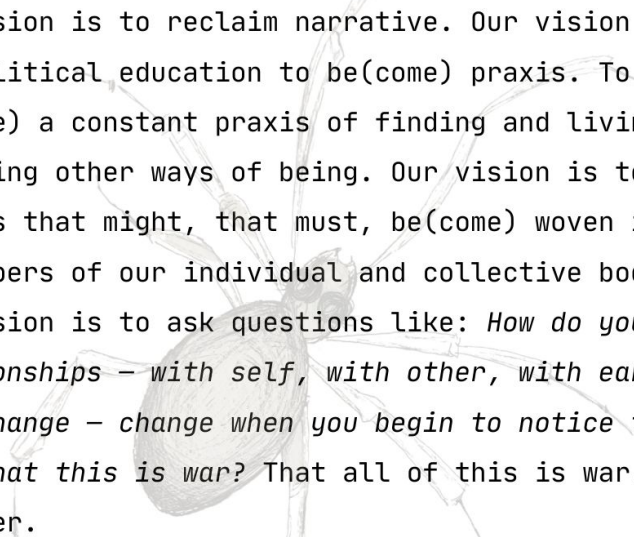


UCIRNF ZINE VOLUME 1
FEB, 2024

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COUNTER- INSURGENCY AND THE UCINTIFADA

A Zine by the UCIRNF Collective
Contributors: Bunny, Sheep, Spider, Fox, Sea Otter,
Beluga Whale, Hummingbird, Jellyfish



Our vision is to reclaim narrative. Our vision is for political education to be(come) praxis. To be(come) a constant praxis of finding and living and breathing other ways of being. Our vision is to tell stories that might, that must, be(come) woven into the fibers of our individual and collective bodies. Our vision is to ask questions like: *How do your relationships – with self, with other, with earth, with change – change when you begin to notice the ways that this is war?* That all of this is war. Over and over.

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The nature of UCI's repression of Palestinian solidarity during the latest chapter of Zionist aggression has made it clear that UCI is, and has been, a testing ground for tactics of counter-insurgency.



The University we now experience as inimical to the mere presence of a vocal Palestinian speaker was once referred to as UCI for UC Intifada, for the rich presence of Palestinian student organizing and thought this campus used to harbor.

We are writing this to collectively uncover precisely how the Zionists took over the discursive, political, and academic structures of Irvine (for now). This zine is multipurpose — it's meant to serve as a general introduction of why we are critical of the University, and it's the first installment in a series of zines focusing on UCI's counter-insurgency in regards to pro-Palestinian organizing [1]. Additionally, we hope to provide a source for political education to our community at Irvine, many of whom do not understand that they're inheriting a legacy of coordinated repression over decades, which is why so many feel fear at speaking up for Palestine. This education goes not only to those based at UCI, but to our community beyond the university as well, and especially for those who are engaged in organizing for Palestine at other universities. By beginning a conversation, we hope to foster a sense of community between ourselves and create a space for dialogue. In

uncovering this history, our peers can understand the tactics of suppression that have been used at Irvine.

UCI has become a model of sorts, of a very particular kind of collaborationist and administrative effort to chill what used to be a hub for Palestinian resistance, to a place where such public spirit remains not even in the collective memory of students. This incredibly effective counter-insurgency has come through the coordination of a number of efforts, including academic, institutional, political, and financial ones. Once armed with an understanding of this, we will be able to move towards undoing the repressive structures in place and bring UC Intifada back — whether from a year, five years, a decade from now, we will bring it back.

As we write this series, we root ourselves in our antagonism to the University. Our work, that of collective knowledge-production and dissemination, fundamentally disrupts the neoliberal logics of this settler-colonial institution. We root ourselves in the work of scholars examining the imperial University, and the links of academic disciplines to militarism and the carceral-state. We also write thinking with and through the Palestinian scholars who remind us that the role of an intellectual is to organize. They also remind us that the Nakba was not an event, but a structure. It is ongoing, as is the counter-insurgent warfare we find ourselves embedded in.

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So don't be confused

This is not simply a matter of free speech
Doctrines of the state cannot know, will not name
This for what it really is which is
Narrative as a central terrain of warfare
Which is the relationship between
Epistemic domination and ontological annihilation

But, we also know and we name,
The thing about doctrines of the state is that
They are the archives of people whose bodies do not
know their souls
And who, for this reason, can never find the rhythm
They never stop moving forward, their narratives
of Progress and Civilization. Their doctrines of
death
They never stop moving and so
Their bodies never find their souls and so
They cannot hear the ember
Burning beneath and beyond and before the terror
They cannot hear underneath their narratives
of death
All the things that empire can never destroy

So don't be confused

This is not simply a matter of free speech
We refuse to relinquish our narratives of revolution
To the doctrines of the state.

