

LINES IN THE SAND

Writings on the Gaza Solidarity Encampment
& Campus Flood at U.C. Berkeley from
an Anarchist Prisoner of War



Casey Goonan

*transcribed, formatted, & edited
with love & rage from
comrades to the end*

cover images:

شهادة الاطفال في زمن الحرب

In Time of War: Children Testify

(Drawings by Palestinian Children)

Beirut: Mawakif / PFLP, 1970

April 17, 2026

Palestinian Prisoners' Day

with whatever weapons at hand

with whatever weapons.noblogs.org



Editor's Note

The content of this book comprises writings and letters written by Casey during their time at Santa Rita Jail in the year before they were sentenced to federal prison. Some of the ideas and opinions expressed in this text are rooted in a particular moment in time and do not reflect Casey's current views on strategy, approach, and political action. These are not definitive statements and must not be construed as such, especially given that Casey is imprisoned and certain ideas may create undesirable repercussions. The editors have aimed to be as faithful as possible to Casey's original words in the transcription and editing process, with minor spelling and grammar changes for readability.

An earlier edition of Casey's book included transcription mistakes which have since been revised: "organize [sic] insurgencies" was corrected to "organic insurgencies," pg. 40, and "there is no [sic] difference between survival and resistance" was corrected to "there is a difference between survival and resistance," pg. 49. We apologize for any confusion! — July 2026

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To Speak for Myself

Perhaps then it needs to be said that the crack dealer, terrorist, and political prisoner share a commitment to war, and society responds in kind with wars on crime, terror, drugs, communism. But “this war on the commitment to war” crusades as a war against the asocial, that is, those who live “without a concern for sociality.” Yet it cannot be such a thing....No, this war against the commitment to war responds to this commitment to war as the threat that it is—not mere negligence or careless destruction but a commitment against the idea of society itself, that is, against....the conquest, the unspoken war that founded, and with the force of law, refounds society. Not asocial but against the social, this is the commitment to war, and this is what disturbs and at the same time forms the undercommons against the university.

Is this not the way to understand incarceration in the United States today? And understanding it, can we not say that it is precisely the fear that the criminal will rise to challenge the negligence that leads to the need, in the context of the American state and its particularly violent Universitas circle, to concentrate always on conquest denial?

— Fred Moten & Stefano Harney¹

One has to understand that the fascist arrangement tolerates the existence of no valid revolutionary activity. It has programmed into its very nature a massive, complex, and automatic defense mechanism for all our old methods for raising consciousness of a potentially revolutionary class of people. The essence of a U.S.A. totalitarian socio-political capitalism is concealed behind the illusion of a mass participatory society. We must rip away its mask. Then the debate can end, and we can enter a new phase of struggle based on the development of an armed revolutionary culture that will triumph.

— **George Jackson**²

I

As we approach the one year anniversary of my capture, i would like to share a few words reflecting on the socio-historical context of my imprisonment, the so-called “student intifada,” and the global revolutionary movement for the abolition of zionist Israel settler-colonialism, and the decolonization and liberation of Palestine, which, i believe, must also be a movement for the revolutionary abolition of the capitalist U.S. white supremacist state, the decolonization of the vast territory occupied by Amerikan settler society, and the liberation of all people oppressed under the dominion of its ruling class.³

My name is Casey Robert Goonan. I am a 35 year old revolutionary abolitionist and anti-colonial anarchist of mostly Irish-Amerikan descent, born and raised in the east San Francisco Bay Area on unceded Ohlone and Miwok land.⁴ I am an independent scholar, a writer and publisher, a print worker, an educator, and a lifelong student. Throughout the majority of my adult years, i have been active in autonomous grassroots social movements against police violence and gendered-racial criminalization as well as a dedicated supporter of imprisoned friends, family, comrades, and numerous others held captive by the U.S. prison regime. I am also an anti-zionist committed to internationalist revolutionary struggle for the decolonization and liberation of Palestine, of which i am currently imprisoned for participation.

For any reader who is unaware, “zionism” is a Western

imperialist ideology and settler-colonial political movement that calls for establishing a Jewish nation-state with a Jewish majority in Palestine. Given the concrete historical reality of an indigenous Palestinian population who are majority Arab and Muslim already inhabiting this region of land located between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, it has taken a permanent colonial war “waged against the indigenous population, by a variety of parties,” to force Palestinians to “relinquish their homeland to another people against their will.”⁵ How else could a predominately Arab country with a historical Muslim majority transform into a “Jewish majority” population in the span of three decades without the forcible expulsion of nearly the entire original native population?

As historian Rashid Khalidi describes, following World War I and the collapse of Ottoman rule, the emergence of a Zionist para-state arose from British military occupation and its financial sponsorship of “large-scale immigration of European Jewish settlers” into Palestine, with a separate “Jewish-controlled sector” of the economy created through the intentional exclusion of Arab labor from work in Jewish-owned firms, and the introduction of “massive amounts of capital from abroad.”⁶

Experienced as they were in counter-insurgency warfare, the British also enthusiastically armed and trained settler militias and eventually paramilitary units.⁷ As Ghassan Kanafani writes in his indispensable class analysis of early Zionist colonialism and Palestinian resistance, these British initiatives procured the resources and infrastructure needed for

the zionist project to mobilize internally, “laying the foundations of a military society and of its military and economic instruments.”⁸ By 1949, approximately 80 percent of the indigenous Arab-Palestinian population was now forced from their homes, losing their land and their property. It is in this historical conjuncture that the zionist movement declares the entirety of Palestine as the new Jewish state of “Israel,” formally endorsed (and soon financially sponsored) by the United States, now “part and parcel of the emerging American hegemony in the region.”⁹

Israel is thus a European-Jewish settler nation fundamentally based on land theft, normalized occupation, continuous population displacement, and anti-Palestinian racial genocide/warfare. Its imperialist-colonial (white) civilization and nation-building project is spiritually animated by zionism. While it is true that Israel’s one-hundred years’ war of land-ecological conquest indeed

shares many of the typical characteristics of other colonial campaigns, it also possesses very specific characteristics, as it [is] fought by and on behalf of the Zionist movement, which itself was and is a very particular colonial project. Further complicating this understanding is the fact that this colonial conflict, conducted with massive support from external powers, became over time a national confrontation between two national entities, two peoples. Underlying this feature, and amplifying it, was the profound resonance for Jews, and also many Christians, of their biblical connection to the historic land of Israel. Expertly woven into modern political

Zionism, this resonance has become integral to it. A late-nineteenth-century colonial-national movement thus adorned itself with a biblical coat that was powerfully attractive to Bible-reading Protestants in Great Britain and the United States, blinding them to the modernity of Zionism and to its colonial nature: for how could Jews be “colonizing” the land where their religion began?¹⁰

Contrary to U.S./Western propaganda, to be in opposition to zionism is not anti-semitism nor is it opposition to Judaism. Rather it means to oppose a particular European/Euro-Amerikan fantasy of settler birthright to possess the land that is Palestine and an ethno-state based on conquest and aspirationally permanent occupation. Just as certain historical articulations of Christianity served as the ideological basis for the genocidal trans-Atlantic anti-Black plantation chattel slavery regime and ongoing European “New World” conquest-construction of the “Amerikas,” so too does zionism mobilize through the mythology of the Old Testament to mutate Judaism (a religion/faith) into ethno-racial terms and justify the apartheid settler nation-building project of “Israel” premised on the elimination of the Palestinian native.

The scholarship of Nur Masalah rigorously demonstrates that “ancient Israelites” were neither a race nor an ethnicity but a community formed around a common faith, a faith community.¹¹ It is important to take the time to break this point down more before moving on with any further writing about anti-zionism and the Palestine solidarity movement, given the sheer density and cultural-political saturation of the

zionist perspective in the U.S. public discourse, among myriad spheres of influence. It is not until the nineteenth-century when this perspective of Judaism as a community of faith (i.e. the Jewish faith) is eclipsed by the globality of European racialism (race science, social Darwinism, eugenics), where “being Jewish” was discursively constructed into a racial identity. This racist framing continued to evolve throughout the Western nation-state system and colonial circuits of knowledge production until the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust, which set the stage for the second transformation of global Jewish identity. Following the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust,

being Jewish was reinvented again into a single ethnicity. Today the Arab Jews of Iraq, Morocco, and the Yemen, together with the Amharic-speaking Falasha Jews of Ethiopia and the Russian, German, and Polish Jews are all treated as having a single ethnicity, if not a single race, by the Israeli Zionist regime. In fact, until the advent of European Zionism, members of the Arabic-speaking Jewish minority in Palestine, known locally as *‘al-yahud awald al-‘arab’* were an integral part of the Palestinian people and their Arabic language, culture, and heritage... and were also destroyed by the European Zionist settler elite. The double reinvention of the “Jewish people” in the modern era is often overlooked by critical scholars.¹¹

One of the foundational myths of the zionist political movement of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, intended to ritualize the discursive erasure of indigenous

presence in the Western geographic imaginary is the propagation of the slogan “a land without a people, for a people without a land,” circulated by the well-funded Protestant Christian lobby (U.K.). This mytheme emerges along with another narrative structure of belonging, propagated by Western literature and other popular cultural forms, which instilled a baseless presumption into (global) Zionist racial common sense of a “natural,” innate, or perennial diasporic Jewish longing for “return.”¹²

Most absurdly presented for the historical record here is the real phenomenon of eastern European Jewish settlers migrating to Palestine and claiming to represent a native population who is “returning” to its homeland after thousands of years of exile, a process of self-indigenization that requires the invention of a new “Hebrew-imagined biblical identity” and a toponymical program of de-Arabizing the region to bolster this construction of a new national language, with the militarized re-naming of cities, places, and of the entire European settler population.¹³ The modern Hebrew language spoken today as the official tongue of Israeli settler society was in fact invented by Ashkenazi Zionists as a “hybrid language” with European vocabulary and strong European connections.¹⁴

The key racial logic at play in the fanciful production of Israeli society as a self-coherent national subject and territorialized civilization is native erasure and elimination. In a fashion similar to the technical rulings of the Catholic church during the fifteenth-century, with the decree of the “Papal Bulls” designating most of the land west of Europe to be classified

as *terra nullius*, or “nobody’s land” (i.e. territory that is not under the ownership or control by a European nation-state becomes available for acquisition via conquest), the geographic imaginary of zionism relies on this exact same Western legal category.¹⁵

Just as U.S. Amerikan “Manifest Destiny” animated the rapid and violent frontier conquest by white settlers across a continent and beyond, presuming their “god-mandated” entitlement to invade and control non-European land and transform it into “property,” so too does the citizen-settler of the zionist occupation of Palestine.¹⁶ In fact, the Israeli state appears to encourage a type of ethnocentric identity based on traditions of land conquest in the Hebrew Bible, “especially the Book of Joshua and those dealing with the biblical Israelites’ origins that demanded the subjugation and destruction of other people.”¹⁷

In a million ways, the zionist political movement has re-invented Judaism and incorporated such select Jewish themes into militarized political action. The involvement of universities, institutions of “Higher Education,” and scholarly research associations in the propagation and normalization of this onto-mythic core of the zionist nation-building project has been central, essential. And the spiderweb of transnational institutional and historical connections between nodes of the zionist war machine and the neoliberal academic-schooling regime is mind-boggling in its expanse. It is not a coincidence that the U.S. college campus has been a principal site of struggle for local articulations of the Palestine solidarity movement and insurgency against zionism, for five decades it has been nothing but a battleground.

I believe that the Palestinian people have a right to return to their land, their homes, and neighborhoods from which their families have been removed, deracinated, refugees suspended in a perpetual condition of Nakba.¹⁸ And i believe that Palestine has a right to self-determination and sovereignty—and thus a right to armed struggle—as an indigenous people and a nation. The Zionist Israel entity is an illegitimate fascist-apartheid nation. In 1979 the Palestinian scholar Edward Said writes:

Zionism (like the view of America as empty land held by Puritans) was a colonial vision... [I]n joining the general Western enthusiasm for overseas territorial acquisition, Zionism never spoke of itself unambiguously as a Jewish liberation movement, but rather as a Jewish movement for colonial settlement in the Orient. To those Palestinian victims that Zionism displaced, it could not have meant anything by way of sufficient cause that Jews were victims of European anti-Semitism... [O]nce victims themselves, Occidental Jews in Israel have become oppressors (of Palestinian Arabs and Oriental Jews)... The fact that no sizable segment of the Israeli population has yet been able to confront the terrible social and political injustice done to the native Palestinians is an indication of how deeply ingrained are the (by now) anomalous imperialist perspectives basic to Zionism, its view of the world, its sense of an inferior native Other.¹⁹

Beyond a “proxy” of the United States of Amerika, the

two nation-state formations form together a singular apparatus of white-supremacist settler-colonial empire. Symbiotic and mutually-constitutive, neither the U.S. nor Israel can maintain their imperialist ambitions without the other, while Israel's war-raging capacity figures essential for larger processes of transnational capital accumulation in the region.

It is for this reason that the colonial world is in a downward existential spiral of panic-reaction following the Palestinian liberation army's "Operation Al-Aqsa Flood" which began on October 7, 2023. The flood is an act of decolonization, a bulldozing of the apartheid border wall, an insurgent burst of liberatory potential summoning the spirit of anticolonial revolution back onto the world stage. The flood is also an expression of abolition praxis, the largest prison break in recent memory, a demand for mass decarceration, the release of hundreds, of thousands of Palestinians held captive in Israeli prisons, jails, and detention centers, and a militant action that seems to have catalyzed a new web of global solidarities between incarcerated peoples against their/our captors.

II

Last spring, i was an active and contributing participant in the Gaza solidarity encampment at University of California, Berkeley. The encampment, beginning on April 22, [2024] was part of a widespread surge of protest escalation on U.S. university campuses in support of Palestine and against zionism and racial-colonial genocide. This escalation was quickly dubbed the “student intifada,” yet its participants were more often a dynamic convergence of communities, in some instances involving the entire regional left-movement ecology in which a campus is located. On a tactical level, the intifada on the university campuses consisted mostly of encampments, building takeovers (referred to as “occupations”), and to a lesser degree more provocative forms of expropriation and sabotage (such as looting, smashing of windows, or arson). Work refusals also were mildly attempted.

To be more specific, i tend to divide the overall cycle of insurgency into two overlapping but distinct constellations, with differing tactical-horizons and limitations. On the one hand, there is the more generalized Gaza “*solidarity encampment wave*,” encompassing the majority of both active and passive participants in the creation, sustaining, resourcing, and defense of camps, which typically seized outdoor space (quads, plazas, and center lawns) on campus. This wave took the form of what the anti-state communist writing collective Research and Destroy describes as “protest camps,” built with the primary intention of “communicating a moral position.”²⁰ This differs

from the mode of encampment used in the 2015 Standing Rock/No Dakota Access Pipeline movement and the more recent 2022 Stop Cop City/Defend the Atlanta Forest campaign, which they write of as examples of the “encampments-as-demand-itself,” where the purpose of the camp is to physically block the construction of colonial-capitalist infrastructure.

On the other hand, there is a second constellation that emerges in the spring 2024 intifada, what i am tentatively calling “*the campus flood*,” consisting of various initiatives of expropriation and sabotage. In some geographies, the flood escalated within the paradigm of negotiation, while in others the flood can be seen breaking from this normative logic altogether. As the Research and Destroy collective explains:

The differing characters across encampments, from orderly tent villages under heavy manners to the wild building seizures of Manhattan or Arcata, bespeak among other things where each campus stands along the arc of transformation—from minimalists ready to treat the convening of a task force as a win, to maximalists sliding towards total antagonism. It is the logic of negotiation itself that arrests the slide and sets the tactical agenda...the baseline quality of a movement with specific and limited demands that must be won from an authority who is empowered to deliver them. Even as escalation can be a negotiating tool, intensifying the discomfort and scrutiny for the administration, the requirement that the administration must be considered a partner, must be granted legitimacy and even the pretense of

having an ethical capacity, sets limits on tactics and even on ideas.²¹

Between May 1-13, i lived within the encampment at University of California, Berkeley (UCB), volunteering in day-to-day maintenance tasks, political education, and community defense. As an educator and someone who has spent over a decade of my lifetime on college campuses (as a student and/or worker, from community college to public research universities to private “R1” institutions), i am intimately aware of the political organizing context of “the campus” as much as the anti-political potential of students and workers to engage in exemplary actions within/against the University of Empire in ways that can spill out to catalyze revolt on a much grander scale. This of course is ultimately dependent on their willingness to first destroy the division of labor, chain of authority, intellectual hierarchies, and specialized-social roles assigned by capitalist society. Secondly, they must be willing to embrace those of us from the community beyond the so-called campus borders, a transformation of our categorization by capital as “outsiders” or “community support” instead to “co-struggles” on equal footing with as much at stake in the revolutionary process unfolding by our convergence and disarticulation of walls.

The call (still) is to “*flood the gates*,” an altogether different paradigm than the majority of 2024’s encampments. The logic of the flood model is closer to what Fredy Perlman and Roger Gregoire famously describe as the abolition of the university. For Perlman and Gregoire, to abolish the university

is not a vaporous idea but a concrete horizon and specific set of objectives and activity that concrete people struggle toward together, that is, “*an abolition of the university as a specialized institution restricted to a special layer of society (students),*” where the “*ex-university*” becomes “*socialized, public, open to everyone.*”²² After all, what is a campus without capital? Without the “student” and “worker” alienated from their sense of collective power? In the absence of administrative power and policing? Is it not just a grip of buildings with tremendous resources and infrastructure available for the taking and repurposing, the redistribution of access, the reassignment of meaning based on socially necessary functions instead of work, profit, and prestige?

As anarchists living in the core of U.S. settler empire, I believe our role in the process of anti-colonial insurgency is to exhaust all means of solidarity and insurrectionary mutual aid, and to expand the sphere of principled collaboration with non-anarchists. Such collaboration however cannot result in capitulation to non-anarchist aspirations for the bureaucratic mediation or management of emergent mass struggle. If at any point in the development of new cycles of insurgency the activist Left or any other popular bloc of collaboration against the colonial apparatus turns toward reformist or prematurely minimalist measures, it is the historical obligation of the anarchists of praxis to advance the struggle to new levels of direct action, specific to the situation at hand, appropriate to the needs of the oppressed classes who are engaged in the self-activity of liberatory revolt.²³

The intifada on the university campuses—which is to say the convergence of likely hundreds of thousands of students, academic workers, faculty, staff, and local communities onto the campuses of the University of Empire—last spring is not some detached reaction by a population far-removed from the site and scenes of war, genocide, and resistance in Gaza, but an autonomous branch of the protracted, decentralized, horizontal, and widespread revolutionary anti-colonial insurgency that was initiated by the Al-Aqsa Flood, situated squarely within the war machine that is materially facilitating and ethico-politically condoning Israel’s mass expulsions, deprivations, maimings, and killings of native Palestinians.

Notes

1. Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (New York: *Minor Compositions*, 2013), 40.

2. George Jackson, *Blood In My Eye*, Pt. 2 (Chicago: *Chicago Anarchist Black Cross*, 2018 [1971]), 26.

3. As Frantz Fanon argues, decolonization is a “historical process,” “it can only be understood, it can only find its significance and become self-coherent insofar as we can discern the history-making movement which gives it form and substance.” In *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: *Penguin*, 1967), 2.

4. The terms “revolution” and “revolutionary” have a specific meaning in my vocabulary and need to be unpacked further, as George Jackson defines:

Revolution within a modern industrialist capitalist society can only mean the overthrow of all existing property relations and the destruction of all institutions that directly or indirectly support existing property relations. It must include the total suppression of all classes and individuals who endorse the present state of property relations and who stand to gain from it. Anything less than this is reform. Government and the infrastructure of the enemy capitalist state must be destroyed to get at the heart of the problem: property relations. Otherwise there is no revolution. Reshuffle the governmental personnel and forms, without changing property relations and economic institutions, and you have produced simply another reform stage in the old bourgeois revolution... Revolutionary change means the

seizure of all that is held by the 1 percent [who presently control the wealth of the society] and the transference of these holdings onto the remaining 99 percent... A social revolution after the fact of the modern corporate capitalist state can only mean the breakup of that state and a completely new form of economics and culture.

Cited in Jackson, *Blood In My Eye*, Pt. 1. (Chicago: *Chicago Anarchist Black Cross*, 2018 [1971]), 16-17.

5. Rashid Khalidi, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917-2017* (New York: *Metropolitan Books*, 2020), 9.

6. Ibid., 8.

7. Ibid., see 17-95.

8. Ghassan Kanafani, *The 1936-39 Revolt in Palestine* (London: *Tricontinental Society*, 1980 [1972]), 55. In this book, Kanafani provides insights into the historical process of Palestine's rapid transformation from a "semi-feudal" society into a capitalist society which is "accompanied by an increased concentration of economic power in the hands of the Zionist machine" and the European-Jewish settlers colonizing Palestine (55). This sequence of colonial accumulation appears to correspond with the "crystallization of the militaristic and aggressive character of the colonial society that Zionism had firmly implanted" in the region, and its relative "containment and defeat" of the native Palestinian proletariat (11). Another factor that created the conditions leading to the genocidal colonization of Palestine is that there was no significant leftist movement in this emergent Jewish colony that could mount struggle and resistance in the opposite direction, as Kanafani writes: "practically the whole of this society was devoted to settlement through invasion" (55).

9. Khalidi, *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine* (2020), 60.

10. Ibid., 9.

11. Nur Masalha, *Palestine: A Four Thousand Year History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2021 [1999]), 24-25.

