The Imperial University

State, War, and the Nation-State

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Sturm Troopers and Students

From January 19, 2012. It is midafternoon on a brisk and beautiful winter day in the Inland Empire of Southern California. I enter my second floor office in the Department of Women’s Studies at the University of California, Riverside. The hallway is silent. It reminds me, sadly, of any colorless and functional corporate office building. I wish for sound, some sign of collective social life. This alienating silence is particularly acute today given the noisy scenes of protest (including some Rabelaisian revelries with drumming and chants) taking place just a few hundred feet away in the student commons. The Board of Regents of the University of California (UC) is meeting on campus to address the budget crisis that has, for some years now, imperiled this great public university system and led to severe tuition hikes. Students know that their fees will be raised again. Contingent faculty and other workers know they will be plunged into further precarity. For some years now, the alliances forged among student, faculty, and labor unions in response to the public education crisis have meant that any high-level UC administrators’ gathering is met with well-planned protests and resistance. But it also means that police officers and other law enforcement agents are in full gear and out in full force.

Earlier in the day, I join other protestors who throng the site of the meeting and whose mood is quite upbeat. “Whose university?” someone chants. “Our university!” replies the crowd. Plainclothes men mingle with protesters, lots of cameras are out. A friend, familiar with surveillance techniques, nudes me: “No need to get paranoid,” she says, “but you do realize we are all being photographed?” A police officer repeatedly asks us to clear the commons. “Our university!” chants the crowd in response. In that micromoment of regulation around who should people “the commons,” I sense that a fence is being
built—and reinforced—around who can inhabit this public space of higher education and what it means for them to do so. Whose university, indeed?

Later, sitting in my quiet office, I suddenly hear a loud buzzing sound outside my window. A police helicopter is circling over the empty sports field adjacent to the building. It might be an optical illusion (because from that lofty mobile panopticon, it can see much more than I can), but it seems to be circling an empty expanse of green. I watch as the helicopter’s circles become smaller, tighter—it begins to resemble a psychotic bee. It seems utterly mad: the silence within, the angry buzzing outside. Suddenly, a small troop of khaki-clad youth march around the corner to my right. They have little bandanas around their neck, they are in perfect formation—they pass by quickly. I blink hard because it seems so unreal—the quick, youthful military march whose steps I cannot hear. Later, I am told that they were deployed by the Riverside sheriff’s department.

This tableau feels surreal and I decide to move back to the noise and action near the student commons. The scene has now turned tense. Police in full riot gear are nose-to-nose with students who are pushing them back. Protestors want the police out of their commons. I learn from someone that some protestors have been arrested. The Riverside Police Department’s SWAT team is already here and the regents have been escorted to their meeting in what looked like a secret service mission and military cavalcade, fit for royalty: regents, indeed. By late evening, the protestors have dispersed, but some of us, witnesses and participants, remain—talking about the various registers of militarized presence: the sheriff’s scouts, the campus police in full riot gear, the SWAT team. The disruption of this collective protest seems to have hardly caused a ripple as we stand there in the now-quiet bucolic green expanse. But as if to remind us of the hyperreal qualities of this landscape of power, we hear the thump of marching steps. Twenty men in light green khaki march by in platoon formation. They make no sound except for the quiet thud of their steps. They are young, not much older than some of the students I teach. The SWAT team is going home.

What can we make of this strange coupling of the bucolic and the brutal, of storm troopers and students? How can we make sense of a corporatized alienation and silence alongside the visible regulation of the “public” and contours of permissible protest? How can we understand more deeply this militarized performance of state university power and its “normalization” within the quiet green peace of a public university campus? What is being “secured” in this performance of power?
Occupy the Occupation

Sunaina: November 2011. Just a few months prior to the events witnessed by Piya at UC Riverside, I had watched the pepper spraying of students by police on my campus, UC Davis. I was actually halfway across the world at the time, in Ramallah, Palestine. Pondering the question of U.S. public university students’ right to protest from contexts such as the occupied West Bank, where the basic freedom of mobility let alone right to education is highly restricted, underscores the ways in which higher education is firmly embedded in global structures of repression, militarism, and neoliberalism. In fact, that November morning while I was working in Zamm cafe, one of the many upscale coffee shops that have burgeoned in the new neoliberal economy of Ramallah, I looked up from my laptop and saw the image of Lt. John Pike, spraying UC Davis students with chemical weapons, on the large-screen television that was broadcasting Al Jazeera news. It was a slightly surreal moment.