Before showing how these multi-faceted forces have come together as a backlash against pro-Palestine student insurgency at UCI, we want to offer an analysis of counter-insurgency in and beyond academic institutions. We have to situate our understanding of counter-insurgency on campus within modernity-coloniality, and connect our experiences of it with the ongoing genocides in Palestine, Congo, Sudan, and elsewhere.



First of all, counter-insurgency, at its core, is a modern-colonial-military invention. Colonizers violently take over land, occupying, stealing, harming, and killing all Indigenous beings on that land. Even though colonizers are always attacking others, they claim to be acting in self-defense. This is why the majority of settler states name their armed forces "Department of Defense" nowadays. Despite colonizers having disproportionally large militaries, deploying troops against militant resistances is not their favorite option.



When constant warfare against insurgencies becomes too costly for settlers, they seek alternative methods to tame, co-opt, divide-and-rule, and/or preemptively defeat insurgent forces. This is, by design, a paranoid regime of population control that ultimately aims to create an environment of fear and submission. It is distinct from population extinguishment (i.e. genocide), that settlers conduct on Indigenous



FOOTNOTES

- [1] Future installments can be found on ucirnf.com/.
- [2] A government act which created land-grant colleges through the seizure of indigenous land.
- [3] To learn more about the humanities's involvement in empire, see Patricia Stuelke's *The Ruse of Repair: US Neoliberal Empire and the Turn from Critique*; chapter 3 of Chandan Reddy's *Freedom with Violence: Race, Sexuality, and the US state*; Eric Bennett's *Workshops of Empire: Stegner, Engle, and American Creative Writing During the Cold War*; and Juliana Spahr's *Dubois's Telegram: Literary Resistance and State containment*.
- [4] The fields of politics and biology interacting for the purposes of a) growing/developing a certain population, b) explaining human behavior through biology, or c) creating environmental policies.
- [5] Social and political power utilized to dictate how certain people must live or die.
- [6] Referenced in comments to graduate students during the Poetic Justice speaker session in 2023.
- [7] Kopstein has noted several times in his Political Violence seminar that he identifies as a "social Zionist."
- [8] See "Faculty and Grad Workers: Strike Now to Stop the UC War Machine!" on our Instagram, @rankandfileirvine, as well as "UCI's War Profiteering & Censorship" on ucirnf.com/.

of knowing and thinking and writing and learning
That the university teaches us are right, moral,
rational, objective and
Theoretically and methodologically sound.
We are not interested in regimes of expertise and
best practices.

We are committed to exploring and exposing the UC's
apocalyptic, death-driven,

Human-making projects
But we are not interested in needing to know
everything:

We leave that work to people whose bodies

Have never been able to find their souls
We refuse the compulsion to solve, to
operationalize, to measure and contain
We refuse the university's demands to write and know
and think formulaically

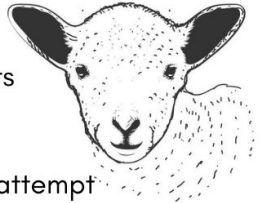
scientifically, rationally, legibly
in complete thoughts and finished sentences
We commit ourselves to a different kind of
experimentation:

To a solidarity in and with and through the
uncertain,

alchemical, living, changing, breathing breadth
of possibilities
Of how the world might be
otherwise.

populations when they deem the latter uncontrollable and in the
way of their land grabbing.

The UC is founded on Indigenous land dispossession. It
would not exist if it weren't for the Morrill Act of
1862 [2], which allowed Western colonial-capitalists
to parcel out stolen Indigenous land for free to its
beneficiaries. Despite its violent beginnings, many attempt
to justify this land grab in the past and present as something that
might have been morally dubious, but ultimately was necessary to
increase educational opportunities and access for the masses and
the betterment of the United States, for the world.



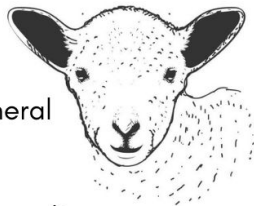
Because of history and perspective, we should be critical of any
claims towards liberalism or the idea that there can be a
"benevolent empire." After all, the humanitarian framework has
been used to justify a number of global atrocities carried out by
the United States and Western world. It can be seen in attempts to
justify the United States's current enabling and active support of
Zionist genocide of Palestinians in Palestine, by depicting
Palestinians as backwards, anti-semitic, homophobic, misogynistic,
and so on.