12. Ibid., 24-25.

13. Ibid., 284-285. Of the actual indigenous people of Palestine, Masalha writes:

Today the Palestinians are culturally and linguistically Arab and largely but not exclusively Muslim. The Palestinian Muslim population was mainly descended from local Palestinian Christians and Jews who had converted to Islam [in the *seventh century*] and inherited many of the social, cultural, religious, and linguistic traditions of ancient Palestine, including those of the Israelites, Caananites, and Philistenes... [I]t would not be unreasonable to argue that the modern Palestinians are more likely to be the descendants of the ancient Philistenes (and Israelites) than Ashkenazi Jews, many of whom were European converts to Judaism. Certainly historically, in contrast to the myth of 'exile and return,' many of the original Jewish inhabitants of ancient Palestine remained in the country but had accepted Christianity and Islam many generations later [emphasis added].

14. Masalha's work is indispensable for demystifying the mythico-discursive regimes of "Israeli national history." With overwhelming documentation and evidence, her scholarship exposes how the leadership of early-European Zionist colonialism operated on the belief that to build a new "homeland"/state in Palestine required the invention of both founding national mythology and a new secular

modern Ashkenazi Hebrew language. (338) In fact, many of the first zionist settlers called themselves “New Hebrews” not “Jews,” and apparently “deliberately changed their European Yiddish, Russian, Polish, or German names to sound more Hebraic, more biblical.” (338) One example is David Grün, whose name is changed first to David Green, after migrating to Palestine, then eventually he changes his name again to David Ben-Gurion. The leading innovator of modern Hebrew as the national language of “Israel,” Lozar Perelman, changed his own name to Eliezer Ben-Yehuda. This all requires mentioning to dispel the deceptive premises that authorize the self-indigenization of European Jews. Although Judaism is born out of this region, European Jewish settlers are not native to this region and “Israel” is the product of European invasion, and continues to exist only by genocide and warfare against an indigenous nation which has never stopped resisting: “Despite the Semitization of European Jews by linguistic and racial theorists in the second-half of the 19th century... modern Hebrew was invented... not as a Semitic language, but rather as a hybrid language... [A] cultural space with which new settlers of the Zionist colony (Yishuv) in Palestine felt at home” (338-339).

15. Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous People's History of the United States*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014), 3-4. Drawing on the legal parallel and direct historical precedent of the zionist movement's use of the concept “*terra nullius*,” Dunbar-Ortiz writes:

Origin narratives form the vital core of a people's unifying identity and of the values that guide them. In the United States, the founding and development of the Anglo-American settler state involves a narrative about Puritan settlers who had a covenant with God to take this land. That part of the origin story is supported and reinforced by the

Columbus myth and the “Doctrine of Discovery.” According to a series of late-fifteenth century papal bulls, European nations acquired title to the lands they “discovered” and the indigenous inhabitants lost their natural right to that land after Europeans arrived and claimed it... The Columbus myth suggests that from U.S. independence onward, colonial settlers saw themselves as part of the word system of colonization.

In the context of Zionist settler-colonialism, Masalha extends the relevance of this genealogy of the “Doctrine of Discovery” that links its present-tense project of (white) nation-building to the originary authorizations of the matrix Judeo-Christian papal bulls:

[S]ettler colonialism is a structure not an episode. Zionist settler-colonialism is deeply rooted in European [and Euro-American] colonialism. Ignoring the existence and rights of indigenous peoples, British colonists often saw large parts of the earth as *terra nullius*, ‘nobody’s land.’ This (originally Roman legal) expression was used to describe territory which was not subject to the sovereignty of any European state—sovereignty over territory which is *terra nullius* may be acquired through occupation and/or settler-colonization. [See 307-315 in Masalha (2021 [1999]).

16. Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).

17. Masalha, Palestine (2021 [1991]), 355.

18. Loubna Qutami, *Before the New Sky: Protracted Struggle and Possibilities of the Beyond for Palestine’s New Youth*

Movement (University of California Riverside, Ph.D. dissertation, 2018).

In her path-breaking dissertation, Qutami argues that the circumstances of enclosure due to occupation, siege, and dispossession; the annihilation of presence in the historical record; and the fracturing of cohesive intergenerational genealogies of anti-colonial struggle by the 1993 Oslo Accords, all combine together to constitute an *ontology of Nakba* for Palestinians in Palestine and throughout the diaspora:

[T]he Palestinian condition is one of prolonged Nakba, catastrophe. But this Nakba is not an extended event, nor is it the afterlife of the exodus of 1948. It has become a signifier of Palestinian existential being. Siege and exile by land, sea, and sky; an international legal system that aids and abets the catastrophe that befalls the Palestinians rather than limiting it; elimination by the war of narrative and erasure of and from historic records; and foreclosures of political genealogies and transnational vehicles to hold together the Palestinian nation—all these forms of enclosure have become attributes of this *ontology of Nakba* (23).

19. Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1992 [1979]), 68-69.

20. Research and Destroy, “The Student Intifada,” *Verso Books* (blog post, June 21, 2024), <https://www.versobooks.com/blog/news/the-student-intifada>.

21. Ibid.

22. Fredy Perlman and Roger Gregoire, *Worker-Student Action Committees, France, May '68*. (Olympia: Detritus Books, 2020 [1969]), 103.

23. I use the term “praxis” as defined by Paulo Freire: “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it.” *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: *Continuum*, 2000 [1970]), 51. On the topic of Al-Aqsa Flood as a paradigm of abolition praxis, see Khalida Jarrar:

The ongoing quest to liberate prisoners is in tandem with the Palestinians’ constant and multifaceted struggle against colonialism. Here, the slogan ‘emptying the prisons’ is derived from a core component in the Palestinian struggle through various stages of its history... Gaza is an ‘open air prison,’ caused by global capitalism. Israel is part of the global military power. The Palestinian model has taught us that breaking the chains of enslavement can only occur by dismantling the imperialist capitalist system that produced and continues to sustain it... This is a reminder of a shared historical struggle that brings us back to a rooted alliance in the face of global struggle against racism and imperialism.”

Khalida Jarrar, “Freedom is Coming: Shattering Slavery and Emptying Prisons,” *Majallat al-Dirasat al-Filastiniyya*, no. 137 (2023), <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/45699>.

Poetry

february twenty nine

flour bags stacked on blue truck bed for palestinian family starved under military orders as settler entitlement-bullets swallow body in desert grave not unlike southwest border-crossed generations displaced hunted by white citizen militias now multicultural found in sonora trench sweat dry bone drenched blood red stain on white flour bag image eaten by amerikan with takeout dinner delivered spectacle-pain status quo repetition sees tolerable tragedy feels compliantly melancholic not mad meanwhile guerrilla fighter of gaza wrapped in green-black self-determination under rubble-rock defies fifty-year eurodescended missile-shock desired by zionist family who is not starving is settler colony is “elimination of the native” embodied is white civilization morality tolerance begets red blood stained flour bags on blue truck bed stacked screams seared into nervous system is why tonight we are in street burning “israel” and “u.s.a.” flags and tomorrow teaches us to make improvised asymmetry-leveling combat within engine of genocide-warfare machine.

December 23, 2024

process

begin

rip away / barred participation

the tepid remains as chatter

unscathed white-speak

mirage memory only

suited for bureaucrats or

a c.v. line maybe

i can't tell you what you stand for by words alone

removed as i am from the same plane of ~~existence~~

all i know is

discourse

negotiation necessitated ~~dialogue~~

dancing beyond demands

to reshape hopelessness into

a prompt for new perception

companion against the grain of

bubble-wrapped praxis

blood-soaked politics

false internationalism

in genocide-source locales

huffing optimism fumes to avoid

inevitable

negation

no certainty

to be found

here

we

begin again

December 24, 2024

whirlwind days

whirlwind days pass in blurred transformation
practice outpacing thought, while imagination outpaces
a consideration for
timing was never my forte
dreamed it all she asks

“why did you take so long to arrive?
or to return,
smoke signal nearly a year late.”

unthought traces in wake
startled i reply

“how could i have known before it happens?”
all i had was
crossless rosary
accidental possession

whirlwind days past things
could have gone
much different
but they didn't

so now what

December 25, 2024

ash

told to define love
halfway out door
felt in flash flare
nothing the same

December 21, 2024

#UMF227

1 a.m. on a 3' x 6' steel sheet top bunk
stacked
snores amass
howls from one hundred
waiting sleeping men
reverberating throughout
this echo chamber pod
sorrow souls humming
chorus of one hundred caged waiting
voices, muted
resting from day's pent up stress/loathing/distractions
one hundred present-tenses arrested waiting
producing octaves that scale
another sleepless starless night
a reprieve from the hum humm hummm
silence broken by deputy boots
jail keys clinking like white devil tambourine
summoning a howling chorus
of snoring men waiting
now punctured by now
noxious bowel movements
distant toilets flushing loudly
smells of shit seeping into our
stacked cell sleeping waiting
while the boy in the bunk
below me
continues to reek of
rancid unwashed feet

from his four consecutive days
in bed, silent waiting
unmoving
face unflinched with tearless eyes
i want to tell him
it's okay
you just need to make it through the night
to find a better morning

yet nothing of this sort can be promised
to these one hundred sleeping men waiting
this is jail and waiting
this is the united states of amerikkka

July 15, 2024

Non-Cooperating Plea

on tuesday i will stand before judge
face to face with the united states
government will label me “terrorist”

defined by, forever in white-christian settler nation documents
as existential threat to its interests and security

better believe i carry a terrifying love
for all who suffer, stare down daily, face to
faced with genocide wars accelerated by
shattered colonizer arrogance

in retaliation i have set fires, as invitation
will you join? or will patience persist as
the unmerited virtue of today.

January 3, 2025

Academicism, within
& without the
“Academy”

Last Friday night, i read an article about my grand jury indictment published by *The East Bay Times*, a conservative-liberal local newspaper.¹ It was not published in any print version of the newspaper this week (or last), but someone showed the article to me on their G.T.L. tablet. This most recent article refers to me as an “academic,” which i presume most stories or news articles have done. As i sat with the thoughts of this characterization, i increasingly became annoyed. Not too long after, the full implications of this naming sunk in, and, frankly, i find it quite insulting. I’m sure in different circumstances my good sense would have struck sooner. After all, this has been only the second article that i read concerning my case at that moment. As of this writing, i have now read a total of five news articles about my case, all from mainstream media outlets, and only a few more in total related to the so-called “student intifada” as a whole since my capture by the feds in June [2024].

Anyway, i find it both annoying and insulting to be reductively characterized as an “academic” for several reasons that are worth detailing below. I believe my perspective on the matter can lend a helpful framework for others similarly mischaracterized. Or maybe, alternatively, the conceptualization put forward can help demystify *who* in fact *is* one.

I do want to mention from the start that my frustrations with the label of “academic,” as with the Academy and academicism more generally, come from an abolitionist and anticolonial perspective based in revolutionary love. This is a needed clarification because i do not wish to perpetuate the

devalorization of critical scholarly and intellectual work (in the university or otherwise), such as the arrogant reactionaries of the fascist/zionist U.S. far-right are attempting to do. Those far-right wing asshats are fabricating a public narrative about me that frames my politicization as a revolutionary abolitionist over the span of nearly two decades as “extremist radicalization” which results from alleged “indoctrination” by my degrees in Critical Race and Ethnic Studies and specifically my Ph.D. in Black Studies.

Now, if we understand the word “radical” to mean what Ella Baker defines it as—to think about and confront social problems “at their roots”—then i am most certainly a radical. And i guess if it is an extremist perspective to be against policing, incarceration, and genocide from within an anti-Black white-supremacist slave-holding settler nation then so be it. You can even call me a “terrorist.” I don’t give a fuck, just don’t call me complicit.

Yet what these nazi-brain-programmed right wing dorks intend to do is establish a public narrative that infantilizes me as some “once malleable” student turned scholar who apparently is unable to think for myself under the influence of “manipulative leftist professors.” Such narratives (and several others i’ve encountered over the years but are not worth the energy of going into at this moment) are absolutely bullshit. They remove all of my agency and pathologize my highly intentional ethical, political, and spiritual growth. Such narratives attempt to displace the truth of my steadfast coming-to-consciousness about normalized systemic state and

interpersonal domination/violence and global power relations. I believe such narratives deployed by the U.S. Right (and to varying intensities by the so-called liberal “center”) are in fact strategic and preemptive maneuvers to dismiss any public retrospective or historical claim to my defiant intellectual formation as an abolitionist and anticolonialist with revolutionary aspirations. My actual, lived politicization and intellectual formation is a process of dedicated study and struggle that is unintelligible to right-wing pundits, journalists, pseudo-scholars, influencers, politicians, their funders, and their cultish followers alike.

Okay, so now that i’ve made that initial clarification, i can begin to more directly explain the characterization imposed on me of being an “academic.” The criticisms that follow cut across the entire spectrum of political sensibilities, including what exists today of a U.S.-based Left and adjacent anarchist milieus. Most deliberately, this essay is a polemic against all neoradical intellectuals who extract from grassroots movements and organic insurgencies through public-facing relations based on partial solidarity and performative activism, while in turn giving little if anything at all back to the source.² I am an anarchist in principle, so this sweeping discernment of hierarchy, authority, and entitlement flows somewhat easily from pen to page.

I think the annoyance of being characterized as an “academic” first of all is triggered by my recollection that in fact i have *not* been welcomed, accepted by, no less invited into the increasingly conservative “Academy” for two years since

completing my doctorate at Northwestern in May 2022. (Not complaining about this, just want to clarify some facts.) Moreover, i'm *not* currently a professor of anything. I do not experience awards like some of my peers went on to do, *nor* do i have the same scale of access to resources. I've very much been struggling financially and was left in the dust by the university job market given my incompatible accessibility needs. And yet, i still have been able to significantly impact the trajectory of multiple social movements, across different fronts and fields of struggle, through autonomous intellectual work and my involvement in several scholarly, media, print, and distro collectives. Most of this work is "public facing," although not predominately done using my face or legal name.³

Certainly i've had the luxury of access to college campuses and university resources for a large chunk of my adult life. These spaces—as exploitative and elitist as they are—allowed myself, my comrades, and some colleagues to create several lasting projects with real material teeth. It gave me the luxury to write often and research many topics and political interests. It provided an avenue to constantly "steal time," in spite of excessive and unregulated work hours, and a base to steal production materials from (printer paper, staples, envelopes, copy machines) and establish some informal decentralized networks with others. Much of this effort would wind up getting funneled into already-existing groups, campaigns, and movements. Unfortunately, this time in universities and my encounter with the Academy was over time punctuated by frequent extremes of hazing, stress, isolation,

physical suffering, and illness, for which i retain a lasting resentment toward (albeit two years removed). Enduring through all of this, i fought very hard to maintain my commitment to a praxis of liberatory militancy and ongoing (imperfect and impure, yet consistent) refusal to cede my soul to white devils and systems of anti-Black/racial-colonial domination. So, with that now shared, i'd like to define and further unpack what an "academic" actually is. Just so we're on the same page moving forward.

First off, there is "the Academy," which is a colonial-bourgeois construct and a Civilizational/civilizing aspiration that i want no business being associated with. This colonial structure of belonging (the Academy/academia) does not encompass the totality of what occurs in universities or on college campuses to be crystal clear. Nor does it describe the totality of people (and their desires) who labor, teach, research, write, learn, love, and struggle within the context of "higher education" schooling institutions. I'm under the impression that college campuses (broadly construed) are *contradictory sites of political struggle*, to borrow a phrase that Ruth Wilson Gilmore once generously explained to me.⁴ As the intifada on the campuses is demonstrating, these contradictions have sharpened and intensified to a relative highpoint. Surpassing the most recent crest in the fall of 2020 on some (not most) campuses in the "United States" and the wave of student-worker strikes in 2022-2023, we are faced with a rapidly shifting historical conjuncture—hopefully, this next school year will reach rupture conditions.⁵

So, “the Academy”/academia is not a place *per se*, but more accurately, as Dylan Rodriguez argues, it is a construct: “*an aspiration*—and it’s not a good one.”⁶ And college *campuses*—analytically distinguishable from “the Academy”/academia—are inherently pivotal sites of struggle over social power. Similar to how Joy James nods to the U.S. prison/jail/detention-center as a “fulcrum” site within the apparatus of state power, i would stretch this notion of a fulcrum site and apply it to an analysis of the structural location of the university or college campus.⁷ I write “stretch” here because the university/college campus has a different institutional and socio-economic function than the prison/jail/detention center, although both contain, discipline, and manage “surplus populations.”⁸ I also say “stretch” here because, in James’ overarching framework and her analysis of contemporary university life, she remains more skeptical than i of the capacity for students and teachers to break from their historically assigned specialized roles. This wave of pro-Palestine, anti-war, and anti-genocide protest is challenging those theorists who consider the campus as a foreclosed or obsolete site of political struggle, a thesis i reject even amidst perpetual validation of the very real problematic of the domesticated (professionalizing) “student activist” subject (an element of the new counterinsurgency and product of neoliberal shifts in the U.S. schooling regime and larger capitalist world system of the last sixty years).

Second we have the term/concept of the “academic.” Hopefully by now i haven’t buried the lede.

“Academic” refers to a disposition and positioning with the social relations of production and nexus of interlocking systems of domination that contextualize an individual or collective’s intellectual standpoint. It is thus a condition to be identified and named, it is not an identity one chooses. Even though people use the term flippantly to describe a wide range of things under the sun, it most definitely means something.

The contemporary academic subject is defined by their constant practice and embodiment of *academicism*. Whether this is known to the subject or unknown is of little meaning within this schema i’m explaining. “Academicism,” to my understanding, is a mode of intellectual activity (i.e. interpretation, conceptualization, analysis, archiving, historicizing, pedagogy, etc.) that is detached from concrete practical experience. In the context of radical intellectuals who study, write about, or work with(in) grassroots movements and/or organic insurgencies, academic ways of being are characterized by any manner of thinking and doing that is not (at the least) intentionally contesting or (at the most) attempting to transform the immediate material context one is situated within in their everyday life.

Of course, academicism is pervasive in U.S. research universities. You may have encountered it recently in the work of tenured R1 faculty and researchers who remain idly on the sidelines making statements while their students for the past several months have faced not only emotional or administrative attacks but also aggressive physical attacks by the police and zionists. These are the more obvious culprits, the easiest to

expose. Yet according to the definition i am proposing, one doesn't have to be employed by a university nor even be welcomed by the Academy/academia to qualify as an academic. To explain what i mean further, i'm going to outline the structural aspects, relational features, and agential dynamics of this positioning process of the academic subject.

In the 1930's, Walter Benjamin wrote an essay titled "The Author as Producer."⁹ The essay offers some suggestions for analyzing, in a more systematic way, the *difference between* a Marxist author whose work has revolutionary dimensions for the "proletarian" mass struggle on the one hand, and on the other hand the Marxist author whose means of subsistence are removed from and/or antagonistic to the fate of the masses in struggle, despite the possible anticapitalist attitude or performance of revolutionary disposition by the latter. Benjamin fixes his critique on a well-known contemporary of his, whom i know little about, but the logic of the argument still stands.

In Benjamin's analysis, the author he is studying is representative of a much larger stratum of "activist intellectuals" whose work appears to relate to the proletarian masses and class struggle in good faith, but does not share a similar class fate. For Benjamin, the uncritical consumption and valorization of this stratum's work led to the popular legitimization of numerous authors who did not share similar material conditions nor similar stakes as the masses. More consequentially, such authors ultimately do not face the same potential consequences of bourgeoisie reaction that revolutionary rupture inevitably

summons. This contradiction has a concrete outcome on the form and content (mostly on the content) of an author's theoretical production. The predominance of this stratum's intellectual output in the public discourse and the era's emerging mass culture industry makes this dynamic particularly troubling for Benjamin. It is an antagonistic contradiction that is obscure and concealed, glossed over by this stratum's mastery over proletarian vernacular, aesthetics, and concepts derived from actually-grounded theory. The ubiquity of the activist intellectual's work—both in terms of circulation and consumption—is not contingent on the importance of their ideas to the revolutionary proletariat, but rather on the mass reproduction of their works which is facilitated by varying degrees of access to capital.

Whether the radical disposition of the author is genuine or well-intentioned makes little difference in this schema. Again, some of these authors' works may be situationally useful. However, what Benjamin is arguing is that the concrete social context of, in this instance, a Marxist author, must be considered in its systemic entirety if we are to discern the historical significance, political impact, and potential consequences of their ideas in the play of revolutionary class struggle.

Given the context of my writing this essay in jail, i'm unable to access most of the sources i'm referencing (at the time of this writing). Although this is the situation before me, i would still like to share a quote from Benjamin. Some of the words may be slightly off, because i'm paraphrasing from

memory, however, the kernel of his argument is expressed so succinctly, it is difficult to withhold sharing his helpful phrase:

It is not enough to merely examine the work of an author based on their *attitude* toward the mode of production. We must always simultaneously identify the author's position *within* the social relations of production.¹⁰

The framework proposed above by Benjamin has use beyond the study of writerly production, given how the cognitive praxis of any intellectual is not reducible to writing or the vocation of "author." But what precisely does it mean to examine an intellectual's work "within the social relations of production" that positions them? To my understanding, it means we must attempt to comprehend (as best as possible) the historically specific arrangement of productive forces wherein the intellectual is situated, which in turn can enable a more accurate analysis of the material circumstances that give their work form, circulation, and meaning. This establishes a more holistic point of reference for analyzing its content.