The video of the attack on the student protesters, seated on the ground, quickly went viral and drew national and global condemnation of this stark staging of state violence against the 99 percent, renaming the campus “Pepper Spray University.” Not all who watched the video of the police attack on the student protesters, however, were aware that this dramatic event was the culmination of a long history of UC student protests, including at UC Davis, against tuition hikes as the burden of the UC and state’s budget crisis was increasingly placed on UC students. In the months leading up to the infamous incident of November 18, 2011, UC Davis students had joined the growing Occupy movement, inspired by the revolutionary uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt. In fact, they had protested just a few days earlier against the fee hikes and also the violent assaults by police on UC Berkeley students and faculty. Student protesters, some of whom belonged to Occupy/Decolonize UC Davis (UCD), occupied the administration building and erected tents on the campus Quad. The administration refused to allow Tahrir Square to be brought to the Quad, but the protesters insisted on their right to remain—in defense of the right to education. Then the pepper spray.

In fall 2009, UC Davis students had also occupied the administration building, and fifty-two protesters were arrested. In March 2010, three hundred protesters had shut down the campus bus service and marched to the freeway to attempt to block traffic; they were beaten by police with batons. Many of these students were youth of color, some were from immigrant and
working- or lower-middle-class families. When the Occupy/Decolonize UCD movement was launched in the wake of the Tahrir Square uprising, some began to also critique the ways in which neoliberal multiculturalism effectively masked the racialized politics of exclusion from higher education.¹ In spring 2012, Occupy protesters began doing a regular sit-in at the U.S. Bank branch on campus, protesting the bank’s contract with the campus and the complicity of both institutions with mounting student debt and the privatization of higher education. On March 29, the bank was shut down, but eleven students and one faculty member were charged by the Yolo County district attorney with a slew of misdemeanors, facing up to eleven years in prison. Among the “Davis Dozen” were students who had been pepper sprayed and who were part of a lawsuit brought by the ACLU against the university. In fact, given that it was the university who had asked the district attorney to file criminal charges against the Davis Dozen, it was apparent that this much-less publicized case was an opportunity for the administration to clamp down on the campus Occupy movement after having been unable to do so in the fall, given the national and international outcry over the pepper spraying. Some student activists were also brought up individually for investigation by Student Judicial Affairs for issues apparently related to involvement in other campus activism. In other words, this was a tactic of legal pepper spraying.

One of the issues that had rocked the campus earlier in spring 2012, and in which some Occupy activists had been involved, was the attack on the Palestine solidarity movement at UC Davis in the wake of the controversial interruption of an Israeli soldier’s talk on campus by a student. Off-campus, pro-Israel groups began issuing vitriolic statements of condemnation, and UC president Mark Yudof sent a strident letter to the entire UC community condemning the disruption. The UC Davis Students for Justice in Palestine had actually staged a silent walkout at the event in order to avoid criminal charges similar to those that had harshly penalized the UC Irvine and UC Riverside students, known as the Irvine II. These eleven students had disrupted the speech of the Israeli ambassador at UC Irvine after the 2009 massacre in Gaza and had been prosecuted by the Orange County district attorney for their civil disobedience. The criminalization of the Irvine II sent a chilling message to Palestine solidarity activists that free speech in the case of critique of the Israeli state was not free, even in the academy, and came with the price of possible felony charges by the state. But the case also sparked creative organizing strategies as student activists nationwide began
walking out of pro-Israel events with their mouths taped, silently performing a critique of censorship and the exceptional repression of open debate on this issue. It became apparent that Israeli government officials and soldiers of a foreign (occupying) military—supported and funded heavily by the United States—had more freedom of political speech on U.S. public university campuses than college students (not to mention the fact that many Arab and Muslim American youth have been subjected to FBI surveillance and entrapment since 9/11).