Secondly, academics, especially in the Social
Sciences and Humanities [3], have been engaging in
counter-insurgency intelligence work (gathering



information to spy on and destroy liberation movements) since the birth of modernity-coloniality. While their colleagues in the "hard sciences" have directly contributed to making weapons of mass killings, social scientists take on the dirty work of mapping local communities and locating weak spots for military occupation and attacks. For example, it has been well documented that prominent anthropologists worked with and for military and government intelligence agencies in colonies or semi colonies (Price). See for instance, James Scott's self-disclosed working relationship with the CIA in spying on student politics in Southeast Asia or the Australian army enlisting anthropologists in war zones (Scott; Rohde). Academic counter-insurgent infrastructure has always been in place in the universities we are in, the UCI Zionist network is but one of many examples of counter-insurgency's constant self-renewal and development in response to dissent emerging from our academic spaces. Therefore, **we want to deeply understand the relationship between the recent establishment of UCI's Zionist counter-insurgency and the University's already existing colonial, bio-political [4], & necro-political [5] regimes.**

Education has always gone hand in hand with the colonial project, as well. The act of schooling in general has been a tool of empire, a means of forcibly assimilating colonial subjects, with the Indigenous boarding schools being the most infamous example. Additionally, education



Our vision is not for reconciliation or repair. The historical record has proven time and again where that leads us. Our vision, instead, is one of radical refusal—

of mourning, re-membering, rerooting, rerouting and reweaving

Our praxis is one of diving deeply into the organs, the flesh, the fascia

The belly of the beast; of dissecting its innards and

Composting the remains

Scattering them across hymns and rhythms that know a deeper truth.

Our praxis is one up uprooting and unearthing and exposing —

Of letting truths, in their pluriverse of multiplicities, take a breath

Meet the air and oxidize as the imperial university's narratives of Civilization and Progress

Turn to rust

Our praxis is one of sifting through poisoned soil

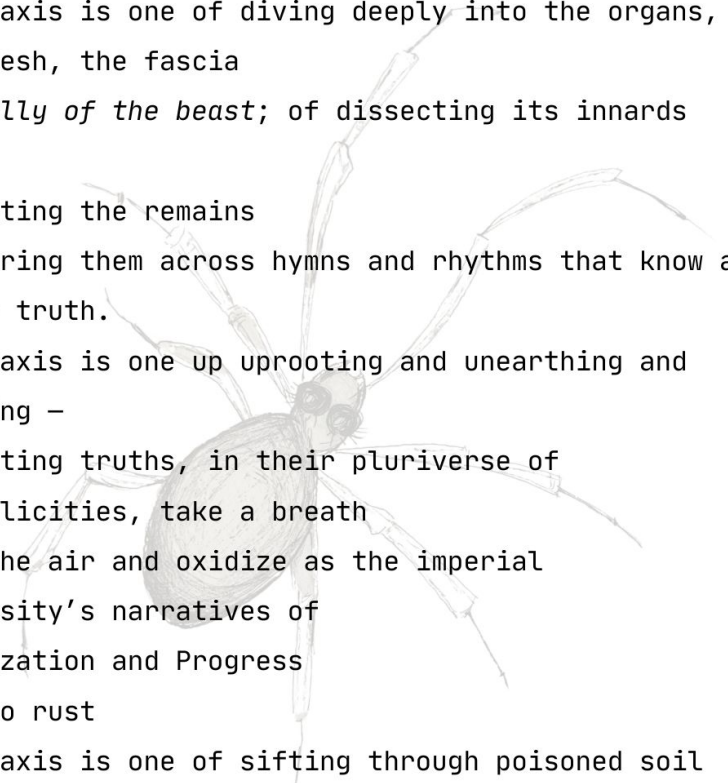
Of letting toxins reveal themselves

Our vision is one of alchemy.

Our politics refuse inclusion and

Reject self-righteousness.

We are unruly and ungoverned by the academic/empirical/evidence-based ways



tactics used on its students and workers, and for its constant commitment to profit and control, exercised aggressively by maintaining racialized, classist, ableist, and heteropatriarchal hierarchies.

But we've heard it in the courtyards, the library stacks, the bathrooms, the hallways of our dorms: a whisper, a sigh of discontent. Wake up! Don't look away! We'll turn that sigh to song. We write in radical hope, from the seams of the empire. Its (ivory) towers are not unbreakable. **Fuck it, let's give it a tug, that we may dance on its debris.**

has produced "knowledge" which proposed colonization is simply the natural order, exoticizes people of color, and produces weapons of mass destruction — as seen with anthropology's shaping of race as a biological trait, the 1904 St. Louis World Fair's infamous display of 'real life African cannibals,' and the testing of atomic bombs in the indigenous lands of the US's Southwest and Oceania which continues into today (Micale; Johnson; Hsu).

Counter-insurgent agencies have used ostensibly radical-leftist academic knowledge production as a tool for infiltrating target populations. It is an open secret that military and intelligence organizations do their due diligence when it comes to leftist theories and social movement studies, keeping up with contemporary changes in insurgency organization. For example, military defense analysis programs deliberately use social movement theories to devise strategies for insurgency demobilization. Also, the CIA carefully reads French cultural Marxist theorists to help understand and infiltrate militant Marxist, anarchist, socialist, and other liberation movements (Rockhill). Finally, the IDF (Israeli Defense Force) organized close reading groups on French post-modern theories among commanders to incorporate their urban operation protocols in the occupied Palestine (Weizman). Therefore, we have to be aware of the fact that counter-insurgency work seeps into our day-to-day intellectual labor and continuously renews itself by taming, appropriating, and suppressing our knowledge production, mobilizing toward colonial genocidal ends.