From this point, it becomes much easier to demystify an intellectual's relative complicity or participation in the process of accumulation and dispossession, if it isn't obvious upon first glance. The active involvement of an intellectual with(in) an existing movement or insurgency would concomitantly be considered here in relation to the aforementioned phenomena. And to push beyond the Eurocentric class-reductionism of Benjamin's framework, i would crucially add that within a

“society structured in dominance,” as Stuart Hall¹¹ aptly describes slave-holding white-supremacist settler nations, we are obligated to examine not only an intellectual’s position within the social relations of *production*, but their full situatedness within the nexus of multiply-scaled and densely interwoven *systems of domination/power*. Such systems include global anti-Blackness, settler-/franchise-/neo-colonialism, white supremacy, and cis-heteropatriarchy, which are all inseparable as socio-historical formations but *analytically distinguishable* from capitalism, imperialism, and Empire as socially determinant structures.¹²

Within this theoretical context, i would like to return to the topic of the contemporary academic subject and why the label feels pejorative and sits uneasy when applied to certain people who really just don’t fit the profile.

“Academic” is a relationally-formed position and trajectory of becoming that a radical intellectual may or may not inhabit, with *academicism* as the primary characteristic activity that establishes this distinction. (It is the coupling of the performance of radicality with access to capital and/or the institutional capacity to pursue, sustain, and circulate their detached intellectual work that elevates one into an extractive perch within the social relations of production and interlocking systems of domination/power.) “Academic” therefore does not mark a static disposition alone. This is a categorically distinct *positioning process* and trajectory of *divergence* from one of a radical-to-revolutionary intellectual whose work directly confronts and intervenes in the social reproduction of

the material circumstances they inhabit. From what i have observed, this is not a disinterested or passively established difference but an actively created difference, meaning that academicism can present itself across inherited positionality and add a nuanced layer to critical analysis of even the most structurally dispossessed intellectuals.

To paraphrase Safiya Bukhari, there is a difference between survival and resistance.¹³ And to riff on Gayatri Spivak, “class” is not only “where you come from,” but, sometimes more importantly, “what you are doing” (and not doing) in the historical present-tense.¹⁴ This applies to more than only an economocentric analysis of class. It applies to an analysis of all relations of domination/power. Despite the aforementioned point, i would still insist that myself, most of my interlocutors, our collective projects, and the decentralized networks we work within are not (according to the schema laid out) qualifying recipients of the “academic” label thrown upon us.

To speak for myself, i am not an academic. I am a revolutionary—a label not self-appointed but given as a placeholder to communicate my near decade-long participation in (and faithful commitment to) protracted, collective struggle against the anti-Black U.S. prison regime and militant opposition to the capitalist, white-supremacist settler state. I’ll let you (the reader) be the judge of whether or not the label applies adequately. I’m only one person among hundreds of thousands of people who are giving significant amounts of their scarce time, limited resources, voluntary labor, and in some cases have lost their mortal life to sustain the historical memory and

social basis for autonomous liberationist/anticolonial/Black revolution to spring forward—with every systemic “crisis” and rupture greating in potential for protracted mass struggle to destroy this World, and, in the same breath, to build things anew in an epoch of ubiquitous opportunism, extraction, and normalized treachery.

All i personally care about is bettering the material condition of the multiple communities i’m a part of, and primarily for the most systemically vulnerable, marginalized, criminalized, and dispossessed among us. To live life and interpret reality “at its roots” means to wake up daily and ask yourself: “what is it i think in relation to what i do?” This is what Bonanno teaches in *The Anarchist Tension*.¹⁵ How to improvise on this oppressive reality is a whole other question altogether, but it’s one well worth asking!

So to return to my definition of an “academic” one final time. The claims i put forth, as fragmented and likely flawed as they are, might be useful or interesting to share with others engaged in similar work during this rapidly shifting conjuncture. If anything, it could be useful to share these definitions of the Academy, the academic subject, and academicism as a small contribution toward defending those radical intellectuals with revolutionary intentions whose work *does not* stand at odds—philosophically or materially—with the fate of the most vulnerable, marginalized, criminalized, and dispossessed among us.

A lot of counter-revolutionary bullshit can be demystified when you combine the analysis of a radical

intellectual's work with: 1) a deep-structural consideration of their concrete social context, 2) a simultaneous reading of the intellectual's activity with(in) movements and insurgency, and 3) a study of the complex ways that points #1 and #2 relate to the form, content, circulation, and social meaning of their work. This is important to do not for moralistic reasons, nor to fulfill some egoistic or contrasting drive to power.

To identify academicism is a labor of criticism for the sake of “our” movements and the likelihood of successful future insurgencies. It is a labor to preserve the integrity of the ideas that “we” create, share, and what we deem useful, a labor to clarify the conditions necessary for insurrectionary processes to develop in ways favorable to the most vulnerable, marginalized, criminalized, and dispossessed among us. Most importantly, such vigilance disallows the entryism and misleadership of charlatans, false prophets, and paper tigers. This task of relentless demystification is profoundly important in an era where a largely self-anointed punditry of neoradicals use social media, podcasts, and collaborations with academia, the publishing industry, and their overlapping professional networks to directly impact the historical development of emerging movements and insurgencies—a position of incredible social responsibility where one's intellectual production can either empower or break the cohesion, morale, and hard-earned momentum of the mass struggle in motion.

Notes

1. Article in *The East Bay Times*, early-August-regarding grand jury indictment.

2. Joy James, “Radicalizing Black Feminism,” *Seeking the Beloved Community: A Feminist Race Reader*. (Buffalo: SUNY Press, 2013 [1998]).

3. One project worth mentioning is True Leap Press: Publishing and Distribution. In 2016, my close friend and comrade, [], and i started a radical publishing collective named True Leap Press. Our first project was a journal of Black study and revolutionary abolitionist analysis, poetry, and experimental writing called *Propter Nos*. We published four issues between 2016 and 2021. Between 2017 and 2024, True Leap hosted a zine distro that used printwork as a medium to organize across prison walls, through the creation of study groups and autonomous educational initiatives. In 2019, this project expanded into the streets. First in Chicago, where it took the form of an informal network of prisoner support events and mutual aid food/resource distribution, and an ad hoc circuit of regional action-reportback circulation via mass printing of zines on commandeered university printers. Then, most recently in the Bay Area from 2022-2024, in the form of supplying and facilitating prisoner support events, tabling in the community, distributing materials across popular social spaces, and the circulation of “print-only” action bulletins such as the *Bay Area Newsreel*, which had a four issue run in 2023.

4. Personal correspondence via email in 2017.

5. A great example of protest activity on a major university campus in 2020, please see: *Insurrectional Abolitionism, Vol. 2: Vistas of Militancy on a Midwest College Campus* (Chicago: True Leap

Press, 2020).

6. Jared A. Ball, Dylan Rodríguez, “Stop Asian Hate, Zionism, Policing, and Counterinsurgency,” I Mix What I Like Podcast (*Black Liberation Media*, May 7, 2024), 1:43:05, www.youtube.com/live/gxQ-itZB0t8.

7. Joy James, *New Bones Abolition: Captive Maternal Agency and the (After)Life of Erica Garner* (Brooklyn, NY: *Common Notions*, 2023), 34.

8. Nick Mitchell, *Disciplinary Matters: Black Studies in the Neoliberal University* (University of California, Santa Cruz: Ph.D dissertation, 2013).

9. Walter Benjamin, “The Author as Producer,” *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, ed. Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (New York: *Urizen Books*, 1978), 257.

10. [Editor’s note: We retained Casey’s quotation from memory with the desire to preserve the imprisoned guerrilla intellectual’s position. The original quotation is as follows:

Rather than asking: what is the attitude of a work to the relations of production of its time? I should ask: what is its position in them?

11. Stuart Hall, “Race, Articulation, and Societies Structured in Dominance,” *Sociological Theories: Race and Colonialism*, ed. UNESCO (Paris: UNESCO, 1980), 305-45.

12. Ibid.

13. Safiya Bukhari, *The War Before: The True Life Story of Becoming a Black Panther, Keeping the Faith in Prison & Fighting for Those Left Behind*, ed. Laura Whitehorn (New York: *The Feminist Press at CUNY*, 2010).

14. Gayatri Spivak, “Revolution and Reform,” interview on

youtube—cited from memory. [Editors were unable to locate this citation.]

15. Alfredo M. Bonanno, *The Anarchist Tension*, trans. Jean Weir (Cuneo: *Edizioni Laboratoric*, 1996; London: *Elephant Editions*, 1998).

Singular Apparatus, Differentiated Terrains

[An apparatus] is, first and foremost, a thoroughly heterogeneous set consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the network that can be established between these elements...

...by the term “apparatus” I mean a kind of formation, so to speak, that at a given historical moment, has as its major function the response to an urgency. The apparatus therefore has a dominant strategic function...

...I said that the nature of an apparatus is essentially strategic, which means that we are speaking about a certain manipulation of relations of forces, of a relational and concrete intervention in the relations of forces, either so as to develop them in a particular direction, or to block them, to stabilize them, and to utilize them. The apparatus is thus always inscribed into a play of power, but it is also always linked to certain limits of knowledge that arise from it and, to an equal degree, condition it. The apparatus is precisely this: a set of strategies of the relations of force supporting, and supported by, certain types of knowledge.

—Michel Foucault¹

I

The zionist colonial entity “Israel” is not merely an ally of U.S. settler empire but its social-historical extension and military-political appendage, inseparable parts of a singular apparatus of land occupation, population displacement, and warfare. The assumed autonomy of the zionist entity from U.S. geopolitical interests is largely superficial, always overdetermined in the final instance by the dictates and imperatives of Amerikkkan statecraft and national-economic needs. This remains the case even in the current conjuncture, as the U.S. government hides its hand and acts as if it has no control over Israel’s war of extermination in Gaza and the West Bank. Surely a move toward innocence, this performative incapacity and concealment of decisive agency in shaping Israeli military policy is no more than a fabrication—the posture play of “good cop, bad cop.”

The United States government is the predominating funder of the zionist entity’s nation-building and war-waging capacities, and will remain so because its fledgling military-political hegemony in the region is dependent on Israel as its proxy command and forward base. This is despite the fact that U.S. settler empire maintains bases scattered across every continent. As Faisal Al-Asad succinctly writes, Israel today is “the purest expression of militarized settler colonialism acting as a lynchpin of Western imperialism and fossil capitalism as a whole,” a “key and integral component of the cycle of capital accumulation in the region.”² The United States of Amerikkka

and Israeli-zionist entity are thus symbiotic and mutually-constitutive, hence my conceptualization of both forming a *singular apparatus*. The former can no longer maintain its dominance without the latter, while the latter may not be capable of operating at all in the form of a settler colonial nation-state without the extensive financial support and relentless military backing by the former.

U.S.A.-Israeli civilizational co-dependence will become increasingly apparent (and desperate) over the next several years if the revolutionary anti-colonial insurgency of the Palestinian resistance and global solidarity movement continue to persist in the face of ongoing, gratuitous and massively fatal settler terror-reaction.³ Such symbioses also explain why the reaction to Operation Al-Aqsa Flood from settler colonizers on both sides of the Atlantic has been (and continues to be) so intense. This mutually-constituting arrangement of “national” interests, state power, and colonial-bourgeois social formation comprises a shared geography and continuous landscape of interrelated reactions, which in turn melts away any strict distinction between either territorial occupation, their carceral-policing and military edifices, and their peculiar structures of social/racial antagonism. This is why participation in the revolutionary anticolonial insurgency initiated by the Al-Aqsa Flood is so important from within the core of U.S. settler empire.

To risk explaining the obvious, if both settler nations bind together to form a singular apparatus of occupation, displacement, and warfare, then it can also be said that we inhabit the *same terrain of struggle* as the resistance in Gaza

and the West Bank, just a different theater, with its own particular circumstances to account for. How we conceptualize the geographic dimensions of both U.S.-Israeli state power/violence and anticolonial insurgency has a direct impact on the form and content of our solidarity movement outside of historic Palestine—from the kind of tactics deemed appropriate or necessary in the play of strategic thinking, to the formation of collective political imaginations that either constrains or helps make possible the advancement of revolutionary struggle.⁴

The revolution in Palestine has been long, dating at least to the 1936-39 period chronicled by Ghassan Kanafani, himself a PFLP member before his 1972 assassination. The transgenerational struggle has included bombings of railways and pipelines, airline hijackings, airport attacks—among other things, the kinds of actions that would help provide the world with the modern meaning of the term “terrorist,” consolidated by press and politicians in their transvaluation of militant resistance in the seventies. Anticolonial warfare is by definition asymmetrical struggle over territory; terrorism is simply what the imperial side calls the requisite tactics of their antagonists. In this case, form aligns with content, tactics with goals. This history provides a useful reflection on October’s Toufan al-Aqsa on October 7, 2023—which was, among other things, a study in asymmetric brilliance. Anticolonial struggle looks like this because it is anticolonial struggle, not (despite Zionist solecisms) because of the moral characters of Hamas or Jihad or the PFLP or DFLP, all participants in that battle within a long war. The same history offers a different reflection, at a quite distinct political level and considerable geographical distance, on the student intifada, whose commitment is inarguably the liberation of Palestine but whose immediate demand is, in main, that the schools divest from firms and funds providing support to the Zionist entity.

*—Research and Destroy*⁵

II

What precisely is Operation Al-Aqsa Flood? What historical processes were set in motion by the insurgent actions of the Palestinian resistance on October 7, 2023? What in fact are its objectives? Its key strategic features? What are the global implications of the Flood?

To my knowledge, the Al-Aqsa Flood can be conceptualized in terms of three or four distinct yet connected levels of analysis. On a basic descriptive level, the Flood is a “meticulously executed guerrilla operation” organized among a united front coalition of resistance factions, combined with a popular insurrectionary component.⁶ In its immediate strategic and operational objectives, the Flood is a major military offensive designed to smash the Gaza Command, the Zionist entity’s southern base which controls the border, wall, and envelope dividing Gazans from the “67 territory,” the main geographic body of Israeli occupation. Relatedly, the Flood was a mission to acquire resources that would maximize bargaining power and leverage in eventual negotiations with the enemy over several proposed demands: chief among them is the mass release of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons and detention, along with the fate of Palestinian access to Al Aqsa/Al Quds-Jerusalem. This took the form of over 200 hostages captured by resistance factions, many of them soldiers, all of them settlers in the illegal and continuously expanding settlements that occupy the territory just beyond the envelope.

While the absolute disregard for the lives of its own

citizens held hostage and the bloodlust campaign of extermination by Israel were impossible to predict on this scale of magnitude, some calculated and anticipated outcomes that did materialize as a result of the Flood are: the deepening of crises internal to the Israeli national form, the demoralization of the Zionist policing and military regime from prolonged hostilities spread across multiple simultaneous fronts, and the further delegitimization of the Palestinian Authority (PA) neocolonial puppet government.

Rather than a single action, it is more useful to think about the Flood as a series of initiatives unfolding across a wide geography in multiple locations. As mentioned, there is first the initial attack on the envelope, which is then followed by a second wave of Gazans incurring across the border, or, the popular-insurrectional component. This unfolds as a simultaneous formal-organized attempt to storm into occupied territory and informal spontaneous uprising that seizes upon the space torn open by the catalyst-incursions. Operationally speaking, the opening acts of the Flood began with a *diversion*, as Hamas fires missiles upon the coast of the '67 territory, stretching up as north as Tel Aviv. Coinciding with this diversion, resistance forces engage in *interference* by systematically destroying Israeli video-surveillance technology along the border. These opening maneuvers are followed by the spearhead-demolition and storming of the border fencing at several strategic points. The formal, coordinated bloc of the resistance factions appears to primarily target military sites for expropriation and the acquisition of assets (including hostages).

The explosive popular insurrectionary bloc that trailed did not flow from or toward any preplanned objective and varied in its content and forms of action.

Another dimension to the Al-Aqsa Flood is the intentionality behind the operation as a *catalyst for longer-term objectives*, and with this, initiating a larger, protracted global-scaled war for Palestinian national liberation—to be distinguished from the Zionist entity's war of extermination and accelerated racial genocide. This protracted anticolonial perspective fixes attention to the Palestinian liberation army's initiative as the means by which international resistance can overturn the material equation of force that the Israeli settler nation is predicated on. As Bikrum Gill argues, this equation of force is embodied in a double economy of force, with colonialism and imperialism based on a foundational greater violence, accompanied by a secondary ideological projection of “invincibility” and “rationality” that has been normalized over time by colonial society.⁷ The *anticolonial* equation of force asserted by the Al-Aqsa Flood correspond with and reflects an understanding of this reality (of “greater violence”), actualizing a concrete basis for Palestinian sovereign power that can enforce the right of return, the reclamation of stolen lands, an end to the blockade of Gaza, and an end to the relentless incarceration and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in the West Bank. In Gill's words:

[In] so far as Al Aqsa Flood expressed the logic of a rising war of national liberation, that was overturning the

underlying equation of force, such recognition would amount to a fatal loss of belief in the viability of israel as a settler-colonial project. It is this contradiction that makes the Al-Aqsa Flood operation unintelligible to israel and the West except as an act of pure irrational savagery that can thus only be responded to with the logic of total elimination.⁸

The Palestinian resistance has, rather than appeal for its “humanity” to be recognized by the zionist entity or Western imperialism, instead pursued a war of social truth on the battlefield, in their own streets, in defense of Gaza. With Israel unable to defeat the resistance on the ground, the Palestinians have “commanded recognition of their political rationality” and “brought the racialized framework of ‘irrational savagery’ to a crisis point.”

The ongoing protracted defense of Gaza and the West Bank by a unified front of Palestinian resistance factions (Hamas, Islamic Jihad, PFLP, Lion’s Den, etc.) within a wider regional “axis of resistance” is organized together through a framework known as *unity of fields*. The shift to defense and counter-offensive guerrilla maneuvers following the initial attack on the envelope is a calculated aspect of the strategy guiding Operation Al-Aqsa Flood. In November 2023, scholar Toufic Haddad astutely notes how an international situation will be

emerging on multiple fronts where a war of attrition of different orders arises in Gaza, on the Northern border with Lebanon, in Yemen, and possibly even Jordan, with [specific]

dynamics individually and collectively frustrating Israel, while creating arenas in which this “Israel problem” begins to shake up Western capitalist alliances, as well as possibly their capitals... due to strengthening mobilizations for Palestine from Western citizens and movements.... October 7 [2023] has opened up so many questions and opportunities to expose, talk about, and organize a whole new Palestinian movement, which can and should play a role in building new left movements. The politics, determinations, and organizing that it is required to stop the Israeli war machine entails a much more radical set of politics, tactics, and strategies than those which have been attempted up to now.⁹

The spirit of the defense of Gaza vectors outward in its transgressive effects, as the panic-reaction and terror-backlash from colonizers and the urgency-imperative of Palestinian resistance and survival serves to intensify the cohesion and solidarity among axis blocs, while galvanizing a global solidarity movement of unprecedented scale. The global solidarity movement, in its own turn, can be further theoretically categorized into two different tendencies with as much overlaps as divergences. This distinction can schematically be broken down into, on the one hand, a mass-based *popular protest tendency*, with a predominately pacifist orientation to political struggle. On the other hand, a much smaller yet militant *proto-insurrectional* tendency has emerged, using more combative methods and taking form through decentralized and autonomous attacks, primarily against weapons contractors, state property, and infrastructure.

Decentralized, horizontal, and widespread, the unity of fields approach to protracted, international revolutionary-anticolonial struggle relies on a model of communication that “leverages the instant exchange of information available” and converts “facts on the ground” into signals between axis groups who work together toward common objectives “without being placed under the same structure of governance.”¹⁰ As Abaljawad Omar eloquently describes it: “unified in vision yet localized in execution.”¹¹ The unity of fields framework has been an important factor for the Palestinian resistance factions (internally) and other axis groups (Hezbollah, Ansar Allah, etc.) to preserve freedom of action and initiative, by imparting a flexibility to the structure of relationships. The arrangement enables each to act quickly and improvise as needed to create “multiple dilemmas for Israel across different theaters of operation,” allowing the resistance to sustain pressure from numerous directions, autonomously, and still maintain insurgent cohesion. So long as realities do not diverge too significantly from the collective narrative, creating constraints and contextual limits on the possibility for axis groups to engage fluidly and decisively in shared struggle, the framework is effective.

An undertheorized dimension of the unity of fields framework remains the relationship between the resistance axis and the global solidarity movement. It is here, at the question of the relation between the solidarity movement outside of the region and axis groups (including factions on the ground defending Gaza and the West Bank), where it is necessary to bring into view the final level of analyzing Operation Al-Aqsa

Flood. This final level of analysis is a recognition of the Flood as a *paradigm for contemporary decolonization and abolition praxis* in the United States, toward the propagation of social war in the belly of settler empire.

The question of Palestine 'solidarity' itself now meets a belated reckoning, its erstwhile self-evidence cracking under the historical force of Al-Aqsa Flood, and its fault lines revealing new depths and divergences. This is precisely as it should be: the Palestinian resistance has sought nothing less than to "crack history open" and divulge the latent possibilities seemingly foreclosed by the hegemony of empire.

In the region itself, "normalization" named the total victory of fossil capitalism and systemic destruction. October 7th derailed this consensus and charted a different course, one which has recentered Palestine as the fulcrum of class struggle and moreover insists in its final determinacy through what can only be described as a people's war. The importance of the latter as a political project and strategic horizon cannot be over-stated, and its meaning has yet to become clear for Western solidarity movements. While it is unlikely that the resistance leadership fully anticipated the abyssal depths to which Israel would sink in exacting bloody retribution, the destructive and vindictive nature of the response was well within its expectations.