In Ramallah, as the Arab revolutions swept across the region in 2011, Palestinian youth, too, protested against military occupation as well as internal repression. Palestinian students continue to be abducted and incarcerated by Israel, which restricts their access to schools and colleges, as highlighted by the Right to Education campaign at Birzeit University. Young activists began stencilling graffiti on the walls of Ramallah with slogans such as “Occupy Wall Street, Not Palestine” and “#Un-Occupy.” Student activists at UC Davis were simultaneously rethinking the vocabulary of “occupy,” which signifies a tactic of protest and also a colonial practice, and adopted the label “decolonize” to indicate their solidarity with indigenous peoples. “Decolonize the university” is their demand—occupy the banks and occupy the occupation of other lands, other universities, and other societies transformed and devastated by settler colonialism, militarism, and neoliberal capitalism.

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In a post-9/11 world, the U.S. university has become a particularly charged site for debates about nationalism, patriotism, citizenship, and democracy. The “crisis” of academic freedom emerges from events such as the ones we witnessed in Riverside and Davis but also in many other campuses where administrative policing flexes its muscles along with the batons, chemical weapons, and riot gear of police and SWAT teams and where containment and censorship of political critique is enacted through the collusion of the university, partisan off-campus groups and networks, and the state. After 9/11, we have witnessed a calamitously repressive series of well-coordinated attacks against scholars who have dared to challenge the national consensus on U.S. wars and overseas occupations. Yet there has been stunningly little scholarly attention paid to this policing of knowledge, especially against academics who have dared to challenge the national consensus on U.S. wars and overseas occupations and U.S. foreign policy in the Middle
East. Simultaneously, the growing privatization of the public university, as in California, has demonstrated the ways in which the gates of access to public higher education are increasingly closed and the more subtle ways in which disident scholarly and pedagogical work (and their institutional locations) is delegitimized and—in particularly telling instances—censored at both public and private institutions. The 9/11 attacks and the crises of late capitalism in the global North have intensified the crisis of repression in the United States and also the ongoing restructuring of the academy—as well as resistance to that process—here as well as in the global South.²

What does it mean, then, to challenge the collusion of the university with militarism and occupation, the privatization of higher education, and economies of knowledge from within the U.S. university? When scholars and students who openly connect U.S. state formation to imperialism, war, and racial violence are disciplined, then how are we to understand freedom, academic and otherwise? How is post-9/11 policing and surveillance linked to racial, gendered, and class practices in the neoliberal academy? Has the War on Terror simply deepened a much longer historical pattern of wartime censorship and monitoring of intellectual work or is this something new?

This edited volume offers reports from the trenches of a war on scholarly dissent that has raged for two or three decades now and has intensified since 9/11, analyzed by some of the very scholars who have been targeted or have directly engaged in these battles. The stakes here are high. These dissenting scholars and the knowledges they produce are constructed by right-wing critics as a threat to U.S. power and global hegemony, as has been the case in earlier moments in U.S. history, particularly during the Cold War. Much discussion of incidents where academics have been denied tenure or publicly attacked for their critique of U.S. foreign or domestic policies, as in earlier moments, has centered on the important question of academic freedom. However, the chapters in this book break new ground by demonstrating that what is really at work in these attacks are the logics of racism, warfare, and nationalism that undergird U.S. imperialism and also the architecture of the U.S. academy. Our argument here is that these logics shape a systemic structure of repression of academic knowledge that counters the imperial, nation-building project.

The premise of this book is that the U.S. academy is an “imperial university.” As in all imperial and colonial nations, intellectuals and scholarship play an important role—directly or indirectly, willingly or unwittingly—in legitimizing American exceptionalism and rationalizing U.S. expansionism
and repression, domestically and globally. The title of this book, then, is not a rhetorical flourish but offers a concept that is grounded in the particular imperial formation of the United States, one that is in many ways ambiguous and shape-shifting. It is important to note that U.S. imperialism is characterized by deterritorialized, flexible, and covert practices of subjugation and violence and as such does not resemble historical forms of European colonialism that depended on territorial colonialism. As a settler-colonial nation, it has over time developed various strategies of control that include proxy wars, secret interventions, and client regimes aimed at maintaining its political, economic, and military dominance around the globe, as well as cultural interventions and “soft power.” The chapters here help to illuminate and historicize the role of the U.S. university in legitimizing notions of Manifest Destiny and foundational mythologies of settler colonialism and exceptional democracy as well as the attempts by scholars and students to challenge and subvert them.