Third, intelligence agencies are not as intelligent as they might want to be when it comes to predicting and preventing insurgencies. To make up for this and maintain control, they create violent infrastructure and systems that invade every aspect of our lives. This counter-insurgency infrastructure has harmful implications far beyond just targeting militant dissenters. One way to understand the pervasive nature of the colonial-military complex in our every-day lives is through the concept of "the imperial boomerang effect." The imperial boomerang effect describes how the violent imperial practices that colonial military forces employ in marginalized populations elsewhere, eventually return and are used to oppress their own populations and control every fabric of society. This can be seen in how French military colonization of Algeria migrated back to the policing of student protestors in May 1968, how brutal repression of colonized Ireland led to the establishment of modern British police intelligence, and how the United States used the war on the Philippines as the test ground for its latter War on Terror surveillance regime (Ross; Woodman "British police and intelligence"; Woodman "U.S. Empire"). The tactics that are used in colonies and other nations become those that are enacted domestically. This is one way the colonial logic of population control infiltrates the most seemingly benevolent institutions in our society. We have to understand this long migration of counter-insurgency from the global South to the imperial core, because our struggles against the repression of student activism here at UCI is deeply intertwined with the repression of insurgency everywhere in the globe.

an index finger pointing to what is to be done.

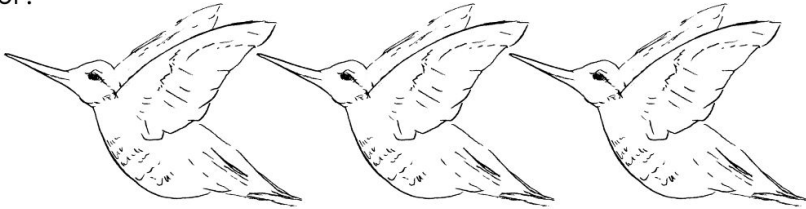
We write because the knowledge we make here has material consequences. Scholars have fed the counter-insurgent academic machine for far too long. We want liberated education for all, fueled by collective knowledge building, creativity, curiosity, mutual support, and care. What we get: an institution that disciplines, gatekeeps, and separates. This place is not for learning. The regents know exactly what they're doing. This is a perfectly-oiled profit mechanism; either you get with the program or you suffer the consequences (note: why the UC needs policing).

Our struggle is not isolated. We are bound to global fights for liberation. Our work supports this institution, our tuition funds its investments, our knowledge provides its intelligence. Neutrality is a cruel but effective fiction. When we keep our head down, we pave the way of and for the empire. Despite its attempts to conceal it, much about this place has to do with Palestine. We're unearthing this together.

Palestinians resist, and Palestinians will free themselves. We write to ensure nothing is overwritten. Israeli aggression toward Palestinians did not begin on October 7, and neither did the UC's efforts to squash solidarity with Palestine. In this work, we hold the UC accountable for its complicity in the genocide of Palestinians, for its continuous silencing of dissent on campus, for the pacifying

We've shown in other writings UCI's involvement in weapons manufacturing and its investment in military expansion [8]. So, while our projects are committed to archiving and educating, they also seek to materially erode UC/I. As students and workers of the University, in the belly of the beast, we must use our leverage for disruption. Heed our call to strike for liberation.

It is as true as ever that only we can free us. What are you waiting for?