The Flood was nevertheless unleashed as an opening salvo of a war, the outcomes, stakes, and risks of which would implicate the masses of Palestine and the Arab world as a whole. The objectively incalculable cost incurred as a result is not the price of a negotiated ceasefire or a phased

return to normalization, but that of a concrete and calculated set of objectives which would give the resistance an advanced position and a firmer footing in its anticipated popular war. These include but are not limited to the maximal number of Palestinian captives, the delegitimization of the Vichy government of the Palestinian Authority, the undermining and demoralization of israel's military and security apparatuses, and the deepening of its internal political crisis. These are the intended advances in a war of maneuver for which the resistance had been painstakingly preparing and capacity-building for years.

Across the West Bank and wider region, the Flood continues to rally the masses and popular armed movements, crystalizing political alignments and opening up new fronts of resistance. Beyond the region, however, such lines have yet to be drawn, and Palestine solidarity remains imprisoned in the form of it acquired through its interminable war of position. If it is to have any meaningful role in the political terrain opened by the Flood, the solidarity movement must re-examine both its form and content in line with the people's war, including its current objectives as well as its longterm ambitions.

In concrete terms, this will of course depend on a practical evaluation of the movement's situation and conditions in any one locale.

*—Faisal Al-Assad*¹²

We all share the inspiring images coming from [Columbia University and Cal Poly Humboldt]—but who will commit to studying and adapting those lessons to fit [their own] conditions?

*—Within Our Lifetime*¹³

III

Taking Operation Al-Aqsa Flood seriously as a *paradigm* of decolonization and abolition praxis in the U.S. context requires a radically different geographic imaginary and sense of place than what characterizes the normative spatial common-sense of the Palestine solidarity movement. In relationship to the resistance operating in historical Palestine, i believe we must conceptualize all fronts where the axis groups and global solidarity movement are active as inhabiting a shared terrain and continuous surface, made up of different “theaters” or “fields,” yet nonetheless struggling within the same overarching structure of antagonisms—against the same apparatus of U.S.-Israeli coalescence through land occupation, population displacement, and warfare.

The intifada on the university campuses in the spring of 2024 (which is ongoing, yet in contained, repressed, and mutated forms) serves as but one expression among many articulations of the global solidarity movement which took shape in ways specific to its context of emergence and the class character/positionally/aspirations of its various participants.

Taking Operation Al-Aqsa Flood seriously as a paradigm for decolonization and abolition praxis in the U.S. context requires us to collapse the presumed spatial separation and assumptive methodological alterity between the various anticolonial formations (i.e. the axis of resistance and global solidarity movement) and their respective domains of struggle. The task of revolutionary theory here is to demystify (and thus

shrink) the fabricated distance between the various sites/scenes of a global struggle so that we understand the continuum of power/violence that forms our shared terrains, while deprovincializing the political geography of Western/settler nations as (potential) zones of guerrilla combat rather than havens of colonial entitlement and impunity only. To allow the normalization of performative activism and protest theater-as-“solidarity” to go on any longer is to commit to a form of politics known as *false internationalism*: the practice of claiming one’s praxis is against U.S.-Israeli settler empire while remaining non-antagonistic to and/or assimilated by its political engine of white civil society.

Taking Operation Al-Aqsa Flood seriously as a paradigm for decolonization and abolition praxis in the U.S. context also requires the production of a stronger sense of insurgent cohesion and synchronicity between the militant wing of the global solidarity movement and the initiatives of the axis of resistance, as a step further to deprovincialize the settler domain of the U.S. “homeland” or geography where the guerrilla proposition is made to feel impossible and inappropriate. Leaning into the tension created by a pedagogical and practical embrace of this revolutionary paradigm will generate a resolution to the problem of the Western solidarity movement’s programmatic pacifism. Our task from this point forward is to wage a relentless ideological struggle against the colonality of acceptable tactics.

Drawing similar conclusions from a different coast, comrades from Lenapehoking territory propose a starting

point:

The movement in the U.S. is at a major crossroad—where we are seeing a split between those committed to revolutionary change and those who are invested, consciously or unconsciously, in the continuation of U.S. empire...

The movement in the U.S. is currently scattered and, importantly, factions of the movements have remarkably different political goals. To build a capable resistance, we must flesh out these objectives to able to coordinate from collective to collective, faction to faction. It is essential that any unity is defined by that process. So long as a shared horizon can be envisioned, we believe unity is possible.

We propose these objectives as an essential starting place:

1. The end of the Zionist regime, a free autonomous Palestine, and solidarity with the Palestinian resistance.
2. The revolutionary end of the settler-colonialist regime of the United States.
3. Coordinating our efforts faction to faction to undermine the U.S. regime and their political-military proxies internationally to weaken the entire colonial system.

In establishing this base level of shared agreement the movement can then strive towards middle and longer term plans and end the confounding cycle of reactivity that has plagued us for so long. To be clear, we are calling for a reformation of the movement away from symbolism and

spectacle, so when calls are made to intensify the struggle, or when the exploited rise, we are not trapped in the activist fog that the movement itself has created. If we truly want freedom for Palestine this should be the first step. Indigenous and Black liberation and all internationalist revolutionary movements have always known this truth: the freedom of Palestinians which is intrinsically tied to all colonized people, will take nothing short of the dissolution of the U.S. empire, and our efforts must dignify the rebels in Gaza and the West Bank.¹⁴

Notes

1. Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 194-96.

2. Faisal Al-Assad, "Reflections on the 'Global Student Intifada,'" *Ebb Magazine* (January 11, 2025), <https://www.ebb-magazine.com/essays/reflections-on-the-global-student-intifada>.

3. The United States military's *Joint Publication 3-24: Counterinsurgency* defines "insurgency" as: "The organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region." Quoted in Martin Schoots-McAlpino, "Anatomy of a Counter-Insurgency," *Monthly Review Online* (blog post, July 3, 2020), <https://mronline.org/2020/07/03/anatomy-of-a-counter-insurgency/>.

4. In using the term "strategic thinking," i am working from a definition of "strategy" as a specific plan to achieve a set of goals in the existing overall situations. Relatedly, by "tactics" i am referring to the means by which operations are carried out. Strategic analysis determines what operations should be carried out, and in what framework. As T. Derbent describes, within revolutionary warfare, such analysis entails several components worth mentioning: 1) calculation of the risks involved, anticipating how, as the revolution progresses, there will be a qualitative escalation on the part of counter-revolution to be expected and planned for; 2) keeping operations in line with the politico-military goal and not reacting on the basis of "ego" or "prestige;" 3) always having prepared a fallback position; 4) resolution once the action is initiated; 5) being flexible about what methods/resources to use when faced with unforeseen developments (15). General principals of revolutionary strategy include: the primacy

of the political over military; primacy of people over things; primacy of interior over exterior; concern with its connection to the popular masses; regardless of the main form of struggle adopted, no form of struggle is neglected: mass struggle, guerrilla warfare, sabotage, legal struggles, psychological warfare, covert warfare, terrorism, and insurrectionary movements; the goal is the total destruction of the enemy's armed forces. An important takeaway from Derbent's pamphlet is that as soon as our analysis abandons its material basis as a concrete analysis of a concrete situation, connected to a political practice, then it becomes abstract theory.

4. T. Derbent, *Categories of Revolutionary Military Policy* (Montreal: *Kersplebedeb*, 2006).

5. Research and Destroy, "The Student Intifada," *Verso Books* (blog post, June 21, 2024), <https://www.versobooks.com/en/blogs/news/the-student-intifada>

6. Calli Adi, "The Great Gaza Ghetto Uprising," Field Notes (*Brooklyn Rail*, May 2024), <https://brooklynrail.org/2024/05/field-notes/The-Gaza-Ghetto-Uprising/>.

7. Bikrum Gill, "Two Logics of War: Liberation Against Genocide," *Ebb Magazine* (April 3, 2024), <https://www.ebb-magazine.com/essays/two-logics-of-war>.

8. Ibid.

9. Toufic Haddad, "Palestinian Resistance and the War in Gaza," interview, *New Politics*, Vol. 19 No. 4 (2024), https://newpol.org/issue_post/palestinian-resistance-and-the-war-in-gaza/.

10. "On Campus Action and the Unity of the Fields," *Resistance News Network* (Telegram post, April 29, 2024), archived at Abolition Media, <https://abolitionmedia.noblogs.org/7682/>.

11. Abdaljawad Omar, "Ceasefire in Lebanon, and the future of resistance to Israel," *Mondoweiss* (November 27, 2024), <https://mondoweiss.net/2024/11/ceasefire-in-lebanon-and-the-future-of->

resistance-to-israel/.

12. Faisal Al-Assad, “Reflections on the ‘Global Student Intifada” (2024).

13. Within Our Lifetime, “To Them, We Are All Outside Agitators: Encampments & Escalation” (2024), <https://wolpalestine.com/en/campments/>.

14. “The Last Intifada,” *Tinderbox: A Journal of Combative Anarchy* (2024). In line with this, the Revolutionary Intercommunalism Research Group writes:

Without enduring and flexible grassroots organizations, cultural movements, collective affinity groups, organizing hubs, social centers, or bookstores, mass struggles will continue to rely on [place-based resistance and improvised static bases of resistance like camps and occupations]. Those who hope to move the paradigm of strategic defense to strategic offense will have to develop 21st century organizational proposals that allow large numbers of angry people to coordinate resources without having to build an ad hoc “headquarters” amidst the front lines.

Cited in The Revolutionary Intercommunalism Research Group, “The Student Intifada and the Revolution to Come,” *Radar Journal*, no. 1 (2024), <https://radarjournal.online/pdfs/issue1.pdf>.

University
of California as
Infrastructure of
Empire

The University of California (U.C.) remains an infrastructure of central functional importance within the global apparatus of U.S. American-Israeli Zionist coalescence. My use of the term “infrastructure” here is intentional, analytically specific, and provides an important geographic scale for examining the form and content of the Palestine solidarity movement, as well as the concrete social context of the U.C. campus as a site/scene of (potential) revolutionary anti-colonial insurgency and exemplary action. The term “infrastructure,” as defined by Nick Mitchell, refers to “material systems, constructed, often under the auspices of state and capitalist planning and regulation, for the purposes of organizing the movement of people, ideas, and other entities over time and space,” which in turn comprise a “major part of the social machinery of domination and exploitation.”¹

From this notion of infrastructure, the dynamic set of *social* relationships that constitute the University of California system, its specific historical and institutional formations, and its role in the reproduction and maintenance of colonial-capitalism can be more easily mapped out. As Mitchell explains, several contested logics of social organization characterize the U.C. as an infrastructure in this sense, foremost among them being: dispossession, displacement, and accumulation.² Within this schema, the logic of *accumulation* can be identified as a precondition for the U.C.’s public mission of education and research, the concrete basis upon which this “mission” is made possible at scale. The scaling up of education and research is driven by the “convergence and

(re)articulation of different accumulation projects.”³

Accumulation of land, of populations, of capital, of labor, of knowledge are all elemental material interests and objectives that the U.C. as an infrastructural form facilitates. The educational mission of the University of California system establishes an institutional narrative that deflects (if not outright disavows) its imperial nature by “rewriting violence as a project of amelioration and uplift.”⁴ Nowhere is the imperialist-colonial character of the U.C. system more apparent than its status as a research arm for the U.S. Department of Defense and its integration into the Israeli zionist war machine.

On a quantitative level, the figures are striking. The Associated Press on May 15, 2024 reported that the University of California has approximately \$32 billion invested in weapons manufacturers and related industry, representing about one-fifth of the U.C.’s overall assets. Broken down further, the figures read:

\$3.3 billion in weapons manufacturing

\$12 billion in U.S. treasuries

\$163 million in Black Rock

\$2.1 billion in investments managed by Black Rock

\$6 billion in investment firm Blackstone

\$3.2 billion in other companies with ties to Israeli settler colonialism, including Coca-Cola and Disney⁵

Black Rock is an asset management firm that owns shares of companies linked to and supporting Israel, and Blackstone is a similar investment firm with ties to the zionist entity.

In a September 29, 2024 article published in *Jacobin* magazine, it is found that the University of California received \$333 million of Department of Defense research funding that was distributed among different labs across its campuses. Apparently, eighteen labs held active contracts at the time of the article's publication, and ten other labs recently had their contracts expire. Contracts and investments such as those listed above are straight-forward, concrete targets to organize around and mobilize against within campaigns for divestment. Disclosure remains a necessary objective.

Both the U.S. military's investment in research produced by U.C. scholars and the U.C.'s investment in various aspects of Israeli state formation and social planning represent *quantitative relations* between components of the transnational settler-colonial apparatus that link together the United States of Amerika and the Israeli Zionist entity. These are specific, analytically distinguishable relations that have a traceable history, their changes can be examined over a span of time, and so forth. There are numerous other dimensions of the apparatus of settler empire by which the University of California mediates as an infrastructure.

Borrowing from the terminology used by Fredy Perlman and Roger Gregoire, i would like to further differentiate between these "quantitative" relations between various components of the U.S.-Israel's imperial apparatus and the more fundamental *qualitative relations* that compose "the shell in which the quantitative changes take place."⁷ Distinguishing between the two kinds of relation brings clarity

to our reading practice, offering a conceptual tool of demarcation that will assist collective discussions over strategy and the prioritization of objectives/goals. Sitting with the difference between the “quantitative” and “qualitative” yields a creative tension that will enable us to anticipate concrete obstacles, to pinpoint antagonistic versus non-antagonistic contradictions, and to locate the most effective targets for offensive attack. It is from a recognition and analysis of these two differentiated levels of structural analysis that we can more properly comprehend each U.C. campus in its local specificity and political geography, and also establish a sense of the continuities among each campus as sites of struggle with similar attributes, functions, and technologies of control. What are the possibilities, precedents, and limit-points of the University of California campuses as a field of struggle for anticolonial insurgency and the global Palestine solidarity movement?

As Dylan Rodriguez writes, the University of California campuses are historically significant sites of counterinsurgency,

not only because the U.C. serves as an infrastructure for research and teaching agendas that support (and define) the cultural, juridical, social scientific, and technological formations of modern domestic and global policing/warfare, but also because it actively uses police power on its employees, students, and visitors in its daily operations through electronic and video surveillance, plain-clothes observation of demonstrations and political events, detention and arrest of suspected unauthorized campus visitors, militarized responses to protest mobilizations, and an armed

patrolling presence (etc.).⁸

As such, the U.C. campus is not only a producer and industrial conduit of U.S.-Israeli military engagement “somewhere else” but also presents us with a unique zone of asymmetrical combat *in-and-of itself*, with its own particular forms of specialized reaction and counterinsurgency that must be considered in relation to resistance, insurgency, and oppositional movement from local-to-global scales.

The University of California in its contemporary form, following a half-century of neoliberal austerity and financialization, “cannot imagine itself outside or in absence of policing,” writes Rodriguez.⁹ The U.C. campus is therefore itself a unique “counterinsurgent learning-environment” which organizes technologies of policing that allow for “university-sanctioned” forms of student organization *only*, and relentlessly attempts to enforce “disciplinary (criminalizing) parameters around autonomous forms of student community and mobilization, including mass gatherings, mutual aid (housing and food distribution), and off-campus political and cultural activities.”¹⁰ If we understand the U.C. campus as a geography of warfare, then how does our perception and interpretations of the spring 2024 intifada of the college campuses change? What orientation and approach to praxis can (and do) emerge from an explicit comprehension of the warfare condition? What kind of strategy and operations meet the task of sustaining a protracted revolutionary movement on the counterinsurgent campus? If the call is to “flood the gates,” what might we learn from the

operational art of Al-Aqsa Flood, for our own purposes in the campus struggle? Not simply as single action (or even a series of events) but as a *paradigm* for decolonization and abolition praxis?

Notes

1. Abigail Boggs, Nick Mitchell, Eli Meyerhoff, and Zach Schwartz-Weinstein, “Marx, Critique, and Abolition: Higher Education as Infrastructure,” *The Palgrave International Handbook of Marxism and Education*, ed. Richard Hall, Inny Accioly, and Krystian Szadkowski (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023), 510.

2. Ibid, 519.

3. Ibid, 524.

4. Abigail Boggs, Eli Meyerhoff, Nick Mitchell, and Zach Schwartz-Weinstein, “Abolitionist University Studies: An Invitation,” *Abolitionist University Studies* (2020), <https://abolition.university/invitation/>.

5. Sophie Austin, “University of California official says system has \$32 billion in holdings targeted by protesters” Associated Press (May 15, 2024), <https://apnews.com/article/california-regents-university-divestment-israel>. Michael Burke, “UC has \$32 billion in assets targeted by pro-Palestinian protesters, but no plans to divest” *Ed Source* (May 14, 2024), <https://edsource.org/2024/uc-has-32-billion-in-assets-targeted-by-pro-palestinian-protesters-but-no-plans-to-divest/>.

6. Derek Seidman, “Using Research to Uncover Campus Complicity in Genocide,” *Jacobin Magazine* (blog post, September 29, 2024), <https://jacobin.com/2024/09/power-research-universities-palestine-1968>

7. Fredy Perlman and Roger Gregoire, *Worker-Student Action Committees: France, May '68* (Olympia: Detritus Books, 2020 [1969]), 78.

8. Dylan Rodríguez, “Tyranny of the Task Force: Police Abolition and the Counterinsurgent Campus,” *Connecticut Law*

Review, vol. 53, no. 3 (2021), 506.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

Light the Way, Part I:
*The Gaza Solidarity
Encampment at U.C.
Berkeley*

I

On April 17, the Gaza solidarity encampment on Columbia University campus begins. The following day the encampment is raided by police. Over one hundred students are arrested. The encampment quickly rebuilds with the aid of massive community support, mostly from people who are not students nor campus workers. The quickness of efforts to rebuild the encampment is a crucial factor that enhances the capacity of this catalyst-action to boost morale and shift a sense of momentum back momentarily in favor of the Palestine solidarity movement. This act of defiance leads to Gaza solidarity encampments (and plans for encampments) to begin hatching across the country. On April 22, Cal Poly Humboldt students, alumni, and community members escalate this budding proliferation of campus insurgency—dubbed the “student intifada”—with the seizure and “occupation” of Siemens Hall. Approximately 45 people fight the police in a standoff that lasts six hours, forcing the cops to retreat and provoking the reaction of the school administration to lockdown the campus for several days. A video of the successful stand-off and retreat of the police goes viral online, with a clip of someone hitting a cop over the head with an office water jug becoming a signature “meme.” (*Bonk!*)

The very same day that Siemens Hall is taken in Humboldt, a coalition of students and non-student community support establish a Gaza solidarity encampment on the University of California, Berkeley campus. From my vantage

point as an individual, a printer, and member of a few collectives and affinity groups engaged in local projects and peoples' survival programs (as well as an anarchist with over a decade of experience organizing on college campuses), i begin preparing to join in support of the encampment wave the best i know how. While many comrades begin living and participating in the various local encampments from their inception, a close friend and i spend three days printing and assembling somewhere between two-to-three thousand zines, which, beginning on April 26, are delivered to, circulated among, and/or tabled at every Bay Area campus within the span of a week.¹ I begin tabling nightly at the U.C. Berkeley encampment, then full days in front of the camp by that first weekend. Comrades grab boxes of zines at a time, delivering the materials as far north as Humboldt and as far south as U.C.L.A.

My first day tabling at U.C. Berkeley, an anarchist participating in the encampment stops by the table and briefs me on the dynamics of the camp, its internal processes, and the different conflicts underway. They then proceed to pin up posters with a communique from the Humboldt encampment-occupation, which reads:

1. Out of the quads, into the buildings.

It's clear that in order for this crisis to develop further, student occupations should take buildings wherever possible. The first action of the police was

to instruct the occupiers to move to the quad. In saying this, they showed that we can wield the most power by occupying the spaces where classes are held and administrators have offices. In addition, buildings on campus are filled with everything you might need to construct barricades and protect an occupation.

2. If you build it, they will come

It only took a small number of students to occupy Siemens Hall. Don't be afraid to hold your ground. This movement is strong. Seemingly out of nowhere, hundreds if not thousands will come to support you. Importantly, outside crowds were able to impede the police by dividing their attention. The cops found themselves kettled and completely unsure where to turn. Someone set up a barbecue—free hot dogs fueled the crowd.

3. The pro-Palestinian movement must be a movement against the police

At every step, police will not hesitate to brutalize those who call for an end to the genocide in Palestine. In Gaza, Palestinians face the Israeli military; in the United States, we face the police. We must recognize that these forces are one and the same: they are all foot soldiers of empire.

4. Listen! organizer.

We need not wait for the permission of professional activists to set the terms of struggle. Student occupiers acted decisively to take the buildings without the backing of any established organizers. Collectively, we found we had the skills, experience, and creativity needed to carry out our action. While student organizations often recommend starting with a list of achievable demands and entering into endless negotiations with administrators, our occupation held one demand for six hours: that the police leave campus.