This book demonstrates the ways in which the academy’s role in supporting state policies is crucial, even—and especially—as a presumably liberal institution. Indeed, it is precisely the support of a liberal class that is always critical for the maintenance of “benevolent empire.” As U.S. military and overseas interventions are increasingly framed as humanitarian wars—to save oppressed others and rescue victimized women—it is liberal ideologies of gender, sexuality, religion, pluralism, and democracy that are key to uphold. The university is a key battleground in these culture wars and in producing as well as contesting knowledges about the state of the nation.

We argue that the state of permanent war that is core to U.S. imperialism and racial statecraft has three fronts: military, cultural, and academic. Our conceptualization of the imperial university links these fronts of war, for the academic battleground is part of the culture wars that emerge in a militarized nation, one that is always presumably under threat, externally or internally. Debates about national identity and national culture shape the battles over academic freedom and the role of the university in defining the racial boundaries of the nation and its “proper” subjects and “proper” politics. Furthermore, pedagogies of nationhood, race, gender, sexuality, class, and culture within the imperial nation are fundamentally intertwined with the interests of neoliberal capital and the possibilities of economic dominance.

The chapters here link the critique of the university to the contemporary as well as historical workings of race, warfare, and the nation-state. They demonstrate that an analysis of the foundational linkages between the U.S.
academy and the imperial nation-state need to be critically scrutinized, especially in the post-9/11 moment, and that overseas imperial interventions are linked to domestic repression, policing, and containment that penetrate the university. In drawing attention to the core issue of U.S. imperialism, this volume goes beyond a liberal discourse of academic freedom, one that is generally bounded by the nation and individual rights. Shifting the focus from notions of freedom of expression, the chapters here link the battles over knowledge production and the policing of critical scholarship to the geopolitics of U.S. imperialism across historical time and space. The contributors to this book bring together seemingly disparate geographic areas and historical moments that are key sites of U.S. expansionism and U.S.-backed occupation (such as the Philippines, Palestine, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico) as well as varied fields of scholarship (such as American studies, cultural studies, Middle East studies, feminist studies, queer studies, and ethnic studies) precisely to show how knowledge building is central to the imperial project.

The chapters speak to one another across self-evident areas, themes, disciplines, and historical periods. Through multidisciplinary research, autobiographical reflection, and writing in theoretical as well as personal registers, the book offers an intellectual and political intervention that we have imagined as a project of solidarity. As scholars who spend long hours sitting in our quiet offices—occasionally interrupted by the buzz of a helicopter—or in cafes in zones of differential occupation, wondering what acts of violence are not being televised, we began working on this book in order to engage in a conversation that often only happens in university hallways or over cocktails at academic conferences but not enough in public and in print. The contributors to this book raise crucial questions about the imperial university that we hope will generate and contribute to an important, unfolding conversation with scholars, intellectuals, and students and also activists, policymakers, and interested readers in the United States and beyond.

Insiders/Outsiders/Solidarities

Our geopolitical positions—of our immediate workplaces as well as transnational work circuits—underscore the complex contradictions of our locations within the U.S. academy. These paradoxes of positionality and employment have seeded this project in important ways. We have both taught at the University of California for many years—in addition to other U.S. universities—and have been members of the privileged upper caste of
U.S. higher education: the tenured professoriate. We have each used these privileges of class, education, and cultural capital to live and work transnationally and have organized around and written about issues of warfare, colonialism, occupation, immigration, racism, gender rights, youth culture, and labor politics, within and outside the United States. In fact, we first began working together when we collaborated in 2008 on a collective statement of feminist solidarity with women suffering from the violence of U.S. wars and occupation, during the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and the Israeli siege of Gaza. Yet our privileges of entry, of inclusion, and of outside-ness are also always marked by the “dangerous complicities” of imperial privilege and neoliberal capital, as the chapters by Julia Oparah; Sylvanna Falcón, Sharmila Lodhia, Molly Talcott, and Dana Collins; Vijay Prashad; and Laura Pulido powerfully remind us. Even as we have recognized the institutional privileges and complicities through which we can do this work, we have experienced at various moments and in different ways—as the chapters by Alexis Gumbs, Clarissa Rojas, Thomas Abowd, and Nicholas De Genova suggest—a keen sense of being “outsiders” within—in the university, in academic disciplines, in different nations.