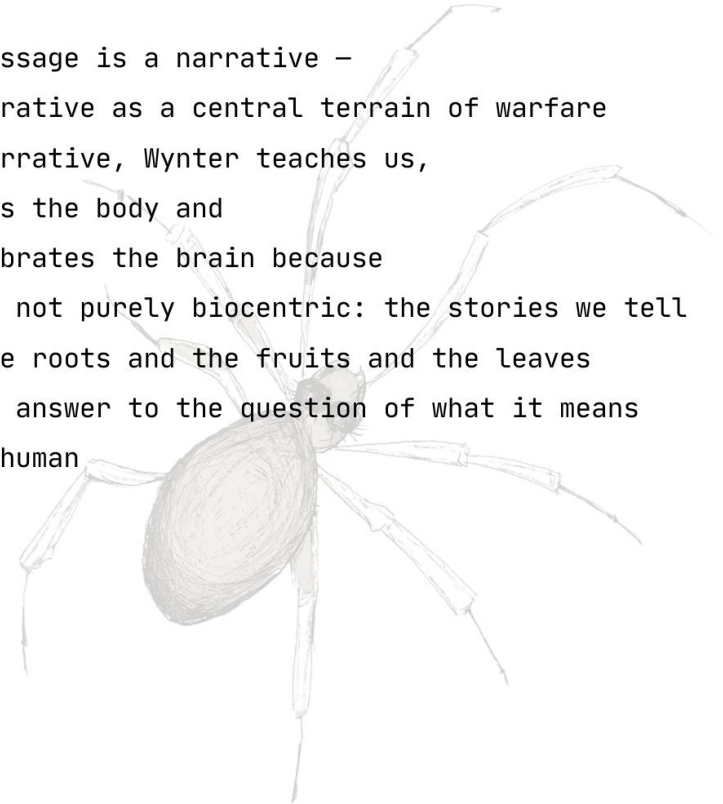


What do you study? Think about it, really. That's why we're here. The University shows its hand — "disciplines" did not earn their name for nothing. Collective study is a labor of love. Collective study, after Moten and Harney, is poiesis (Moten "Undercommons" 24). This creating is a flower in a Coke bottle, what José Esteban Muñoz calls "an opening...indispensable to the act of imagining transformation" (Muñoz 9). We write because we want everything.

From the neoliberal UC, from the settler colonial US empire, we write because the University has rendered illegitimate any form of learning it does not itself sanction. We write as praxis, without replacing praxis. We read, we follow threads, we talk to each other as we are talking to you. This is not a molotov cocktail — just

This message, we know and we name,
Is the form, function, and necessary outcome
Of the imperial university's empires of knowledge
Of the imperial UC as an empire of knowledge
The message is one of the relationship between
Epistemic domination and ontological annihilation.

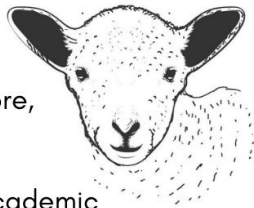
The message is a narrative —
Is narrative as a central terrain of warfare
And narrative, Wynter teaches us,
Rewires the body and
Recalibrates the brain because
We are not purely biocentric: the stories we tell
Are the roots and the fruits and the leaves
Of the answer to the question of what it means
To be human



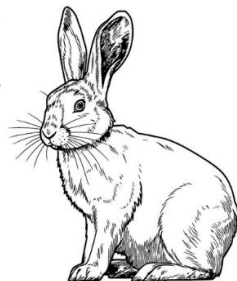
The UC's brand of violence extends beyond being a cog in the colonial machine. It functions as a business, a corporation, raking in our money generated from our tuition, our labor, and the endless other transactions of parking, rent, and so on... and investing said money in warfare both at home and abroad.



As counter-insurgency institutions seep back into the most seemingly unharmed spaces in the imperial core, we witness how their epistemology dominates the University as well. Academic disciplines neutralize, normalize, and naturalize colonial-genocidal logics in the name of scientific rigor, rationality, and apoliticality.



In fact, to begin to address a portion of the complicated web of Zionist collaboration at UCI, the first and arguably most centrally authoritative piece is the academic one. In response to coordinated anti-Zionist organizing and energy at UCI in the past, the University set out to hire faculty in the Political Science department specifically tasked with "addressing" the high rate of anti-Zionist sentiment at UCI. These people would go on to build greater institutional partnerships with the Zionist state, and bring in even more academics through visiting professorships with the Israel Institute. This academic work on Israel, coming out of UCI, allows the University to position itself as a neutral arbiter of information on Palestine — to adopt the UC Regents language, "a view-point



education forms the basis of any collective's sustainability, but on its own is not enough. Political education only leads to liberation when our collective actions reflect and materialize what we are thinking through and learning about. What ways can we materially achieve liberation? Embedded in the imperial core, at a university that has made clear its unwavering commitments to Israel and Zionism, our contribution comes in part from making these ties apparent. It also comes from destroying those ties, whether slowly, snip by snip, or in a great tear.

What we've come to realize in the last few months is that this sophisticated network of Zionism and militarism is not something a ceasefire can dismantle. Not even the International Court of Justice can halt genocide. As we recognize these facts, we work to create a more sustainable movement to combat the UC's militarism and Zionism, and to work towards our collective liberation. We are indebted to the ongoing Palestinian resistance, and to those in Yemen, Sudan, the Congo, and elsewhere who relentlessly fight against empire. The UC is an integral part of the empire, and our locus within it requires we act against it. These zines are both part of our archives and our political education. And even then, they are also building blocks. Our other writings have highlighted the need to hit the UC where it hurts — its finances. Described above is the clear relationship UCI has to platforming Zionist academics and deplatforming Palestinian ones.

de-radicalization, so it is imperative to be self-reflective and seek out those invested in direct coordinated actions from the shared desire for liberation. While this work is so, so personal to many of us, it is not something we can take (on) personally. This movement is beyond an individual, beyond personal feelings of shame, sadness, and hope — as much as it also thrives on our continued emotional investments. What it means to be part of a collective striving for liberation is ever evolving; it is a practice of love and care that is ever forming.