5. Be prepared.

Our town is somewhat sleepy. We underestimated the scale of police repression we would face. Four years after the George Floyd Uprising, we should heed its lessons. It is best to come to all demonstrations with goggles, gas masks, laser pointers, and shields. You never know what a casual sleepover might become.²

The distro table allows me to connect with the encampment at U.C. Berkeley, to feel out the temperature of activity, to greet comrades, friends, and acquaintances in attendance at different times, and to spread revolutionary ideas, which i learn quickly are at once present and absent among the campers, a source of internal contradictions certainly. Among this former set of campers, revolutionary ideas are largely book-learned and not based in much experience of action, while those

experienced with action are all quite young, mostly activated into such practice somewhere between 2017 and 2020, a majority of the camps most enthusiastic participants post-2020. For many people involved with the U.C.B. encampment, it seems like this is the boldest protest they have ever taken part in.

On April 29, on the East Coast, the Columbia University encampment wakes up to the administration threatening with a probable sweep by the police. A breakaway group of 46 people in the evening invade Hamilton Hall, smashing out the building's surveillance cameras, barricading themselves in, and renaming it "Hind's Hall." Rather than a "spontaneous" and unplanned action, this building takeover is "surgical and planned down to the minute" by a "tightly organized" cadre, as one comrade reports.³ The following night, April 30, police lock down the entire campus, sweeping the Gaza solidarity encampment with mass arrests, and violently raid Hind's Hall. Also occurring this same night, in the same city, is the sweep and mass arrest of an encampment-occupation formed at the City University of New York (C.U.N.Y.) with 28 people catching charges. (As of this writing, 8 people continue to face charges, 6 with felony charges.)

On the West Coast, April 30, two developments also threaten to reverse the momentum of the cycle of escalation and insurgency, back in the direction of settler-empire's counterrevolution. The first is the raid and removal of the Cal Poly Humboldt takeover, which at this point has seized multiple campus buildings, created barricades, internal processes

of horizontal decision-making and popular assemblies, and has even moved to build fortified structures to “occupy” high up in the trees. From my vantage point, the images and reports of these sweeps and raids is alarming, and mark a clear counter-escalation by the white supremacist state and civil society—a counter-escalation that, only days before, used chemical weapons on a group of mostly students and some faculty at Emory in Atlanta.

That same evening, in Southern California at University of California, Los Angeles (U.C.L.A.), a group of approximately one hundred zionists and pro-zionist christofascists (including former soldiers of the israeli military) attack the encampment established on campus. The attack lasts several hours. The group of grown men violently lash out at the students, taunting and beating on members of the encampment, while campus police and other local police agencies stand back for over four hours watching as if spectators at a sports game. This “petty pogrom,” as the Research and Destroy collective describes it, is live-streamed in its teeth-grinding entirety, adding a vicarious dimension for many of us paying close attention to the rapid changes underway in the terrain of this turbulent unfolding struggle.⁴ Sadly, yet understandably, for some this night would mark “the end of the spring of the Student Intifada.”⁵

From my vantage point, bearing witness to all of this sequence of repression signals the urgent need to move beyond the table and enter holistically into the day-to-day life, social reproduction, and defense of the camp i had grown so fond of.

II

On May 1, the morning after the petty pogrom witnessed around the world, i decide to spend all day involving myself in the daily social activities that maintain the encampment spread out across the front lawn of Sproul Hall in the heart of U.C. Berkeley campus. Not fully committed to the idea of living full-time in the camp just yet, i'm in awe of the abundance of food, medical and hygiene supplies, housing offered for participants in the form of available tents, as well as the internal processes that were clearly developed on-the-fly. The food deliveries and constant stream of donations is impressive, and a marker that—despite the shadow of disapproval cast by administrators and zionists—the Gaza solidarity encampment has drawn significant community approval and support (this is a point that i will return to elsewhere). Some of my close comrades and friends at this point—who for over a week have been engaged in a deadlock ideological battle with the self-anointed “leadership” of (neo)liberal student activists, grad students, and partially-committed non-student participants from the Bay Area activist Left—had grown frustrated by this point. Whereas, given the relative novelty of everything, i can't help but see potential in every relation built that tethered the encampment together. In my mind, there is too much collectivity and resources concentrated in the camp to abandon it, despite the troubling news i keep hearing in conversation with trusted comrades.

Additionally, the ever-present, looming threat of zionist

counter-demonstrators at this point is a force to contend with. The precedent set by the attack on the Gaza solidarity encampment at U.C.L.A. the night before, led me to acquire the opinion that non-student local anarchists should not abandon the space of the camp so quickly. After staying the entire night and a tense midnight standoff with a group of obnoxious zionists walking circles around the encampment, yelling anti-Black and anti-Arab slurs and making bomb threats, i decided that i would stay within the camp indefinitely, funneling my energy into militant community defense, barricade fortification, and political education from within the Refaat “Liberation Library” tent.⁶

My opinion and chosen roles notwithstanding, i agree with the internal criticism from many comrades and friends: there was a need to communicate these tensions and contradictions quickly, having been largely crowded out of the so-called “general assembly” meetings held once every evening. Apparently, similar frustrations from radicals across the Bay Area campuses led to the circulation of an important position paper, which, of course, much of the student/campus-worker bloc at U.C.B. either ignored, or, if challenged to move differently, seemed to not fully comprehend what the autonomist critique is astutely demystifying. As the May 3 statement, titled “Bay Area Autonomists’ Reflections on U.C.B., S.F.S.U., and U.S.F. Camps” reads:

we are numerous, we have no name, no body, no beginning,
and certainly no end. this is a call, a reflection, a promise that

we will find each other. we are the spark to an uncontainable fire.

in recent weeks, we've watched the new bay area (quite different from the one we grew up in) join the student movement to call for an end to the ongoing genocide in gaza. uc berkeley, san francisco state university, and university of san francisco are as of now the three local campuses where student-based encampments have launched...

...there have been numerous attempts for autonomy and escalation for gaza stifled by the university-sanctioned cowards and the alphabet boys. we understand the majority of our fellow students and fellow young people are learning this shit on the fly and taking their first steps toward fighting for liberation. however, we understand there is something of a power vacuum that opens when students look to those with experience. the "organizers" who step in during these moments tend to be paid actors, pouncing to push their liberal compliance on students who then see these teachings as gospel. we see this as a threat with a history, a context, and deeply infected roots.

we are in the bay area, with its own unparalleled history of black radical tradition, a centerpoint for the occupy movement, a bright fire burning from grief for oscar grant. the bay is the hub of countless counterinsurgent agencies—mostly non-profits—many of which began preying on our people in the aftermath of these organic moments in time. the united snakes government fears black rebellion, and all rebellions so inspired and shaped. as we witness the

attempted defanging of this critical moment in time yet again, we hope to impart this critical context on the readers. the united snakes has pushed the non-profit system, its affiliated counterinsurgent dogs, and the associated colonial tech “gold rush” into the bay area as a way of preemptively stamping out the specters of rebellion which haunt them. to the state agents reading this, both paid and unpaid, we have one word for you: boo!

we urge students, youth, all our beloved outside agitators to just say no. this movement does not belong to individuals. all moments in time belong not to one but to the numerous and the nameless. now is the time to pour gas on the fire and to push the fuck back... ⁷

This statement provides an important (if not decisive) criticism of the very real “power vacuum” that is a concrete feature of and obstacle in the U.C. Berkeley encampment, which is filled opportunistically by big-tent organizations and individuals marshaled by the non-profit industrial complex (NPIC) and professionalized activist Left. It also places collective responsibility in the hands of the Bay Area anarchist milieus for this vacuum to persist as such, by not setting strong enough terms of engagement to which all oppositional blocs must dialectically respond to, as well as the lack of exemplary actions taken to make concrete what those terms may be.

Meanwhile, on May 6, the Israeli Zionist entity begins its “Rafah Offensive” in the southernmost part of the Gaza strip, or what was to be the indiscriminate bombardment and

terrorizing of unarmed refugees, mostly women and children, living in tents and makeshift structures. By May 7, U.S. police have arrested more than 2,400 students and non-student protesters at more than 50 college and university campuses across 25 states since the first encampment began at Columbia. And convergences on university campuses in protest of the Israeli offensive and for divestment have been reported in Australia, Canada, Egypt, France, India, Mexico, the Netherlands, Ireland, and the U.K.

Notes

1. It's difficult to convey the scale of the zine production and distribution, but a ton of labor went into it. We printed continuously, nearly every other day for the span of two weeks. Everything was hand-assembled, folded, and stapled. About half of all zines printed went to the U.C. Berkeley camp, while the remainder was divided up to other campuses. The content of the zines is important to note, as it makes more clear the concrete impact of the distro work. The materials printed include: communiques, analysis pieces, and critiques of and produced by different campus insurgences including the Columbia and Humboldt camp-occupations. This brought a *sense of continuity* between all other encampments, and a chance to increase *clarity of purpose*. Along with this material was a healthy dose of literature on and published by the Palestinian resistance factions (Hamas, PFLP, Lion's Den, etc.) and some propaganda by the Palestinian anarchist group Fauda. We also printed a substantial amount of instructional "101" literature on tactics, tools, and relevant practical needs, such as "How to build a barricade" and primers on "building occupation" methods.

2. "Lessons on Taking the School: A communiqué from the occupation of Siemens Hall," *Crimethinc* (zine, April 23, 2024), <https://crimethinc.com/2024/04/23/report-from-within-the-cal-poly-humboldt-occupation-the-occupation-of-siemens-hall>.

3. "No Peace," Unity of Fields (blog post, October 28, 2024), archived at the Wayback Machine, <https://web.archive.org/web/20241101163935/http://unityoffields.org/?p=1161>.

4. Research and Destroy, "The Student Intifada," *Verso Books* (blog post, June 21, 2024), <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/news/the-student-intifada>. The research collective writes of the Zionist

mob violence as a crystallization of “the largely explicit and generally understood alignment of the universities at a national level with forces of both formal and informal violence... The petty pogrom tracks recent political developments in the U.S. in which informal actors, with tacit and unsayable authorization from the state...exact often-fatal violence amid anti-state upheavals...with impunity.”

5. “No Peace,” Unity of Fields (2024).

6. Upon entering the camp as a permanent resident-participant, several homies briefed me on the internal struggle unfolding within the camp. My first few days there is a contentious struggle over ideas in so-called general assembly meetings that were held once every evening at the end of the day. These evening meetings were a place where radicals hypothetically should have been able to speak our grievances over the direction and purpose of the encampment’s organization and decision-making structure, as well as challenge the “negotiations”-based mindset of the student organizers. Sadly, the evening meetings became a primary source of exhaustion and stress (possibly even a distraction) for radicals who were frequently shot-down and condescended to by students with less experience but clearly more decision-making power. Members of big-tent “leftist organizations” who saw their role as deferent supporters reinforced the sanctity of student choices. Over time, this power play turned off many of the camp’s radical participants, who increasingly split off to plan other activities. On a whole, radicals gradually spent less time involved in camp activities, events, and aboveground decision-making. This conflict felt unresolvable often, and many non-student radicals abandoned the encampment-making process entirely. The few of us who remained continued to have our ideas rejected, myself included, by camp liberals. Yet we stuck around, deciding to act on our own initiatives without proposing agenda items to the larger assembly. Eventually, the evening GA’s stopped and instead broke into

smaller meetings organized by sections of the camp where our tents were located.

7. “Bay Area Autonomists Reflections on UCB, SFSU, and USF Camps,” some anarchists (*Indybay*: May 3, 2024), <https://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2024/05/03/18865767.php>.

Site & Scene
of the University
Campus

The modern university campus is certainly a localized and analytically identifiable geographic unit or scale of analysis. However, the discursive dimensions of its territorial presence and the ideological nature of its alleged “border” remains an undertheorized aspect of infrastructural analysis. A review of last spring teaches us that one of the tasks for a revolutionary theory, among many others, is to demystify the *reified* site (and scene) of the “university campus,” a task that was unevenly realized in practice by some participants of the intifada, although not by most. “Reification” is a Marxist concept that describes when a “relation between people takes on the character of a thing and thus acquires a ‘phantom objectivity,’” or an appearance of “autonomy that seems so strictly relational and all-embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature: *the relation between people*.”¹ The modern university is a complex set of relations between people that, under capitalism, takes on the appearance of an infrastructure that exists external to and autonomous from the labor-/power of people who are, in fact, the only concrete source of its historical formation and social reproduction.

The reified myth-image of the U.S. university *campus*, in this context, is also taken to be a discrete, self-enclosed space, which is isolated from its surroundings. The “campus” is thus widely perceived as a world relatively separate from an “outside” community and from the displacement it creates. Its fantastic “interior” is a provincialized space, in ways similar to the analogy that Fred Moten and Stefano Harvey discuss as the settler garrison-fortress and “the surround.”² Rodriguez’s

theorization of the reified site/scene of the U.S. prison is useful as a parallel figure for elaborating on the concept of “reification” and its application to an infrastructure like the university campus.³ Just like the university, the prison is a “capillary site.” This means it is not simply an infrastructure that facilitates a particular, peculiar circulation and management of bodies but also the “production and movement of power,” exerting a domination that reaches “significantly beyond its localized setting.”⁴ Drawing on Lukács’s notion of “reification” defined above, Rodriguez carefully demonstrates how the common-sense conception of the free world’s (non)relation to the imprisoned world is as a “thing” or a “natural feature of the social landscape, rather than an expansive and mind-boggling technology of domination and subjection.”⁵ This common sense evinces prisons as somewhere allegedly “outside” of civil society, somewhere else, when in actual fact these modes of human capture “surround, enmesh, and articulate with the normative everyday of the social formation.”⁶

In similar terms, we might best think of the site/scene of the university campus as both a physical geographic zone that mediates social relations while simultaneously producing and reproducing a myth-image of itself as an atomized institution in ways that conceal the dynamic set of relationships which directly constitute its corporate institutionality and social-historical form. The campus is a continuous discursive-political production. Internally concealed by its myth-image is the class character of students and student-workers as surplus populations; multiple hierarchized layers of precarious labor;

and a chain of administrative command/authority that governs through policing and criminalization primarily. The scale and scope of the university's situatedness as an infrastructure in the machinery of state power and capital is also relatively mystified—one is seduced into a common-sense conception of the campus as a “place of education” rather than accumulation and warfare. Unlike the myth-image of the prison as a domain that remains outside or beyond the pale of civil society, the university campus is envisaged as located squarely within civil society, if not a beacon of U.S. Amerikan civilizational ascendancy itself.

To demystify the common-sense conception of the university campus as a discrete atomized institution reveals the complex set of relationships between people as classes and sectors of the U.S. settler empire in ways that profoundly alter traditional perspectives of the campus as a “field” of struggle and zone of combat in the revolutionary historical process of decolonization and abolition. One of the most significant consequences that such shifts in perspective and interpretation yield is a more accurate description of the terrain of campus-based insurgency as it actually exists, allowing for greater interrogation of the so-called “student” intifada's content and the asymmetries that define the relationality between various hegemonic and counter-hegemonic blocs involved in this historical struggle in motion.

The revolutionary theory put forward by some of the more militant tendencies of the campus revolt last spring proposes that the “student activist” is a “transitional figure” whose actions should ideally help to “broaden the movement

for Palestine liberation beyond itself from the campus as a battlefield, generalizing into a struggle that engages with the material contradictions and antagonisms of society at large.”⁷ Yet not only did the “movement” fail to broaden beyond the reified site of the campus, but the social-historical subject of the “student activist” quite often in fact became a concrete obstacle to the generalization of antagonism. An attempt to flood the gates would ensue, following the initial encampment wave. Unfortunately, it will not be enough. Clearly the intifada last spring is not France 1968, nor is it a second iteration of the “Occupy Movement,” and the class character of the insurgency differs drastically from the composition of the most revolutionary segments of the 2020 George Floyd Rebellion.

Without a doubt, the university campus will continue to be a field of struggle, yet a reassessment of what this means is clearly in order. We must be willing to see “the general models behind the specific sequence of events.” We must be honest enough to each other—and to ourselves—to analyze “the content behind the forms.”⁸

To many it was clear that steps into the unknown had been taken, that the line in fact had been crosses, that the sea in fact had begun to flow over the dam... [W]hat they had not expected, what they only slowly and painfully accepted, was that the sea itself should begin to ebb. They accepted the retreat with pain because they knew, as they watched the water recede, that as high as the tide had risen, as close as the flood had come, the sea would have to gather much more force, the tide would have to rise far higher, merely to reach

the level of the dam once again... [T]he same cracks will not be found twice in the same dam; they will have been repaired, and the entire dam will have been raised. A future tidal wave will find new cracks in the dam, cracks which are invisible to the insurgents as to the defenders of the old order...

[T]he task of revolutionary theory is to analyze the sea itself; the task of revolutionary action is to create a new tidal wave.⁹

It would be easy to be complacent or disillusioned...but we have obligations to the martyrs, to the prisoners, and to all who fight to end this.¹⁰

Notes

1. Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1968), emphasis added.

2. Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2013).

“In films....the settler is portrayed as surrounded by ‘native,’ inverting....the role of aggressor so that colonialism is made to look like self-defense. Indeed aggression and self-defense are reversed in these movies, but the image of a surrounded fort is not false. Instead, the false image is what emerges when a critique of militarized life is predicated on the forgetting of the life that surrounds it. The fort really was surrounded, is besieged by what still surrounds it, the common beyond and beneath—before and before—enclosure. The surround antagonises the laager in its midst while disturbing the facts on the ground with some outlaw planning... Our task is the self-defense of the surround in the face of repeated, targeted dispossessions through the settler’s armed incursion” [emphasis added], 17.

3. Dylan Rodríguez, *Forced Passages: Imprisoned Radical Intellectuals and the U.S. Prison Regime* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Cited in Faisal Al-Assad, “Reflections on the Global Student Intifada,” *Ebb Magazine* (January 11, 2025), <https://www.>

ebb-magazine.com/essays/reflections-on-the-global-student-intifada.
original source unknown.

8. Fredy Perlman and Roger Gregoire, *Worker-Student Action Committees: France, May '68* (Olympia: Detritus Books, 2020 [1969]), 31.

9. Ibid., 33-34.

10. Palestinian Youth Movement, "One Year," *The New Inquiry* (October 7, 2024), <https://thenewinquiry.com/one-year/>.

Forms of Struggle

The momentary escalations of the Palestinian solidarity movement on U.S. university and college campuses consisted of several different “forms” of struggle. The most prevalent forms were: protest encampments, expropriation, and sabotage.

The encampment model became the most generalized form, proliferating in seemingly memetic fashion across approximately 140 campuses. This is due to several factors, foremost is that it is a minimally combative tactic, with relatively low risk involved. Its popularity spread widely and rapidly. Regardless of its non-combative character, a majority of these camps were subjected to harsh police repression, as well as harassment (and even attacks) by zionists and other reactionaries. There has been a great deal of affirmative and critical analyses published over the past year that reflects on the tactic.¹ As a participant in the Gaza solidarity encampment at U.C. Berkeley and west coast articulations of the spring intifada more generally, my perspective is undoubtedly influenced by such experience. The Revolutionary Intercommunalism Research Group gives us a helpful summary of this dimension of the Gaza solidarity protests on university campuses overall:

The prospect of the Columbia encampment spreading to schools across the country formed the horizon of activity. All debates on tactics took place within this strategic possibility and limit. Campus protests sought to defend the “Liberated Zones” from police and Zionists, while simultaneously turning the camps into centers of mutual aid, group deliberation, political education, and chanting. It is not clear why, since the “negotiations” between student bureaucrats and

university authorities were a gross and demoralizing ruse, but the protestors seemed to believe that establishing encampments would give them leverage against their respective authorities on the question of support for the Israeli war against Gaza. Students and their allies thought that universities form a central pillar of the Israeli war in Palestine, or at least attempted to foment widespread resistance under that premise.

The political meaning of the protests was clarified by the clashes between protestors and police; not only by the slogans, statements, and demands produced by the students. Everywhere that protestors failed to engage in active or passive physical confrontation with the police, we can say nothing really happened, even where protestors had developed coherent and interesting statements and goals. The real question posed by the events focuses us on the role of American civilians in opposing US imperialism in Palestine. What could they do, and what would they risk to do so?

Most encampments were short lived, facing police attacks and violence in an hour or less. This had a serious effect on what protestors could do or imagine, and locked them inside a framework of defense. As squads of helmeted riot police ambushed camps in the early morning hours with clubs and mace, the Gaza Solidarity Encampments defended themselves in almost every way an unarmed movement could. Most camps opted for passive resistance to arrest by linking arms and constructing barricades. Some were more active: they shoved the police, threw objects, or blocked the cruisers taking arrestees to jail.²

When encampments took militant community defense more seriously, or what the Research Group above refers to as “active” resistance to the police, they in some instances were able to stay functioning for two or even three weeks. Some were able to regroup after attacks and disbandment by the police. The encampment wave had been based on a paradigm of *strategic defense*. Yet as the Research Group soberly argues: “as long as the police are permitted to retreat,” they will eventually surround and destroy [unarmed] place-based resistance.”³ Here they point out how “static bases of resistance” over the last ten years have always led insurgencies to “surrender the initiative” to the police, who have all the time they need to “plan a counter-attack, to be carried out when it most suits them.”⁴

On a few campuses however the Gaza solidarity encampments served as a launch point for actual escalation, which most often took on some form of *expropriation* action. Most often, this type of initiative consisted of the “occupation” of campus buildings, planned and executed by small breakaway groups. Cal Poly Humboldt and Columbia University are the first sites this tactic was advanced at, followed by takeovers of varying degrees of “success” on only a few more campuses, not many, including City University of New York (C.U.N.Y.) and U.C. Berkeley. Although it is hardly ever mentioned, one of the more inspiring building takeovers was at C.S.U. Los Angeles, where people autonomously converged one night on the campus to occupy, barricade, trash, and loot a major administrative building. After ransacking the building, the large group dispersed instead of attempting to hold down the

expropriated building. This was strategically smart and tactically innovative.