As scholars and teachers located within “critical ethnic studies” and “women and gender studies,” we are also well aware of a certain politics of value, legitimacy, and marginality at play, especially as the dismantling of the public higher education system and attacks on ethnic studies around the nation accelerate. The struggles to build ethnic studies and women/gender/sexuality studies as legitimate scholarly endeavors within the academy, emerging from several strands of the civil rights and antiwar movements, are well chronicled and keenly debated. The precarious positions as well as increasing professionalization and policing of these interdisciplinary fields within the current restructuring of the university is a matter of deep concern; for example, in the wake of the assault on ethnic studies in Arizona, the dismantling of women’s studies programs, and in a climate of policing and criminalizing immigrant “others” across the nation.

The pressure on academics to fund one’s own research—following the dominant grant-writing models of science and technology—is now even more explicit in a time of fiscal crisis and deepening fissures between faculty in the humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, education, and business who occupy very different positions in an increasingly privatized university. Prashad reminds us in his chapter of the consequences of the fiscal crisis for college students who bear a massive and growing burden of debt. We
recognize these pressures on faculty and students as stemming from neoliberal capitalism and the university's capitulation to a global "structural adjustment" policy that is now coming "home" to roost in the United States, as astutely argued by Farah Godrej in her analysis linking the neoliberal university to militarism and violence. The academy has also tried to market the notion of "public scholarship," transforming activist scholarship into a commodifiable form of knowledge production and dissemination that can affirm the university's civic engagement—confined by the parameters of permissible politics, as incisively critiqued by Salaita, Rojas, and Abowd. If we cannot—or choose not to—market our scholarship and pedagogies through these programs of funding and institutionalization, we find our work further devalued within the dominant terms of privatization in the academy. Given that neoliberal market ideologies now underwrite the "value" of our research and intellectual work, what happens to scholars whose writing directly tackles the questions of U.S. state violence, logics of settler colonialism, and global political and economic dominance?

We know from stories about campaigns related to tenure or defamation of scholars, often shared in hallways during conferences and sometimes through e-mail listservs and the media, that there are serious costs to writing and speaking about these matters. For far too many colleagues who confront the most taboo of topics, such as indigenous critiques of genocide and settler colonialism or especially the question of Palestine, the price paid has been extraordinarily high. It has included the denial of promotion to tenure, being de-tenured, not having employment contracts renewed, or never being hired and being blacklisted, as this book poignantly illustrates. Coupled with the loss of livelihood or exile from the U.S. academy, many scholars have been stigmatized, harassed, and penalized in overt and covert ways. There are numerous such cases, sadly way too many to recount here—most famously those of Ward Churchill, Norman Finkelstein, David Graeber, Joel Kovel, Terri Ginsberg, Marc Ellis, Margo Nanalal-Rankoe, Wadie Sa'di, and Sami Al-Arian—but it is generally only the handful that generate public campaigns that receive attention while many others remain unknown, not to mention innumerable cases of students who have been surveilled or harassed, such as Syed Fahad Hashmi from Brooklyn College, while again there are countless other untold stories. These are the scandals and open secrets, we argue, that need to be revealed and placed in broader frames of analysis of labor and survival within the U.S. university system.

As some of the chapters powerfully demonstrate, struggles against
censure, self-censorship, and institutional silencing are connected to longer genealogies in which the alliance between the academy and state power is abundantly clear. We consider this gathering of chapters an act of collective and collaborative solidarity between authors and editors, who in different ways have engaged and challenged the dominant codes of belonging and citizenship within the academic nation. Indeed, as the chapters suggest, these critiques also offer the possibility of a decolonized university—one in which we can both imagine and enact our pedagogies and scholarship through a postcarceral and nonimperial institutional lens, as suggested by Oparah and Falcón et al. and as gestured to by several other authors. Such a process of decolonization is possible through the work of solidarity. The collection joins a growing archive of urgent conversations about the future of critique and dissent in the U.S. university that we will continue to engage with through a web archive that accompanies the book. We hope this digital project will allow this conversation to spill over from the pages of the book and continue in the years to come.