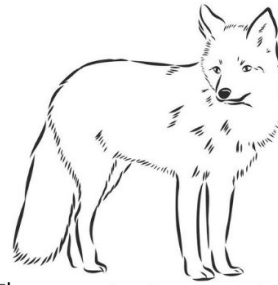
Sustainable resistance and communities of care require vulnerability and critical thought. If you are not in a space to do this — ask yourself what you need to do to get there. You cannot let hopelessness and despair overcome you: we owe it to those who continue to struggle in the face of unimaginable violence and trauma, in the face of genocide. We have a shared responsibility to try, to learn, to act. **We can continue to mourn, but we must also build.**

Everyone is starting from different points, and there is no shame in this. If you were shocked/sad/struck by Israel's actions in October, but in the months since have yet to do anything to bring us closer to liberation, there *is* shame in that. None of us have the luxury to wait for the "right moment" to begin — there is no such thing. Continue to educate yourself — to read and write and talk with others. But continue to learn from action as well. Political

neutral explanation of the Middle East" (Drake). That is, of course, nothing more than a sanitized history bereft of any acknowledgement of the historical trauma and suffering inflicted upon the Palestinian people and its historical links to UCI itself as an institution sitting on stolen land and generating wealth off of this land in perpetuity. These ideologically-driven but purportedly neutral academics were imbued with the institutional respectability that allowed for the epistemic erasure of the robust community of students, faculty, residents, and others, who were organizing for Palestine before such hiring efforts took place. Through this, the knowledge of these community members advocating for Palestine, rooted in the truth and weight of dispossession and death, often formed through the trauma of bearing witness to Zionist aggression themselves, became even more illegible to the University. Their perspectives had no claim to the academic arena that UCI had crafted, but were rather, now, the crazed and infuriated cries of a people whose knowledge was rendered illegitimate, unacademic, and fanatical.

Thus, the academic presence of those tasked with quelling anti-Zionism was a crucial aspect of this ongoing counter-insurgency. These academics allow for Zionist ideology to infiltrate every corner of campus as they set the discursive rules: anti-Zionism is anti-semitism, calls for liberation are hate speech, peaceful protests are threats to safety, and so on. Such effective control over the discursive terrain leaves those fighting for Palestinian

liberation forced out of academic spaces, and any attempt by them to claw their way back into the room, to be heard, is understood as inherently violent and disruptive. The right to be heard has been one that Palestinians have necessarily had to claim by force at Irvine after a coordinated campaign of crowding out such voices. They must push to be heard during Q&A events hosted using campus funds and the tuition dollars of students where Palestine itself becomes a dirty word, as our campus does the discursive work that parallels the physical reality of Zionist ideology: extermination. In 2019, the Combatting Extremism series at UCI hosted an event titled "A Conversational Debate on Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism" featuring none other than Bret Stephens and Michelle Goldberg. A liberal Zionist and a conservative Zionist who once called anti-semitism "a disease of the Arab mind" (Stephens). These are the people who would comprise the panel debating the link between anti-semitism and anti-Zionism, and of course, the idea that a Palestinian voice might appear on stage was out of the question, despite anti-Zionism being the only means of sustaining Palestinian existence. In 2023, after the events of October 7, we found ourselves receiving cross-campus emails promoting events titled "Updates on the Israel-Hamas War," from UCI's visiting scholar from the Israel Institute. Disappearing Palestine is their goal, and such events accomplish this, except for the fact that resistance at Irvine, like in Palestine, did not totally disappear simply because settlers willed it into existence through suppression. The hearts and minds of the



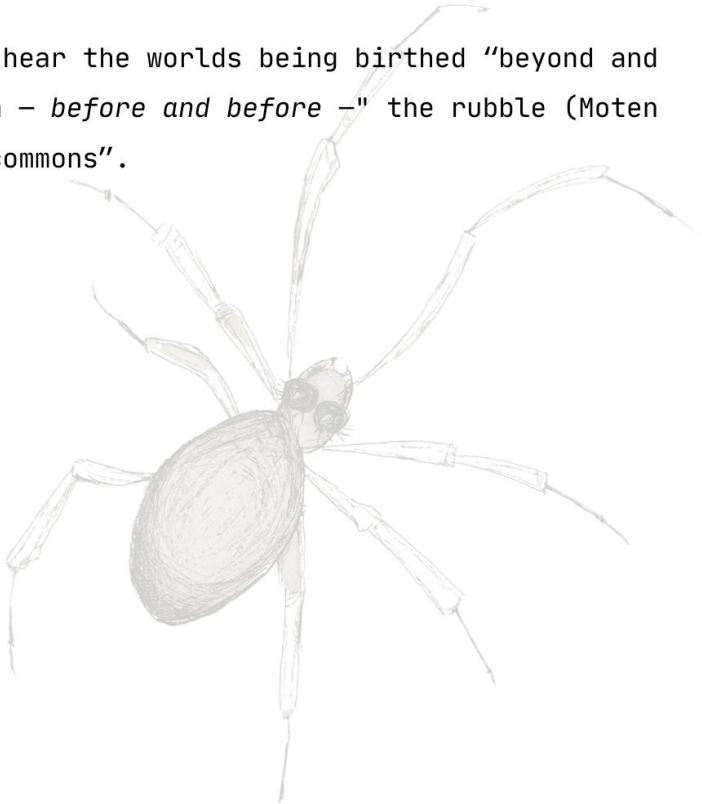
In the face of counter-insurgency,
what can be done?