Another principle form of struggle and creative self-activity that was organically expressed in the CSU Los Angeles building takeover is *sabotage*, through deliberate property destruction. Two unique examples of sabotage as a form of struggle in the intifada last spring are at Portland State University and U.C. Berkeley. In Portland, a black bloc march tore through a commercial district near campus, smashing up property of businesses whose interests align with the zionist entity, staying on the move to evade capture. The march ended on campus, where the existing encampment had already seized the library. The library was ransacked. On May Day at Portland State, a black bloc march also smashed out every window of the campus police station.

Far too often, when a new protest “movement moment” arises in the contemporary U.S.-context, there is a viral effect and *mimetic replication* of fetishized tactical forms throughout its course of development: certain tactics that prove successful in one environment are attempted by others in a different location, often without consideration for that tactic’s relation to strategy or mindfulness of geographic and contextual specificity. For example, maybe the encampment model is not the best suited for particular campuses but it is for others? Maybe the “form” of struggle is not what needed to be replicated universally as the spring wave began to rise but only its momentum and spirit of purpose (i.e. the conflictuality, refusal, and militant anti-zionist principles)? If each campus took into

account the specifics of place, local demography, and institutional culture with greater consideration, the generalization of the intifada may have been far more substantial without the pressures of fitting into the mold of a pre-determined form. This of course is only speculation, but here we begin to see the problem of “tacticism”: when a movement or insurgency disproportionately focuses on tactical questions at the expense of all the other necessities that struggles over social power require.

Relatedly, the news cycle of our epoch—both “mainstream” and normative-algorithmic social media—deeply reinforces this compulsory tactical mimeticism between and across different geographies. What begins as an action uniquely intended for its particular local circumstances unexpectedly and rapidly becomes an “object” of the news cycle, celebrated or ridiculed, part of the commodity spectacle no less: its formal components duplicated without critical contemplation of its relation to content or context. Where escalation was able to materialize, the fetishization of form is less prevalent, and seems to correlate with the capacity of specific campus protests to generalize. “[S]truggles spread insofar as they give people a way to channel their frustrations into meaningful collective action, to use the skills and relationships they already have, and to participate in meaningful historic events.”⁵ And central to this process of invitation is ensuring that our strategic thought is based in a concrete analysis of concrete situations. “Tactics cannot be judged in abstraction, because there is no abstract balance power.”⁶ Unfortunately, in most Gaza solidarity

encampments, the greater the escalation on campus the less number of people seem to participate or in some instances even support the escalatory actions taken at great risk. This is not desirable, as those taking on increased militancy become isolated and atomized and thus more easily targeted for repression, as was the case in the Bay Area at U.C. Berkeley.

One form of struggle that we have not discussed yet, but would emerge briefly against the University of California, is the “political strike,” which U.A.W. graduate workers on a few U.C. campuses organized. Unfortunately, the strike was effectively killed by a court order. A helpful perspective on this attempted strike and the broader university Gaza solidarity movement is offered by the Research and Destroy collective:

The strike [as a form of struggle], once and for good reason understood as potentially part of a revolutionary sequence, has largely established itself in the U.S. as a limited means towards a limited ends, specific demands. The return of the political strike to the precincts of the UAW, however, portends something more. As the institutions of empire have had progressively less surplus, less wiggle room, fewer fucks to give and fewer reforms to offer, winning these in any serious way has required ever more intensity. If the path to revolution is no longer to be found via accruing reforms, then the reforms themselves, if that is one’s goal, nevertheless require something like revolutionary intensity. It may not be too long before one must blow up a pipeline just to win socdem policy changes.

This sets in part the measure of the current movement. The coordination of strike and encampment, if it can be developed, would be a significant and heartening development. Alongside the steadfastness of the student protests, the realization of the strike must be attributed, in large part, to the work that comrades have done to deepen and radicalize the UAW at the UC. [The 2022-23] strike may have been beaten by the university....but the graduate students remain mobilized, organized at the department level. At the same time, however, these [2024] strikes present at least two problems.

The first is that they accede to a legalistic terrain, requiring the negotiation of labor law to find basis for a political strike despite a contract with a No Strike proviso... This would be less of an issue had not the strike itself, in the context of demobilized encampments and exhausted academic years nationwide, become the leading orientation for the movement, offering leverage elsewhere absent. Consequently, the fate of campus solidarity with Gaza was handed to the courts—a strange evolution from its origins in defiant illegalism, or at least principled indifference to official policies...

The second problem is the extent to which such strikes risk re-institutionalizing the problems of militancy at another level. During the 2022-23 UC strike, the necessary focus of rank-and-file formations on internal cohesion toward pushing past the grade deadline, where their core leverage lay, left other factions on campus (particularly undergraduates) with little sense of how they might involve themselves and

help push things forward. The connection between this strike, however, and the broader university Gaza solidarity movement, provides the opportunity for such divisions to be transcended, though such efforts will likely need to be coordinated at a distance from union leadership—who might worry that elements not directly under their control will weaken their position at the bargaining table. The “stand-up” strike model is, in this case, no more a structure of escalation than it is a structure for forestalling the same, holding power in reserve... In truth, the university will likely be willing to yield anything of significance only once it’s clear that the strike risks turning into a wider campus conflagration, with lecturers and tenure-track faculty joining the strike and students engaging in autonomous action to liberate campuses. It is then that the university will truly want to avail itself of the union’s disciplinary power.

These problems have complimentary solutions. The encampments, bearers of the initial spirit under the slogan “Escalate for Gaza,” will need to push the union to overspill the constraints of policy and legalism. The strikers must by the same token overcome boundaries imposed by the division of labor at the UC, and particularly the divisions among students, academic workers, faculty, staff, and so-called outside agitators. This can sometimes be difficult given the position in which graduate student workers find themselves with regard to undergraduates, for whom their real concern is the basis of solidarity but no less a route to paternalism. Unionized educators may feel compunctions about violently blockading campus and confronting some of their own students who are not in solidarity, but students themselves

need have no such scruples. Take the buildings, take the campus, then give them away to the broader movement, so that it can organize for work in other areas, such as direct action against defense contractors. Come back after summer and take them again. The fight for the liberation of Palestine will be long.⁷

Notes

1. Dylan J, Frances Fuku, and N. S. Ríos, “Student Intifada: Reflections from the 2024 Palestine Solidarity Encampment Movement,” *Unity and Struggle* (September 11, 2024), <https://www.unityandstruggle.org/2024/09/student-intifada/>.

2. The Revolutionary Intercommunalism Research Group, “The Student Intifada and the Revolution to Come,” *Radar Journal*, no. 1 (2024), <https://radarjournal.online/pdfs/issue1.pdf>.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Research and Destroy, “The Student Intifada,” *Verso Books* (blog post, June 21, 2024), <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/news/the-student-intifada>.

Light the Way, Part II:
The Campus Flood

What began as a purely defensive-retaliatory action, turned into the realization of an experimental whirlwind offensive cut short. Was it not for one careless mistake early on in the endeavor, i may very well still be in the street instead of this miserable jail. I would say collectively across the Bay Area anarchist milieus we were unsuccessful in our autonomous initiatives to redeem the trajectory of pro-Palestine, anti-genocide insurgency against U.C. Berkeley after its defanging by the trained forces of state violence and the myth of student leadership, which both in turn served to discipline the various sectors that met in the encampment last spring toward a premature collapse, i.e. capitulation to an administration who did not even concede the minimal demand of “disclosure.”

From frustrations within the encampment developed various different trajectories of activity. On the one hand, early on a breakaway grouping of anarchist and anti-state communist students and non-campus worker participants from the area remained connected to the camp but gradually phased out involvement to prevent exhaustion. This became the catalyst group for the “Hind’s House” building takeover and “occupation.” On the other hand, there is what might be called an autonomous and decentralized ensemble of radical affinity groups and individuals, some who frequented the camp but did not live within it daily, and others who avoided the high visibility of camping altogether. This latter segment advocated for not only taking campus buildings but the compliment of sabotage and attack, and also the spreading of revolt beyond the campus. Whether or not there is overlap between these

developing tendencies is beyond my knowledge. The encampment wave and (unfinished) campus flood against U.C. Berkeley is the production of hundreds of peoples' combined efforts, to the extent that one grouplet could offer criticism of a problem in a project that their friend is a part of, while that same friend might also simultaneously be involved in a different project that already embodies the proposed suggestions offered by the critique. After my abrupt departure from the U.C. Berkeley encampment, i would increasingly place my energy and activities with the second segment. Expropriation *and* sabotage. Solidarity *as attack* would (to my aspirations) be a clarion call. Or at least some of us had hoped.

One exemplary action, advocating this second segment-tendency, took place a night before the closure of the U.C.B. encampment, at a location off-campus of great significance. In downtown Oakland, an autonomous group of anticolonial anarchists and communists smashed out seven front windows of the University of California Office of the President, spray painting the entire street-facing facade with red paint and unleashing 500 cockroaches and twice-as-much paint into the interior of the office. Under the name "sacred black and red," the militants shared a communique calling for greater escalation and a multi-sited approach to struggle against the U.C. system for Palestinian liberation. The approach advocated for by sacred black and red is to expand the strategy of the "movement" in motion to prioritize a long-term focus on resource expropriation and sabotage of the University of California irreparably. An excerpt from the communique reads:

As anti-colonial anarchists and communists we offer this act of material and spiritual solidarity with the hopes of shattering the illusion that resistance is limited to a single site.

As Moten says “THE ONLY POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIP TO THE UNIVERSITY TODAY IS A CRIMINAL ONE.” The University’s true fascist form has been put on full display, and hiding behind hollow progressive ideals is no longer an option for the dead-eyed desk killers... [T]he University of California is nothing more than a settler colonial project....their police are protecting the gates of the colony, where knowledge is produced and captured by the State to only dig its claws deeper into the flesh of Indigenous lands here and abroad... Speaking only to the UC’s material connection to the Zionist entity obfuscates the extent of the political, theoretical, and cultural entanglements between the U.C. and the Israeli State. The University does not simply fund Israel, *it creates Israel*, and launches this white-colony into the post-modern Empire. What does divestment mean when the very essence and foundation of the institution is a fascist regime? Where does Zionism begin and end in the University of California? Is divestment an oxymoron? *The UC must be abolished...*

Some of the encampments have established themselves as outposts of nonprofits and NGO’s loyal to funders; moved by professional partnerships and personal brands. Revolutionary struggle and its legacies have been co-opted, deradicalized, and professionalized through identity-driven liberal pedagogies. By teaching a revisionist history that renders liberation movements compatible with capitalism, university-

deputized counterinsurgents erase and demonize militant forms of struggle while smugly promoting an inert philosophy of nonviolence and respectability. This is one of the many reasons why, although divestment is a valid and tangible baseline demand, our long-term focus should not be on reforming and reaffirming these institutions, but rather on *resource expropriation* and *fucking them up irreparably*.

Across the Bay Area university encampments and police-liaisoned street mobilizations, escalation is consistently policed by weaponized liberal anti-oppression politics or crushed entirely by the fear of risk. Perpetual hand-wringing over what could happen obscures what can be achieved. Attempting to shape a militant movement into something that will never have to contend with repression is to abandon the pursuit of revolutionary ends. The attack on UCOP began with an ask: *how can political analysis be articulated through attack?* An effective operation begins with the needs of the struggle, the goals of the cadre, and its limitations. Threat assessments should remain realistic and specific to the actions being carried out. Within the American empire, what is solidarity with the Mujahideen of Palestine and militant student movements if not shapeshifting into a political fighting force?

We join the chorus calling for escalation in the imperial core: escalate, escalate, escalate! This is our historical and spiritual duty. To not hold this truth is to give up and accept defeat, hoping someone else will do what it takes to disrupt the flow of capital into the settler-colonial project. We must bring the war home...¹

A day later, the U.C. Berkeley encampment publicly announced that it would be disbanding, and the day following the camp's closing a building on U.C.B. campus was taken over by a group of around 60 people and renamed "Hind's House." As i was not a participant in the building occupation, i cannot speak on the internal dynamics that characterized the group that seized "Hind's House." Yet i am very much aware of the external factors, which, beyond police repression, can largely be described as an abandonment by the local Palestine solidarity movement and much of the Bay Area left/anarchist milieu. A widely circulated statement, published in the last week of May read:

We heard your call and are with you. We heard your call the day Hind's House was occupied, and were with you that night. As the police moved in we were gathering friends to defend the house, because that is what you had asked for. We are still gathered...

Hind's House, Wateen's House, Ahmed's House, Mahmoud's House, Oscar's House, Banko's House, Aaron's House....is not in our minds, an end, or the end. Actions open new possibilities. There are many rooms to make...

You said everything that needs to be said about activist counterinsurgency in the Bay. We have no words for them, as you said, they do the fascist's work for them, treat them as such. We do have words for some people we'd call friends, or comrades—

Do not get stuck in your own projects and small circles, do not fail to act together. We are stronger when we do. There was an opportunity to defend the house the night it was taken, all together. Where exactly were some of you? An opportunity for escalation, for new possibilities. And, we were asked to come.

We think the house got rolled on so quickly because there were not enough people initially there to defend it. The cops saw that and moved. We watched them as they scoped the sich [sic] out.

We think we can both act all together in important moments and remain committed to the everyday projects we admire you all in so much. Capacity, recovery, strategically moving is one thing, hesitation and comfort is another.

There is nothing to wait for in this moment, there has never been anything to wait for. Again, we hope to find you all in action.

in love,
some fucking people²

At this point, speaking for myself at least, there seemed to be two paths (maybe it's best to call them *perspectives*) that emerge following this escalatory sequence of events, alluded to in both the May 14 communique and the public reflection on repression of the Hind's House occupation. The first path-perspective is expropriation: whether through building

takeovers or theft, within this conjuncture anything and everything felt possible. But the combination of frenetic urgency, attrition, and frustration made it increasingly difficult to gain a sense of clarity around how to act and what measures felt most reproducible, the most generalizable.

From my vantage point, increasingly isolated by repression (as other militant-minded people were, too), a second path, that of *sabotaging campus infrastructure*, seemed more viable and within reach. And following the zionist entity's gratuitous assault on refugees in Rafah just weeks prior (and the double-to-triple digit killings with no end in sight), it felt like the short-term necessity of escalating action to the extreme (as a method of pressuring both the U.C. system and U.S. government to at minimum at least withdraw support for the accelerating genocide-war) was the only option available. In such conditions, within the vortex of this atmosphere of urgency and frustration, it became difficult to keep any "long-range" considerations in focus. What was unfolding is intolerable, and the repetitious violence unbearable. Burning down the university of settler empire became the priority for me. *How* to do so and *when* would be a question that i obsessed over and attempted to organize around: to create a crisis of loss for the University of California. Exemplary action was required.

The weekend following the repression of Hind's House, a supply building on U.C. Berkeley campus was "smash-and-grab"-style raided by an unknown group, who reportedly liberated a couple thousand dollars worth of equipment and

materials. With news of this successful action circulating and the experience of Hind's House, it now seemed as if expropriation had finally completed the shift from an "idea" or a "concept" into a concrete exemplary form of struggle in which the local milieu can turn to. Practically possible.

Meanwhile, the following night, students and many others involved in the Gaza solidarity encampment on U.C. Santa Cruz campus (only an hour's drive from U.C.B.) were mass arrested after a daring stand-off with the police which lasted into the early morning hours. To retaliate, following the "unity of fields" strategy of improvisational and adaptive decentralized action in solidarity with other geographies of the campus movement, i decided to launch a retaliatory attack against University of California police infrastructure. Around 4 a.m., June 1, i firebombed a U.C. police car that was parked in front of the campus police station and published a communique statement explaining why. The statement included a photograph of the charred vehicle, taken the afternoon following the attack. An excerpt of the statement reads:

This act was done in retaliation against U.C.P.D., for their attack on students yesterday on a different campus and to retaliate against the University of California for its support for the zionist israel settler colony. More specifically—this attempt to torch a police car in front of the university was in solidarity with our Palestinian siblings assaulted by the zionist state in Rafah. It comes from a place of love for Palestine and love for revolution and liberation of all oppressed people.³

Not only an attack responding to the mass arrest of the U.C.S.C. camp, the attack was also in solidarity with the U.C.L.A. encampment, which continued to sustain itself in spite of a ruthless, paid opposition, and whose participants were brutalized and abused by street zionists with U.C.P.D.'s implicit endorsement a month prior. And less acknowledged in the communique is an explicit message of revolutionary love to the resistance in Gaza, the West Bank, South Lebanon, and Yemen, as well as a blessing sent to all Palestinians. The statement goes on to read:

This act was in solidarity with the students attacked by the fascist police state at uc santa cruz. In solidarity with the students attacked by zionist street collaborators at uc los angeles. In solidarity with the uc berkeley students seizing the time and taking back Hind's hall.

In solidarity with the resistance axis for Palestinian life, liberation, and total decolonization of the zionist occupied lands. For an end to the genocide of our beloved Palestine, and an end to the anti-Black and colonial genocide destroying our loved ones here.

A life worth living is a life in solidarity with our Palestinian siblings, who face down the settler's scope with every moment, every day. A life worth living is a life in solidarity with the Ohlone people. We continue to return the land with this offering. A life worth living is in solidarity with our Black and Brown siblings continuously surviving and thriving in the face of genocidal state violence here in the

Bay Area.

Blessed is the flame that burns down the settler-plantation.

Blessed are the rockets that will free thousands of prisoners held captive by the zionist entity and US colonizer police state.

May the spirit of Revolutionary anti-colonialism unearth the truth from beneath these occupied lands.

Our heart will forever be tied to the fate of Rafah
Knife to the throat of Zionism
Death to Amerikkka
Glory to the martyrs⁴

Yes, as you may assume correctly, this action was an expression of madness and rage against an intolerable condition. But this act, its planning, and execution was in fact methodical, calculated, and i was calm and focused when carrying out the mission. I have no regrets besides returning to the scene to snap a photo the next day, assuming that i could blend into the pedestrian traffic, because *i did not*. And it would be this moment that made me a “suspect.” Otherwise, there would be zero trace or reason to identify me as a suspect. Unfortunately, i did not “blend in” and now must live with the consequences. May this be a lesson to others: to return to the scene of a sabotage action, even days later, even in a crowded street among hundreds of people, returning to the scene to take a photograph

of the aftermath for publishing along with your communique is not worth the risk. If you need such an image, ask a friend completely separate from your affinity group or circle responsible for the action. Or if you are alone in the act, just live without the photo. The action *still* happened. Find a different means of corroborating your responsibility claim.

A number of retaliation actions were carried out against U.C.B. property over the span of two weeks, all in response to police and administrative repression of pro-Palestine, anti-genocide encampments. For the sake of self-criticism, most of these actions failed to materialize the level of destruction intended. For instance, an incredibly dry grassy open-space on the north end of campus was set ablaze using gasoline and fire-starter, yet the flames extinguished before it could spread to the surrounding trees. The following week, an (empty) building on the same end of campus was targeted, and the building's facade was arsoned in retaliation for the aggressive police raid of the U.C.L.A. Gaza solidarity encampment and the reported injury of students. Yet this action was nearly foiled by a security guard crew who unexpectedly stuck around in the area. The initial objective was to smash the window and set the entire building on fire, and the original (but aborted) plan was to torch the fully-formed wooden structure of an (empty) new student housing complex still under construction around the corner. Nevertheless, an action did still take place, but the goal was initially to incur big losses for U.C.B. It ended up being more of a symbolic action, which is fine. A communique was published explaining the arson:

UCLA STUDENTS WERE ATTACKED LAST NIGHT
SO WE RETALIATED WITH A FIREBOMB ON UCB
CAMPUS

NOT SURE WHAT BUILDING IT EVEN WAS.
HONESTLY DON'T REALLY CARE.

EVERY SINGLE BUILDING ON THE UC
BERKELEY CAMPUS DESERVES TO BE
INCINERATED FOLLOWING THE UC SYSTEM'S
TREATMENT OF STUDENT PROTESTORS. LAST
NIGHT THEY ATTACKED A YOUNG WOMAN
STUDENT WHO WAS SPEAKING HER MIND ON A
MEGAPHONE. SO WE UNLOADED A FIREBOMB
ON THE SIDE OF A CAMPUS BUILDING. THE
FLAME WAS BIG AND SPREAD ACROSS THE
TREES AND BUSHES ON THE SIDE OF A
BUILDING

LONG LIVE THE STUDENT INTIFADA FOR
PALESTINE

STOP THE GENOCIDE NOW

UC SYSTEM MUST DIVEST FROM ISRAEL OR
FACE OUR WRATH OF REVENGE

BLESSED IS THE FLAME⁵

It would be a shift in this guerrilla initiative toward

offensive measures that provokes the F.B.I., A.T.F., and U.C.P.D. to raid my parent's home and recent place of residence in West Oakland, following the arson of a construction site within the heart of U.C. Berkeley campus on Father's Day, in broad daylight. This was another action that was modified and did not cause as much damage as intended, but it was technically quite difficult to pull off.