**Crises and Continuities**

While the heightened patriotism in the wake of 9/11 and a decade of U.S. wars and occupation overseas have amplified the role of the academy in shaping our understanding of U.S. global dominance and simultaneously intensified attacks on “anti-American” views—particularly in relation to the Middle East and to Islam—there is nothing “new” about this state of emergency. Ongoing debates about the role of the imperial university are indicative of the “state of exception”; that is, the exclusion of some from liberal democracy and eviction from political rights is not a sudden break but is constitutive of the imperial state and the state of permanent war.\(^2\) The notion of the “imperial university” suggests that the War on Terror and the post-9/11 culture wars made hypervisible the *persistent* role of higher education in shaping the discourses of nationalism, patriotism, citizenship, and democracy. This is a key premise of our framework and one that underlies many of the chapters here.

Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Lynne Cheney and Joseph Lieberman’s American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) and other neconservative groups sounded a clarion call for an intensified scrutiny of scholarship that challenged U.S. dominance.\(^3\) These campaigns underscored the frontlines of the culture wars through robust deployment of notions
of patriotism and national security considered key to defending “Western civilization” in a nation presumably facing an existential threat. Animating this powerful sense of danger to U.S. dominance are specific kinds of “anti-American” scholarship and the dangerous knowledges they impart. Furthermore, the specter unleashed by unruly student protestors and the repression that they elicit can be viewed as one important aspect of this end game of cultural and imperial supremacy—and its pepper spraying and paranolas.

The post-9/11 policing of knowledge and the neoliberal restructuring of the university create pressure points that reveal the forces of political imperialism and the economic matrix within which they are embedded, as argued by Godrej and Prashad, among others. This is a matrix that is historically formed: an imperial “knowledge complex” is fed by the profitable business of militarism, incarceration, and war. A decade after 9/11, the crises of late capitalism in the global North (and the dismantling of public education) unravel the “safety nets” for many university students and employees; this is a process that Gumbs points out has a much longer genealogy that is intertwined with the racial management of populations within and beyond the campus. The “downsizing” of the university unmask an ideological “precarity” even for critically engaged tenured or tenure-track faculty, among the most elite and “protected” of academic workers, as suggested by Pulido’s reflection on tenure battles in an elite, private institution. In fact, Oparah points out that private, liberal arts institutions are crucial to the corporate logics of the “global knowledge marketplace,” so that the neoliberal restructuring of the public university is clearly at work at private institutions as well, as wittily observed in Prashad’s account of his own college. Furthermore, Oparah argues that liberal arts colleges provide the corporate sector and the military-prison-industrial complex with “moral capital” precisely because of their supposed liberalism. As Prashad’s analysis suggests, the crises of “academic freedom” or student debt allow us to dig more deeply into the ways in which neoliberal practices and their geopolitics intersect—and how this informs the consolidation of the corporate university.

The bursts of dissent (both within scholarly production and in student protests and the Occupy movement) suggest that “business as usual” is being disrupted in the U.S. university. However, this dissent—and the modes of repression it provokes—begs the question of what sustains “business as usual.” Our introductory vignette, juxtaposing the bucolic green of a “peaceful” campus with the performance of militarized power, offers our unease with the normalized terms of “peace” in our elysian surroundings, not to
mention with the complicity of the U.S. state with military occupations elsewhere and the lockdown on open critique of particular foreign states. The police in riot gear do not signal something exceptional; rather, their presence unmasks the codes of “the normal” in academic discourse and practice. It is a normalization that we see routinely in the grants that we are encouraged to apply for and in Department of Defense funding that many scientists, social scientists, and technologists receive for their research, as discussed in Roberto González’s chapter. The capital provided by these grants has built the foundations of some of the most powerful and preeminent universities in the world: MIT, Stanford, UC Berkeley, California Institute of Technology (Caltech), and many others. The alliance between military research and science, which is well known, builds the deepest strata of connection and complicity between imperial statecraft and the knowledge complex of the U.S. academy. This, also, is nothing new, as González and Oparah demonstrate in analyzing the historical, global economies within which U.S. intelligence and prison systems enact violent logics of incapacitation and counterinsurgency.