The counter-insurgent and Zionist mobilizations at UCI are not a foregone conclusion; as we've illustrated above, these are coordinated state-sanctioned actions which (re)enact colonial-modernity logics at institutions supposedly dedicated to improving the human condition (a falsity if ever there was one). Some of us have never believed this lie, have never had on the blinders that blur the injustices being committed in the very place we get to read and learn and write. So, we ourselves mobilize. Our collective writings are acts of resistance and world-making. Our refusal is itself a negation of stagnating in complicity to the genocidal actions of the UC. It is where our work begins, but not where it ends. People in Palestine have urged us to pay attention, to archive the atrocities Israel is committing with impunity. Our work documents the relationship of the UC, and UCI in particular, to these crimes. Our privileged position within the institution provides us leverage in creating this archive.

By nature, this work is collective. Those creating networks of counter-insurgency are not operating alone, and neither can we. Political education is foundational to building collectives of people dedicated to liberation — armchair activism can of course lead to

We are not asking to be etched into the archive of a people whose bodies do not know their souls. We are not asking to become voices in a chorus that has no rhythm, in a place that knows only death, in an empire that cannot hear the ember burning underneath the terror

Cannot hear the worlds being birthed "beyond and beneath – *before and before* –" the rubble (Moten "Undercommons").



oppressed and colonized remain intractably tied to their dreams of liberation. This is why the Palestinians will outlast Israel, and why we will outlast the UC. The communities the UC dispossess, murders, starves, and then renders discursively absent, illegible, or non-tangible remain present, alive, and human nonetheless.

Our knowledge comes from a collection of sources, discussions with those who lived it, and archives of resistance. UCI itself is built through the "architecture of counterinsurgency," as Fred Moten once noted [6]. We know this all too well. This infrastructure was built over time, as the institution began to notice the power students had built and do everything in their power to dismantle it. We may all know about the Irvine 11 by now, where 11 Muslim students, some Palestinian themselves, were arrested for simply speaking during an event in 2010 where Michael Oren was onstage. The dynamics of this have become familiar to us at Irvine now. The university channels, their stages, their generous funding for speakers, their official dinners, their press-invited events, are all reserved for the representatives of these ideologies. In the case of Michael Oren, for the then ambassador to the country that, back in 2010, were engaged in another episode of mass death and displacement. In this now familiar play, those not given the microphone, the platform, who the University intends to render voiceless, find another way to speak, and then, are chastised and punished for it. During the Irvine 11, it was by now UC President Michael Drake, then Chancellor. They are then tried, for daring to

use the voices that the UC presumed they would understand were not welcome. Protection for Michael Oren (the man who once called former President Obama a secret Muslim that was unfairly sympathetic to the Palestinians) became UCI's mission, and the trial of 11 Muslim young adults, who had not yet begun their adult lives or careers, and who the UC purported to protect, became the public means of doing so. Their message was clear, that Palestine was, yet again, the word that exceeded the discourse. The country who exceeded the protection of international law. The people who exceeded their welcome.

This could be marked as a continuation of a ramped-up campaign in UCI's history of counter-insurgency. The neoliberal University would not want to invite the kind of public attention that would harm their business, as they had with the Irvine 11, which invited some likely unanticipated backlash. So instead, they hired people like Jeffrey Kopstein to help "solve" the problem of anti-Zionism on campus. Kopstein helped form more institutional partnerships with Israel, bringing ambassadors from the state to campus, and, crucially, visiting professors from the Israel Institute as well. He lent academic credibility to the theory that anti-Zionism and anti-semitism are related. According to Kopstein's research, where he has literally used UCI as an actual testing ground, running survey research on the undergraduate population at the school, he finds that anti-Zionism and anti-semitism are most closely linked within the Muslim student population at Irvine (Shenhav-Goldberg &

So let us not be confused. What we are up against is complete and total warfare. What we are up against are the death-driven, human-making, earth-shattering projects of modernity/coloniality/Progress/Civilization as they congeal in and through the UC.

How might, or how must, our relationships with this space change if and when we understand and study and refuse the UC for what it is and has always been:

a laboratory for counterinsurgent epistemic domination
a testing ground for ontological annihilation
and an indispensable apparatus in empire's ongoing
genocidal experimentation.