This offensive maneuver, as far as i hoped for, was to be the opening salvo in a new phase to escalate protest further against the University of California. Concrete action. The attack was executed with precision from start to finish. The smoke signals were communicating something new. Or maybe something from the past? It was after all an action committed in ancestor veneration, as the responsibility claim reads, authored as it is by "Marilyn's Daughters":

phase two of the #Escalate movement heats up at u.c. berkeley with a construction site on fire in broad daylight. this was done in retaliation for u.c.p.d.'s violent assaults on vulnerable student demonstrators and to punish the university of kkkalifornia system for supporting the genocidal zionist-israel entity. this was an autonomous initiative in concert with the current WEEK OF ACTION underway: operation campus flood. call it mutual aid.

at one p.m. this afternoon, we torched large portions of a construction site in the middle of u.c. berkeley campus. OPERATION CAMPUS FLOOD on u.c.b. kkkampus has begun with:

- successful looting of a u.c.b. supply building of thousands of dollars
- the firebombing of a u.c.b. cop car
- the experimental burning of dry grass hills on the interior of campus
- the torching of a building front on the perimeter of the campus and now
- the arson of a construction site (mostly construction materials, wood pallets, and massive dry bush area)

this was done to further retaliate against the u.c.p.d. for attacking students at u.c.s.c. and u.c.l.a.

this was done as an autonomous (self-directed act) in concert with anyone who shows out to create liberatory destruction until the u.c. system completely divests from the genocidal “israeli” settler nation-building project

— this was done in solidarity with all displaced peoples who were removed from people’s park — criminalized survivors of genocide HERE

— this was done in retaliation for the u.c. berkeley administration’s attack on the homeless community of berkeley — in retaliation for stealing the land called people’s park

lastly

this was done on father’s day for all the palestinian fathers who have lost their children at the hands of the zionist and

amerikkkan settler states. this was done on father's day for all
the black and brown fathers who have lost their children at
the hands of u.s.a. police forces

glory to the martyrs
blessed is the flame

— marilyn's daughters⁶

These actions were undertaken with, to my cautions at the time, no face and no trace. It was only one mistake, at the very start of the guerrilla initiative on June 1, that i conceded a trace leading to my identification, and the eventual F.B.I bugging of my car, their following me daily, and their eventual capture of me in a morning raid on June 17.

The totality of all actions from May 13 onward—the attack on the President's Office, the Hind's House occupation, the audacious expropriations, the retaliatory firebombings of campus/police infrastructure—must be understood as concrete, relationally-formed *collective revolutionary self-activity* rather than separate or disparately situated “events.” This concrete activity represents the historical shift from the encampment model toward a more unprogrammatic and highly conflictual paradigm of “the Campus Flood.”

An attempt to give self-aware expression (a name) to this emergent assemblage of diffuse militant activity was circulated in the form of a pamphlet, titled *Operation Campus Flood*, which was also framed (somewhat hastily) as a proposal for a local “action-campaign.” A print-only version of the

pamphlet was circulated for about a week before the public version was shared on June 14, as a compilation of articles, communiques, and responsibility claims beginning with reflections on the fallout from Hind's House. An excerpt from an amended version of the pamphlet reads:

Operation Campus Flood: Call for Autonomous Action on
Bay Area College Campuses to End the Siege on Gaza

NO MORE GRADUALISM IN THE FACE OF GENOCIDE

A new phase of the #Escalate for Gaza movement on college campuses has begun. With Berkeley lighting the way. We are calling this Operation Campus FLOOD. This initiative is an open invitation, for those who are sick of it all, to join in displacing the displacers... Are we tired yet of moralistically demanding these war-machine colleges divest *themselves* from the Zionist occupation of Palestine?

Can we continue to explore ways of expropriating the seeming infinite supply of resources and material wealth stored in campus buildings? All you need to get started is three people, some hammers, and to *attack the glass*. Imagine what if people popped the locks of the libraries to liberate the books, computers, and printers? Think of all the flyers we could print to further organize against this genocide?

We can even seize the buildings, as the Hind's House has proven. We can take up massive amounts of campus space,

with community approval even, as demonstrated by the multi-week solidarity encampment last month. With enough people, we can even turn UCB Sproul Plaza into the new People's Park.

We can fulfill the original goals of the 1968 Black and Third World student strikes, to liberate the entire University campus and open the buildings up to surrounding community. We can seize the dorms to house the homeless, we can take over the cafeterias and food courts to feed the hungry. Or, if seizing space in such ways never seems to generalize, never drawing in numbers, and every attempted encampment and building takeover leads us into unnecessary arrests, then maybe diffuse or riotous attack at the point of production is the only viable remaining option?

Put otherwise, if a collective seizure of the campus space is not possible in your local area, or such means have been tried yet appear to be exhausted, there are *other options*—much more stealth, quiet, and cost-effective for us while severely debilitating for them. We could simply *burn down the buildings* in the middle of the night and *torch* the artificial landscapes that colonize the lands the U.C.B. and other campuses occupy.

Fire is quiet. Fire is quick and easy. And it only takes some fuel and a single spark. These campuses are already tinderboxes, and there are targets everywhere and examples of methods abound. Two parts gasoline. One part motor oil in a beer bottle. Douse a rag out the top. Or just a bucket of gasoline. Escalate. Ignite.

[...]

Signed,

Leila's Daughters

Safiya's Daughters

Marilyn's Daughters⁷

The above excerpt is the *original* text circulated. It should be noted for the historical record that the version published in the pamphlet that is posted online, in the rush of the moment, contains a number of confusing typos and errors which require brief context and explanation. When the original document was “copy-and-pasted” during its formatting into an updated pamphlet, the text got jumbled up somehow. In a series of reversals of edits, older versions of certain sentences made their way back into the text. With the typos uncorrected, the pamphlet (assumed to be the correct version formatted into a booklet) was made public as *the* mass “publicly-circulating” version by mistake. This was sloppy editorial handling on my part. Rushed and careless, i take responsibility for the error.

The chaotic form of the pamphlet all considered, such errors in prose do not account for the issue and question of *why* this “action campaign” failed to generalize. Further reflecting on the matter, the two foremost reasons are: first, the attrition inflicted upon the local milieu and increasing disconnect of the Bay Area Palestine solidarity movement from the campus struggle at U.C. Berkeley after the collapse of the

encampment. Second, likely the prime source: the intensification of state/administrative repression and lawfare inflicted upon the “movement.” Did the suddenness of my capture and the terms of my charges also have a chilling effect on the local anarchist space? From my vantage point, it is difficult to evaluate the situation. An unforeseen result from my arrest is the apparent ceasing of direct attacks against the University of California property in the months to follow (at least to my knowledge). I would love to be proven wrong. Clearly, a strategic retreat from the so-called “Student Intifada” by the Bay anarchist space was underway. I do not resent anyone in the Bay Area for taking a step back to reassess the changing circumstances. However, i do not believe that the failures of this first initiative is a marker of failure for the Campus Flood *as a paradigm* of insurgency in the U.S.-based Palestine solidarity movement. Rather, what the failure of the “action-campaign” to generalize tells me is that there was a lack of preparedness, planning, and coordination /communication among radicals in the Bay to engage in sustained, decentralized, and widespread diffuse sabotage/attack. Even more so, i believe that ultimately the failure of the initiative to generalize is a lack of clarity on behalf of everyone in the Bay as to precisely what the *model* of the flood is and can be. It is this last point i would like to meditate on below. It is not vanguardist action but a catalyst and invitation.

Operation Campus Flood is defined on two levels, as far as i am concerned. Others may have different opinions. That is fine. In fact, i hope so. Nonetheless, it is important to explain

in greater detail what this multifaceted *paradigm of strategic offense* entails.

First, Operation Campus Flood is the insurgency that had begun to take shape in the shift from camping toward expropriation and sabotage. That is, the organic first militant actions of concrete people against concrete obstacles and infrastructure of the University of California. Second, it is the unfinished action-campaign that is proposed in the pamphlet, its first consciously named act: the torching of the U.C. Berkeley construction site. An initiative cut short but remains alive as an eternal proposition. In this sense, we can also say that it *remains* as both a proposal and provocation, an invitation always open as it is an improvisational strategy based on methods and tactics that ordinary people are able to carry out, with an infinite potential of targets and combination of measures. Second, expropriation and redistribution (broadly interpreted). Third, calculated and targeted destruction of campus property, iconography, and prestige.

The organizational logic of the campus flood is to bring together a far-reaching convergence of groups (formal and informal) and individuals, to descend on a major university campus (or a few campuses) as a decentralized, horizontal, and widespread revolutionary social force. No revolutionary strategy is premised on just one method or tactic. As a general principal of strategy, regardless of the main form of struggle adopted, no methods should be neglected. The three distinguishing aspects of the Campus Flood that i mention above have less to do with “form” and all to do with *content*. By this i mean that the

methods of the campus flood will shape shift according to the needs and circumstances of its context. What matters most is that the content of our actions collectively find some way *to combine aspects of its three defining measures* to the maximum-degree possible. Whether our objective is to overturn the material equations of force that underpins the university of global settler-empire to demand divestment, or it is to foster and further along a more generalized revolutionary crisis, the *principles* of the flood paradigm remain the same.

Notes

1. "The Only Possible Relationship to the University Today is a Criminal One: A Communique from Sacred Black and Red," *Haters Cafe* (zine, May 2025), <https://haters.noblogs.org/files/2024/05/Sacred-Black-and-Red-imposed.pdf>.

1. "A Response to 'Hind's House is Wateen's House is Ahmed's House is Mahmoud's House...'" some fixing people (*Indybay*, May 31, 2024), <https://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2024/05/31/18866842.php>. Emphasis added.

3. "Student Intifada as Our Historical Duty: Fulfill It or Betray It," *Abolition Media* (June 2, 2024), <https://abolitionmedia.noblogs.org/8566/>.

4. Ibid.

5. "UCLA Students Were Attacked Last Night So We Retaliated With a Firebomb on UCB Campus" (*Indybay*, June 13, 2024), www.indybay.org/newsitems/2024/06/13/18867336.php.

6. "retaliation arson attack on construction site at university of kkkalifornia berkeley," marilyn's daughters (*Indybay*, June 16, 2024), www.indybay.org/newsitems/2024/06/16/18867409.php.

7. "Operation Campus Flood: A Call for Autonomous Action on Bay Area College Campuses," leila's daughters (*Indybay*, June 14, 2024), www.indybay.org/newsitems/2024/06/13/18867339.php, emphasis in original.

Lines in the Sand

As a concrete activity (not a speculative one), the art of war never encounters two identical situations: neither the means nor the enemy nor the terrain nor the socio-economic conditions are ever the same. What's more, war is not just a confrontation between material forces, it is also a confrontation between wills, between moral forces that often radically modify the value of material forces.

—*T. Derbent*¹

[T]he materiality of discourse is as solid an aspect of political economy as the Gross Domestic Product, and its far-flung subtleties and evasions, its coded displacements and well-choreographed insinuations, decidedly more pernicious as the missile that hides its hand. To spot it by preventing, or warding off, its closures, on its own terrain, with its own weapons, defines the “war,” as I understand it.

—*Hortense Spillers*²

I

What occurred between April and June 2024 is not a “student intifada” but a convergence of society onto the university campuses. The struggle that had erupted on the University of California, Berkeley campus was composed of three dynamically involved and contradictorily-situated *counter-hegemonic blocs*: “students/student-workers,” “non-students/non-faculty,” and to a lesser degree “non-student campus workers” (predominately faculty). Each of these blocs is heterodox and internally diverse. Yet the participants from each bloc are also all defined by certain distinct structural positions and political subjectivities. The distinct dynamism generated by this convergence of the different blocs at the site of the campus—as well as the limitations and constraints that restricted our struggle from generalizing any further beyond it—is papered over by the narrative misrepresentation of the intifada as one of only students. I argue that it is a *misnomer* to label what took shape last spring a “student intifada,” and to do so repeats a historical framework that is unhelpful and theoretically flawed. This can be said of most campuses where there was an escalation of Palestine solidarity activity in the form of encampments and building occupations last spring.

To privilege the “student” as the primary historical subject of this wave of escalation across university campuses is to commit a grave error with consequences that remain mystified in most analyses of the events and their representation in the public discourse. This error is fundamentally an issue of

narrative warfare and its correction exposes the density and ubiquity of colonial-bourgeois “common sense.” I additionally argue this misnomer is both a symptom of the ruling ideology and an active counterinsurgency technology that isolates the intifada’s most militant elements (who were often not students or student-workers), to subvert the potential for a cohesion of purpose among the various blocs converging across sectors of society that are traditionally segregated when they meet within the dominant spatio-ideological schema of the “university campus.” Ultimately, this misnomer leads to a *false image* of the intifada’s content, represented as a movement of students and campus workers in most retrospective analyses, which in its own turn has produced a kind of self-fulfilling misrepresentation as the 2024-2025 school year commences. That is, what a year ago was beginning to look and feel like a massive, vibrant *popular* uprising (or at least “pre-uprising” atmosphere) against the University of Empire, with essential and decisive participation from non-student/non-faculty bloc, now endures the 2025 school year as an entirely student-populated movement. Participants from the non-student/non-faculty bloc remain either exhausted and abandoned the initiative for new sites of struggle, recovering and stuck in strategic retreat, or, if they have stuck around, appear to have transitioned into a relation of deference to the “student activist.”

The misnomer of “student intifada” perpetuates a false image of the spring 2024 “escalations” as it actually had been formed, relying on a peculiar, wishful narrative framework: *the myth of student leadership*. The mytheme continues to mystify

the core dynamics of the insurgency as animated by the political will of the student/student-worker bloc, and relegates the non-student/non-faculty bloc to a secondary narrative position of “community support.” To historicize the insurgency of last spring as such is to affirm the perspective of its most conservative and domesticated elements.³

The myth of student leadership conforms to nothing in the reality of the most revolutionary sections of this insurgency, which only emerged because of widespread community participation from the non-student/non-faculty bloc drawn from the regional left wing, anti-fascist, and anti-authoritarian movement ecology where each university or college is located. Where the student/student-worker bloc was open to the possibility of genuine horizontal decision-making and refusal to isolate their provincialized sector from the vast ecology of resistance that surrounds campus, the most exciting, decisive, and combative forms of struggle seem to emerge: from the very first “Gaza solidarity encampment” at Columbia, to the first building occupation of Siemens Hall at Cal Poly Humboldt, and other scattered acts of expropriation and sabotage that sustained into the summer. None of the most celebrated of our tactical achievements generated by the spring intifada on the university campuses were the lone work of students, and this is a fact to be proud of and embrace, not to shy away from or allow the State to shame you into presenting otherwise.

Combative action in New York City and Humboldt, at Cal State Los Angeles and Portland State, or the campus flood at U.C. Berkeley did not emanate from the desires of “student

leadership,” but recurrently was catalyzed *in spite of it*. Rather, escalations on these campuses obviously precipitated from the fusion of all three oppositional blocs, a breakdown in hierarchized social roles, chains of administrative authority, and the specialized division of labor, as well as the circulation and cross-pollination of insurgents meeting between multiple campuses in a single region at once. Any revolutionary content and/or forms of struggle only advanced in situations and circumstances where insurgents refused any politics of deference to traditional authority based on the capitalist organization of social relations. More often than not, the student/student-worker bloc was actually a vector of disciplinary power within the scene of the Gaza solidarity encampment, as my experience at U.C. Berkeley certainly corroborates. Class antagonism permeated the inner life of these spaces due to the frequent attempt to consolidate authority through assertion of “student” identity as a property claim, a signifier of belonging and a possessive claim to valorized status within the fabricated borders of “the campus.”

Students must come to see themselves as the problem, which, counter to the complaints of the restorationist critics of the university, is precisely what it means to be a customer, to take on the burden of realization and always necessarily be inadequate to it. Later, these students will be able to see themselves properly as obstacles to society, or perhaps, with lifelong learning, students will return having successfully diagnosed themselves as the problem.

—*Fred Moten & Stefano Harney*⁴

Once you participate actively, once action is no longer the specialty of a separate group, you suddenly realize that you have power over larger projects....the “institutions” of society lose their character of external spectacles and come into focus as social projects which can be determined by you together with others.

—*Fredy Perlman & Roger Gregoire*⁵

II

In the context of narrative warfare, what is in a name? My rejection of a description of last spring's insurgency in identitarian terms (i.e. "student-led," "student intifada") is an important analytical move. Instead, i argue it is more helpful and accurate to speak of the intifada in terms of spatiality, geography, and place. In rejecting the identitarian title, our critical perspective challenges the simultaneous *over-representation* of the student/student-worker bloc as the principal "catalyst" and agent of action and *devalorization* of the extensive contributions from the non-student/non-faculty bloc. Surprising has been the prominence of the myth of "student leadership" even among various articulations of the non-student/non-faculty bloc throughout this "movement" as it continues on, albeit in fractured and stunningly gaunt form. In locales where the myth remains unchallenged, a new level of deference to the students has taken hold.

For the 2024-2025 school year, this problem has metastasized. It is now commonplace to see the remnants of non-student/non-faculty bloc participants—if their focus is even still on the campus as a site of ongoing organizing, planning, or resistance—waiting for the student/student-worker to initiate activity on a campus before joining in "solidarity," and then place blame on the student when activity isn't as bold or risky as the non-student/non-faculty participation desires. This is not revolutionary. Understandably, many anarchists are disillusioned after collaborating with the student/student-

worker bloc involved in the various encampments around the Bay Area. Many are also skeptical, after the experience of last spring, about centering the university as a site of struggle. As a close comrade of mine asked in our correspondence,

Of course [the university] is “implicated in the displacement and genocide,” as you wrote, but so are many other institutions, some perhaps even more directly. What makes the university stand out? Is it just that the encampments started there last spring? [...] I can also understand why some non-students would generally prefer to direct their energy elsewhere.⁷

Despite these legitimate concerns, the non-student/non-faculty bloc is still implicated in the failure of the intifada on the campuses to sustain itself and re-articulate in continuity with its origins as a societal convergence last spring: either by waiting for the students to be a spark, or by not taking enough responsibility for the initiatives themselves, or by withdrawing participation prematurely or altogether. We non-student/non-faculty insurgents can take action on (or against) any university or college campus, on our own accords, autonomously and even without students, at any time. In fact, what this specific struggle has revealed is that university campuses are infrastructures of state power and capital that are incredibly easy to access and within reach much differently than a factory or prison/jail/detention center. The destabilization of a major campus also has ripple effects that are different than, say,

blocking a highway or attacking a power grid.

Anarchists from the non-student/non-faculty bloc have a unique structural position to be leaned into during future articulations of action, given the intensifying administrative scrutiny and repression of students and faculty last spring. Possibly more than any other enclosure does a so-called “outsider” pose the capacity to physically move through, enter in and out, blend into, and directly support their co-strugglers who are employed or administratively managed by it. And in many instances, the potential consequences that such “outsiders” face for taking action may be less severe than for the latter. By not considering it as our equal responsibility to seize the initiative this 2024-2025 school year, many anarchists who participated in the non-student/non-faculty bloc last spring strategically retreated, and in the process demonstrated how *we as well* had not understood the full significance of the *models* of convergence that took shape between April and June 2024.

Thinking about “the campus” as a specific site and scene of anticolonial insurgency and struggle for Palestinian liberation does not necessarily mean “centering” anything besides our analysis, and it certainly does not mean centralizing the campus as a singular field of resistance. The analysis put forth here refuses to reify the university or college campus as a discrete, self-enclosed “institution” and geographically contained province in which the primary envisioned subject of action is “the student” isolated from: a) the complex *division of labor* that informs its purpose and self-coherence (e.g. graduate workers and faculty instructing classes, departmental staff, custodial

staff), and on another level: b) *sheltered from a supposed “outside” community* from which the student’s experience of subject-formation is premised on in a materially extractive way.

Because of the myth of student leadership and the above “common-sense” conception of the campus geography still pervade the public discourse and even much critical analysis, we can predict the further isolation of the campus fight from the broader global Palestine solidarity movement and greater descendance into attrition, without significant regrouping and contributions (once again) from the non-student/non-faculty bloc. That said, the university and college campus is a key field within the global anti-colonial insurgency and revolutionary way against the apparatus of U.S. American-Israeli Zionist settler empire. The advance of state repression and expansion of policing and surveillance and criminalization of campus life this new school year, if anything, has exposed that the government certainly recognizes it as such.

[Campus organizers should] open vortices of subversion within the campus themselves, welcoming “non-students,” anarchists, abolitionists, poor Black people, migrants, and others [who are not enrolled in universities] onto campuses for carnivals of refusal and action. If these institutions are developing the weapons, if they are conducting the research, if they are training the personnel, if they are manufacturing the consent, then it is not the privilege of students and faculty alone to challenge them. In fact, it is the right and obligation of all people of conscience to swarm the

universities and to stop the war where it is cultivated before it is dropped on the heads of the Palestinians in Gaza.⁷

Notes

1. T. Derbent, *Categories of Revolutionary Military Policy* (Montreal: Kersplebedeb, 2006), 13.

2. Hortense Spillers, "Peter's Pan: Eating in the Diaspora," *Black, White, and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 7.

3. The Revolutionary Intercommunalism Research Group writes:

In the U.S. imaginary, the identity of movement protagonists is a uniquely significant factor for the perceived legitimacy of struggles. More than elsewhere, the social position of protestors determines whether and how people will support a movement, and what means can be reasonably brought to bear against participants without provoking further acts of resistance. The compositional question (i.e. "who are the protestors?") is at least as important to determining the perceived legitimacy of a movement as its stated goals or methods...