Our goal, then, is not the selective weaving of "subaltern" epistemologies and knowledge traditions into the imperial university. We refuse to relinquish the quiet hush, the reverberating rhythm, the deep, resounding hums and hymns of revolution to a place that will take that hush and that rhythm and those hums and those hymns and crush them up; sever and dismember them; carve them into fractions of themselves that can be churned into something commodifiable, something professionalizable, something like diversity and equity and inclusion.

are invisibilized — relegated sometimes to a Humanities course, but never in the "real" work of Political Science, where feigned objectivity and neutrality provide discursive cover to the political aims of Zionists on campus. Students are taught that while Israel may have issues, or may be complicated, its founding cause is moral and just. Then, this academic work is used to justify shifting policies, such as in the Higher Ground Report at UCI, which proposed "combatting anti-semitism" on campus by creating more institutional partnerships with Israel and training UCIPD with ADL consistent standards (Haynes). There is a political economy that decides whose voice holds authority at UCI, who can inform policy, and who is crowded out. This was decades in the making at UCI. These academic voices thus came onto campus as a means of counter-insurgent warfare, discrediting and crowding out the voices of those fighting for liberation, using their work to shift UCI policy and law enforcement, and then researching their effects to promote on other campuses as a model of their success. UCI is their testing ground for a model of how to quash student resistance.



Kopstein). No mention is made in this work of the fact that the Muslim Student Union temporarily lost their recognition on campus after the Irvine 11, or that they were once infiltrated by an FBI informant who messaged undergraduate students in efforts to entrap them. The lasting institutional memory of that has left a decades-long impact on the MSU's fear of sharing political messaging, but Kopstein's irresponsible work shifts the historical burden of anti-semitism as a European ideology rooted in white supremacy to that of Muslim students. He goes on to share this work with other campuses, as well as how his efforts to bring in Israeli ambassadors and build institutional partnerships with Israel can all serve as a model for other schools.

A self-proclaimed "social Zionist" in multiple occasions, Professor Kopstein teaches the graduate "Political Violence" seminar every year [7]. One can get a glimpse of the colonial logic of counter-insurgency in two main assumptions of this seminar, representative of social sciences of politics in general.



Assumption one: the modern nation-state's "right to exist" justifies and necessitates counter-insurgency.

Kopstein's seminar starts with the premise that modernity is a desirable and natural process, an integral part of that which is the founding violence of the modern nation-state. Instead of offering

critique and thinking about a way out, Zionist scholars normalize and weaponize this as a whataboutism against critics of the Israeli state. They ask, based on the modern capitalist world order, should Israel not be endowed with that order's "right to exist"? And to this we say, no one — nation-states, Israel, the USA, or any other — has a "right" to exist. The entitlement of this legal language erases the costs of all existences. In the case of Israel, the United States, and modern nation-states in general, these costs are atrocities, traumas, Indigenous land, racialized bodies, and more. As Jasbir Puar rigorously shows us, by "rights," the pro-Israel professors are claiming "the right to maim" and "the right to kill" civilians (Puar). Their seemingly harmless but persistent focus on the "right" of Israeli settlers, as Hagar Kotef's powerful works show, is an insidious effort to neutralize the "entitled colonizing self", or the violence of colonialism (Kotef). And we will not let this pseudo-science colonize our mind.

Assumption two: institutionally recognized scientific authorities monopolize the definitions of "enemy insurgencies" and civilians.

Kopstein's "Political Violence" seminar is notoriously steeped in the weaponization of positivist "expertise" as a method to cover up epistemic violence. The instructor repeatedly insists on finding an objective, narrow, definition of genocide, in the name of conceptual clarity, in order to avoid its "overextension." This conveniently serves his purpose of gatekeeping the concept and

ensuring only a few cases, particularly the Holocaust, can be deemed as proper genocides. Founded on the "rights" of settlers, such as the "right to self defense," this is meant to very consciously perpetuate the logic of academic Zionism. It additionally highlights the attempt to "legitimately" conflate anti-Zionism and anti-semitism as synonymous. Further, if the Holocaust is the only "true" genocide, then ostensibly anti-semitic speech is synonymous with genocidal hatred. By assuming the subject position of a scientist, Kopstein is able to operate under a contradictory logic: studying anti-semitism and its violence while perpetuating police brutality, violence against Muslim students, and the planned elimination of Palestinian voices and bodies. The coherence comes from the subjectivity provided by "expert" legitimacy. If you are by definition scientific, you get to decide what true violence is, who can claim authentic victimhood, and who is ontologically violent. That is, the subject of "the expert" is the only thing that holds this coherence together. Claiming to be in the position of neutrality, producing universalizable knowledges of science and/or history, and thus concealing how one's own subject position preconditions their way of seeing — this is referred to as the colonial transparency thesis of the subject, by Denise Ferreira da Silva, and it has long been criticized by Black, Indigenous, Queer, feminist scholars (da Silva).

Academics like Kopstein lend legibility to Zionist philosophies and talking points. They push out the perspectives of Palestinians, who