...Even though in some places the majority of arrestees were community members (so-called "non-students" or "outsiders"), this did not significantly impact the perception of these protests as "student-led" by those who were already primed to support them... [The] double bind between the pro-"student movement" camp and the pro-"outside agitator" camp formed a subtle but devastating trap for the protestors, most of whom opted to assert the "student-led" nature of the protests. By continuing to invest their creativity and energies

on campuses, and by legitimizing the protests on the basis of their real or imagined “student leadership,” protestors missed some chances to build the participation of rebellious social layers that are systematically excluded or marginalized within higher education and city centers, including poor people and Black people.

Cited in The Revolutionary Intercommunalism Research Group, “The Student Intifada and the Revolution to Come,” *Radar Journal*, no. 1 (2024), <https://radarjournal.online/pdfs/issue1.pdf>.

4. Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2013), 29.

5. Fredy Perlman and Roger Gregoire, *Worker-Student Action Committees: France, May '68* (Olympia: Detritus Books, 2020 [1969]), 126.

6. Personal Correspondence (March 2025).

7. The Revolutionary Intercommunalism Research Group, “The Student Intifada” (2024).

Federal Task-Force
to Combat Anti-
[Zionism]

*Let's get everybody who's been
criminalized together and figure out how we can
undo this state of affairs.*

—*Ruth Wilson Gilmore*¹

At the time of this writing, the U.S. Department of Justice has announced it is launching a “major civil rights investigation” into the University of California, based on claims that it allowed pro-Palestine anti-war and anti-genocide protests to create an allegedly “hostile antisemitic work environment” on several campuses during the 2023-24 school year. Such investigations serve as a high-profile example of the primary narrative strategy of *victim-reversal* deployed by defenders of Israeli zionist settler colonialism: the dubious charge that to oppose “Israel” as it actually exists—a European Jewish settler nation based on land theft, occupation, native population displacement, and anti-Palestinian genocide-warfare—is to be categorically “anti-Semitic.” This intellectually and historically dishonest defense mechanism also hinges on the equally deceptive premise that to be against zionism—the western imperialist ideology that spiritually animates the (white) Civilization and nation-building project of “Israel”—is to be an anti-Semite. The zionist entity of Israel thrives on this fabricated aura of vulnerability and the ruse of “innocence” that is generated by this ploy of victim reversal.

The current D.O.J. probe of the University of California underway is part of a larger campaign organized by the Trump-Vance “MAGA” bloc, in lockstep with the far-Right Israeli government, to exert intensifying political-legal pressure on the administrative, industrial, and financial structure of U.S. universities where strong movements against Israeli apartheid exist and/or popular support for Palestinian liberation is growing.²

The so-called Federal Task Force to Combat Anti-semitism, since February, has multiplied its counter-offensive attack on the Palestine solidarity movement in what appears to be a “shock-and-awe” approach to coercing the entire social ecosystem of Higher Education back into the normative conduct and disciplinary constraints of Zionist conformity. All funding from the federal government “will stop for any college, school, or university that allows illegal protests,” writes Donald Trump proudly from his personal social media platform, “agitators will be imprisoned/or permanently sent back to the country from which they came,” or if it is an “American student,” they will be “permanently expelled, or, depending on the crime, arrested.”³

U.S. American-Israeli Zionist settler empire is approaching the 2024 intifada on the university campuses from the perspective of international geopolitics, domestic counter-insurgency, and modern warfare. Meanwhile, our Palestine solidarity movement still overwhelmingly organizes itself according to liberal-pacifist and reformist terms of engagement. Far from some irrational retributive campaign by the government to punish university institutions where dissent and support for Palestine has become most pronounced, such measures against the U.C. system (and similar institutions) are the expression of a more general urgency from (global) settler empire to realign the material equation of force that last spring was momentarily thrown into crisis by the convergence of anticolonial insurgency on campus across the country—an equation that was first upended in Palestine on October 7,

2023. That is, the material equation of force that underpins colonialism and the larger imperialist world order in which the zionist entity of Israel is a lynchpin and forward base.

This spate of federal investigations is strategic, calculated within the geopolitical and military context of U.S.-Israeli joint counterinsurgency doctrine: “Comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain” emergent and potential articulations of anti-zionist resistance.

We are now experiencing the current far-Right coalition government mobilize the ostensibly liberal-humanist legal regime of “civil rights” (Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act) on the fraudulent basis of “combatting antisemitism,” to do far much more than simply penalize participants of the 2024 campus revolt retroactively. What we are in fact experiencing is the capitalist, white-supremacist state *proactively fortify an infrastructure* that is essential for the continued social reproduction, ideological coherence, and hegemony of a singular apparatus of settler empire formed between the United States of Amerika and Israeli nation-states.

In this historical and theoretical context, it becomes easily apparent that the CUNY 8, the Ann Arbor 11, Leqaa Kordia, Mahmoud Khalil, and i (among others) are all targets of this peculiar, historically-specific wave of ongoing repression. And yet, each of us are merely exemplary objects of criminalization. Suspensions and expulsions, visas revoked, detained to be deported, two-decade-long prison sentence proposed—we are some of the latest defendants and prisoners

from the Palestine liberation movement in the United States. Some of us can even be called prisoners of war. The attempt of the colonial apparatus to neutralize us is meant to invoke fear in the present, as much as it is a preemptive attack against *the potential for a revolutionary subversion of the U.S.-Israeli war machine* catalyzed by the convergence of society onto campuses throughout the imperial-settler core. Toward the fulfillment of our generation's historically necessary task: the *abolition* of the University of Empire, of which each of our various legal cases represent a different facet or sector of this most recent cycle of struggle.

The state uses the imprisonment of political leaders and rank-and-file activists as a bludgeon against movement victories. Their incarceration is a reminder of the strength, potential, and, just as crucially, the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of radical mass movements. As a result, political prisoners serve collective prison time for all those who participated in the movements from which they emerged.⁵

Notes

[Editor's note: this chapter was originally released as a zine in September 2024 by Bloomington Anarchist Black Cross.]

1. Ruth Wilson Gilmore, with Jenna Loyd. "Race, Capitalist Crisis, and Abolitionist Organizing," *Abolition Geography: Essays Toward Liberation*, ed. Brenna Bhandar and Albert Toscano (New York: Verso, 2022 [2012]), 469.

2. The absurdity of it all is that, following the spring 2024 uprising on the college campuses, the U.C. system engaged in the largest increase of its police department budget in over a decade. Each campus also implemented new policies disallowing the use of masks and face-covering, as well as new rules mitigating the obstruction of walkways and against encampments. U.C. Berkeley added drones and new weaponry, and some campuses acquired tanks, new surveillance tech, and other military-grade resources.

3. Quoted in Molly Gibbs, "Feds Opening Probe into U.C." *The East Bay Times* (March 6, 2025).

4. Martin Schoots-McAlpino "Anatomy of a Counter-Insurgency," *Monthly Review Online* (blog post, July 3, 2020), <https://mronline.org/2020/07/03/anatomy-of-a-counter-insurgency/>.

5. Dan Berger, "The Real Dragons: A Brief History of Political Militancy and Incarceration, 1960s to 2000s," *Let Freedom Ring: A Collection of Documents from the Movements to Free U.S. Political Prisoners*, ed. Matt Meyer (Oakland: PM Press, 2008), 3.

A Message to a Prisoner Letter Writing Event

Thank you everyone for coming out tonight. It feels like a gigantic hug to know that so many people have learned about my case, which is not only about me as an individual facing repression, but rather about the capitalist, white-supremacist U.S. settler state “punishing” and hoping to “deter” the revival of a global initiative to escalate disruption of the status quo on college campuses for the sake of Palestinian liberation. It is our historical duty to sabotage and expropriate the University of Empire, to abolish its function as an infrastructure of occupation, displacement, warfare, and genocide.

Last Spring, a largely spontaneous, ad hoc, and mimetic combustion of creative energy was unleashed by the catalyst-action of not only students but far-reaching communities converging on some campuses, and of course small groups of brave people taking big risks. In reaction, the owning class of U.S. Amerikkkan and Israel-Zionist settler empire was to engage in a massive repression/counterinsurgency campaign to exhaust, confuse, and strike fear in the minds of all sectors of society involved in the campus flood, not only students, not only faculty.

I am but one example of thousands of non-student/non-campus worker participants in the encampment wave. From this experience, i’ve learned that it is important to continuously deconstruct and clarify the false consciousness that on one hand constructs some of us as “outsiders” who threaten the province of “the campus” as an allegedly discrete space, imagined to be self-enclosed, a world apart from society and its surroundings. While simultaneously, on the other hand, it is

only “students” and “faculty” who reside as the privileged historical subjects of “campus life” and of this recent sequence of protest. What was most threatening about the campus flood is that, at least in some geographies, the convergence of these segregated worlds threatened to collapse the division and hierarchies of labor, authority, and space-time which serve to maintain the university campus as a technology for imperialism and transnational capital, for population management, for white civilization, nation-building, and settler land-ecological conquest.

The potential of the campus flood, the potential force that provoked incredible reaction from the government, the owning class, and grassroots supporters of fascism, the potential that was displayed by the actions of so many people last Spring is in the convergence of two segregated worlds that in combination can overtake the university campus as a primary chokepoint of capital flows and state power, while in our own turn eliminating the alienated social roles that we take on from either side of the line. Such social roles, these categories of existence under capital, are preserved by the ongoing belief that it is only the “teacher” who teaches, only the “student” who learns, only the “staff” who toils on logistics, and only the “custodian” who repairs and cleans. Meanwhile, what brings all of these components together is the singular mandate of the wage (or future wage)—labor and surplus to be managed and policed by administrators and their chain of command.

What almost happened in certain geographies is that, to paraphrase Fredy Perlman, the university campus almost

finally, actually, (ironically) for once became a site of learning rather than a site of discipline into conformity. The spectre of a different relation to authority was summoned, if only for a brief moment. Communicated by this spectre is a critical lesson: one of the most direct and tangible ways we can act in solidarity with the resistance to the Israeli-Zionist entity in historic Palestine is to abolish the university of settler-empire first as a concept and then as a material infrastructure.

I've mentioned this elsewhere, but at the end of the day these campuses are just buildings and a mass accumulation of resources. It is all of us who give it a specific social meaning, those of us whose labor (or "work") actively create its social basis of power. This is just as so for those of us who are excluded from its provincialized space, those of us who accept that we do not belong on its premises or that we cannot act autonomously, ourselves, against the University of Empire without permission from some mythic "student leadership," those of us who joined the encampments yet so often were relegated to the restricted status of "community support." So long as we accept an image of the college campus that confirms the colonial-bourgeois schema, we will never see victory.

Yet that which is social can always be changed. What is needed is an attack in the immediate, a protracted revolutionary insurrection against the social relations of production and existence that constitute the University as an infrastructure. Then and only then will we be able to say we are contributing to the liberation of Palestine and materially combatting Zionist rule from our location in (global) settler-empire.

We can set an example by overtaking the university campus and destroying the assigned roles we all hold “within” and allegedly “outside” it, thus eliminating the social basis that creates its function as a managerial apparatus for colonial-capitalist Amerikkka. We can set an example for all by expropriating the campus and de-alienating our own life and labor in the process. If the “movement” formed in the encampments and building takeovers were to link itself to organizing efforts across all sectors of labor and society on a specific campus and its surrounding area, with the goal to converge, to refuse work, and to wage a general strike, what new forms of creative energy might this unleash? The secret is to begin, to radically break from habits.

“Palestine’s liberation will liberate us all” has been a popular slogan in recent years. And for good reason. However, I am of the belief that the inverse also holds true. To liberate ourselves from capitalism where we are situated and to destroy the social roles that a settler-colonial, white-supremacist, and anti-Black hetero-patriarchal class society assigns us is precisely the centripetal force necessary to defeat Zionism and U.S. Amerikkkanism. Such is the very self-activity that will destabilize the war machine that is killing Palestinians, the very self-activity that will also lead us into the inevitable “people’s war” here, bringing us squarely into combat against the police and all who have a class interest in the order of things, the genocidal status quo, the way this social structure is but does not have to be. It is this initiative that will unleash a flood that spills out from the liberated campus, the abolished university, to

generalize disruptive self-activity across all sectors, to the factories and fields, to the service industry workplaces and city centers, to the encampments and housing complexes, to the jails and prisons.

It is such an initiative—the destruction of the University of Empire—that the U.S. government truly fears, and of which my experience of state repression is a microcosm. This is why i say that i am not an “individual” in this situation. I am an individual to the extent that i am an autonomous person who can think, make decisions, and act for myself. Yet this “self” is always in relation, collectively formed. I do not exist in a vacuum. I exist within an innumerable combination of affinities, communities, collectives, and networks. We are all, in the first and last instance, interconnected and dependent on one another to extents hardly perceivable. Together we will set the example. May the Intifada of the university campuses be eternally revitalized and may future revolts continue to generalized.

To do this, there will be a need for relentless and widespread anti-repression skill-sharing and prisoner support, so our movement does not fear taking necessary risks. And in this respect, you all who gather tonight are setting this example. Tonight is an exemplary action.

Blessed is the flame of anti-colonial resistance!

Long live the Palestinian revolution!

*We are on the inside [of U.S. Empire]...
We are the only ones....who can get at the monster's
heart without subjecting the world to nuclear fire.
We have a momentous historical role to act out if
we will. The whole world for all time in the future
will love us and remember us as the righteous
people who made it possible for the world to live
on. If we fail through fear and lack of aggressive
imagination, then the slaves of the future will curse
us, as we sometimes curse those of yesterday....We
must build the true internationalism now.*

— **George Jackson** (*April 1970*)¹

Notes

[Editor's note: this chapter was originally released as a zine in September 2025 by with whatever weapons distro.]

1. George Jackson, *Soledad Brother: The Prison Letters of George Jackson* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 1994 [1970]), 266.

Timeline of the Gaza
Solidarity Encampment
Wave & Campus Flood
at U.C. Berkeley
from My Perspective,
April to June 2024

April 17 — Columbia University
encampment begins.

April 18 — Columbia camp raided by
the police, mass arrest of 100+
students.

Encampment quickly rebuilds with
community support, larger number of
non-student / non-campus workers
join.

[Quickness of effort to rebuild the
camp is a factor in both the capacity of
the action to boost morale and shift
momentum momentarily in favor of
the Palestine solidarity movement.]

April 22 — Cal Poly Humboldt
escalates with a building takeover.

UC Berkeley encampment begins.

April 26 — *True Leap Press* begins
tabling zines and propaganda at UC
Berkeley, delivering boxes of zines to
every Bay Area campus encampment as
well as Humboldt and UCLA.

[Upwards of 3,000 zines were printed and distributed during the first two weeks of the encampment wave.]

April 29 — Columbia encampment is threatened with the possibility of a sweep.

An autonomous group that night seizes and takes over Hamilton Hall, renaming it Hind's Hall.

April 30 — Humboldt encampment and building takeover is raided, disbands.

On the same day Hind's Hall at Columbia is raided.

UCLA encampment is attacked in the evening by Zionists and fascists.

[Bearing witness to this via livestream is what leads Casey to permanently join the UCB camp.]

May 1 — Casey begins staying in UC

Berkeley camp, after a night of defense work declares, “I’m staying. I’m on strike from life.”

May 3 — Radicals involved in UCB camp assemblies and day-to-day life publish and circulate a position paper, titled: “*Bay Area Autonomist Reflections on UCB, SFSU, and USF camps.*”

Frustrated with the reformist negotiation approach, they launch an important critique, noting a “power vacuum” in the encampments that the reformist and activist “Left” opportunistically fills.

May 6 — Israel-Zionist entity begins its “Rafah Offensive.”

May 11 — Casey still living in camp, weekends involve intensive work in the camp, becomes exhausted and attrition kicks in.

By this time, many radicals stopped attending camp assemblies which cedes

ground further to reformists and the activist Left.

May 12 — Casey leaves camp due to exhaustion, injuries, and stress.

May 13 — Casey taken to hospital, calls doctor a racist after Zionist comment is made about participation in UCB camp.

As a result Casey is wrongfully 5150'd (involuntary psychiatric hold / incarceration).

May 13 — University of California office of the President attacked, with a communiqué and responsibility claim published by “Sacred Black and Red.”

[Communiqué posted on 5/14 calls for expropriation and greater escalation, for “attack.”]

May 15 — UC Berkeley encampment ends prematurely and controversially to the fault of the so-called “student leadership” and its enablers from the

activist Left.

May 16 — UC Berkeley building seized and taken over by approximately 60 people, renamed Hind's House.

May 19 — UCB Hind's House raided by police, arrests made.

[It is easily raided because lack of community support by local milieus and less student participation in the building takeover than the encampment.]

May 20 — Casey is released from psychiatric facility.

May 28 — UC Berkeley supply building expropriation over night, thousands of dollars in materials are liberated by an unknown group.

May 29 — Palestinian student association in Gaza publishes call for greater escalation from US-based students, titled "*It's time for revolutionary escalation of the global*

student intifada for Palestine.”

May 30 — UC Santa Cruz encampment standoff at night with police, eventually kettled and arrested en mass.

May 31 — Statement published and circulated on the Hind’s House building takeover, with an affirmation of the effort and a critique of the lack of community support to defend the action, titled “*A Response to Hind’s House Is . . .*”

June 1 — UC Berkeley police car is firebombed around 4 – 5 AM.

An open space on the North side of UCB campus is arsoned around 10 PM.

June 2 — A communiqué is published and circulated, claiming the UC police car is torched as retaliation for the police attack on UC Santa Cruz, titled “*Student Intifada as Our Historical Duty: Fulfill It or Betray It.*”

June 12 — UCLA encampment is raided and attacked by the police, arrests made.

June 13 — UC Berkeley's Koshland Hall building front is firebombed in retaliation for the police attack on UCLA encampment.

A communiqué explaining the attack is published, titled, "*UCLA Students Were Attacked Last Night So We Retaliated with a Firebomb on UCB Campus.*"

June 14 — A call for greater participation from the Bay Area Palestine solidarity movement in "*Operation Campus Flood*" is published and circulated in print and online (24 page pamphlet), co-signed by Leila's Daughters, Safiya's Daughters, and Marilyn's Daughters.

June 16 — Construction site at the center of UC Berkeley campus is arsoned in the middle of the day, to

retaliate against the government and UC system's support for the Israel-Zionist entity, for the UC's treatment of student protestors, and for the UC's decision to sweep houseless people in People's Park and build student housing in its place.

A responsibility claim is published by Marilyn's Daughters, titled, "*Retaliation Arson Attack on Construction Site at University of KKKalifornia Berkeley.*"

June 17 — FBI, ATF, California Fire Marshall, UC Police Department conduct a multi-house raid and arrest Casey, who is taken to Santa Rita Jail in Dublin, California and held on a million dollar bail.

Other Writings by Casey

Propter Nos

— “Introduction: Reflections on the ‘Movement Moment,’” *Propter Nos*, Volume 1, Issue 1, Fall 2016.

— “On the Courtesies of Order,” *Propter Nos*, Volume 1, Issue 1, Fall 2016.

— “Introduction: 1 Insurgency/Exhaustion,” *Propter Nos*, Volume 2, Issue 1, Fall 2017.

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— “Federal Task-Force to Combat Anti-[Zionism],” Bloomington Anarchist Black Cross, September 2025.

— “Timeline of the Gaza Solidarity Encampment Wave & Campus Flood at U.C. Berkeley from My Perspective, April to June 2024,” with whatever weapons distro, September 2025.



Casey Goonan is a dedicated community educator, writer, distroist, printer, and anarchist/anti-imperialist political prisoner who has committed their life to struggles for liberation. Casey is incarcerated for actions carried out in solidarity with Palestinians facing genocide in Gaza and in response to the repressive actions against the pro-Palestine student encampments in the United States. In January 2025, Casey pleaded guilty to one count of maliciously damaging or destroying property used in or affecting interstate commerce by means of fire or an explosive for the arson attack on a campus police car. As part of a plea agreement, Casey took responsibility for other attacks but pleaded not guilty to the additional charges and was sentenced to 235 months in federal prison. Just as Casey has persistently for years cared for, supported, and struggled alongside incarcerated comrades, we aim to replicate these actions in solidarity with Casey as they continue their struggle from the other side of the wall. A note from Casey in September 2025: *“Thanks to everybody out there who has shown me love and offered support through this time. I wish every prisoner could experience the level of support you all have shown to me. In here, I’ve done my best to show my love to all my fellow prisoners and I remain steadfast to the movement to Palestinian liberation and the movements for decolonization and abolition worldwide.”* More information:

freecaseynow.noblogs.org

Writing a letter to a political prisoner or prisoner of war is a concrete way to support those imprisoned for their political struggles. A letter is a simple way to brighten someone's day in prison by creating human interaction and communication—something prisons attempt to destroy. Beyond that, writing keeps prisoners connected to the communities and movements of which they are a part, allowing them to provide insights and stay up to date. Writing to prisoners is not charity, as we on the outside have as much to gain from these relationships as the prisoners. Knowing the importance of letter writing is crucial. Prisons are very lonely, isolating, and disconnected places. Any sort of bridge from the outside world is greatly appreciated. Find out more:

nycabc.wordpress.com

The cover images for this book and zine series are drawn from *In Time of War: Children Testify (Drawings by Palestinian Children)* / شهادة الاطفال في زمن الحرب edited by Mona Saudi & published by Mawakif in cooperation with the PFLP (Beirut, 1970), a collection of drawings from Palestinian children aged 5 to 14 years old in Baqa'a camp in Jordan between September 1968 and June 1969.

From the river to the sea...

From the encampments to the camps...



with whatever weapons at hand