The contributors to this book seek to illuminate the historical continuities of crisis and the boundaries of regulation and containment, especially in the current moment, because they reveal the threshold of academic repression. This involves connecting analyses of localized domestic dissent (e.g., in student protests) to the censorship of scholarship and pedagogies of critique of U.S. state projects (especially related to support for Israel and the domestic and global frontlines of the War on Terror). Many of the chapters highlight that the regulation and repression of various forms of dissent share core ideologies—about corporate and militarized capitalism as the means and ends of state power as well as the deeper codes of cultural, racial, and national supremacy that they enable. When the University of California debates the purchase of an army tank, as it did in Berkeley in 2012, it crudely reveals the profound strategic confluence of military science and militarized praxis in fortifying the citadels of higher learning.

There are four overlapping arenas central to this complex field of engagement and debate that undergird the conceptual framework of our book: imperial cartographies, academic containment, manifest knowledges, and heresies and freedoms. These arenas provide a rubric for understanding the intersecting fronts of the academic, cultural, and military wars, and they also provide the scaffolding for the chapters that follow in this book.
Imperial Cartographies

Empires of knowledge rest on the foundation of racial statecraft, militarized science, and enduring notions of civilizational superiority. What we call “imperial cartographies” can be traced through the meshed contours of research methods and scholarly theories as they are staked out in the pragmatic mappings of conquest, settlement, and administration of U.S. empire. It is important to note that expert knowledge on “other” cultures and civilizations has been a cornerstone of the development of academic disciplines and used in the management of “difference” within the nation as well as the conquest and management of native populations by the United States, here and overseas.

For example, Victor Bascara examines an early iteration (and a model, perhaps) of what Bill Readings has called the “Americanization” of the university. Bascara’s chapter on the imperial universities founded in the U.S.-controlled territories of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines after 1898 demonstrates how educational discourse and practices in the colonies exemplified a complex colonizing mission. Cultural “difference” was mapped within the classroom through a distinct racial and gendered lens, one that, however benevolently, consistently tracked the ideologies of U.S. military, cultural, and economic supremacy. The educational mission for inclusion and civilization “there,” on the periphery, became a laboratory for new regimes of governmentality “here,” within the immediate territorial borders of the United States.

If universities of the imperial periphery introduced a new governmentality and constructed mobile, but unequal, racial/gendered and national subjects, then these processes must also be understood within the epistemologies of “othering” being constructed by disciplines such as anthropology. Late nineteenth-century anthropology emerged through centuries-old scientific curiosity (and debates) about human difference as well as the administrative imperatives of other imperial powers, such as Britain. Theoretical constructions of categories such as “savage” and “primitive” were not mere reflections of ivory tower ruminations about human origins and human science or “cultural” essences but helped create the very scaffoldings of European and later U.S. imperial cartographies.

If these constructions of racial hierarchy shaped the curricular and disciplinary consensus about difference in the imperial university, then what can we say about institutional research practices that explicitly furthered state
projects, especially during times of internal and external crises, such as war? In other words, what happens when professional scholars use their disciplinary tools and training to further military projects to defend the "national interest"? Academic knowledges about others have been significant as both information and "intelligence" for the subjugation and administration of indigenous and minoritized communities, within and beyond the United States, as demonstrated by González's fascinating research on the contemporary Intelligence Community Center of Academic Excellence programs that target students of color. While this volume does not explore the fuller histories of the relationship between the U.S. academy and war efforts throughout the twentieth century, we gesture to some historical "plottings" that signal an enduring coimplication between the institutionalized practices of the military and the academy. It is this deep historicized process of normalization that has created the dominant "consensus" and "silence" in the imperial university in the post-9/11 period.

During World War I, for instance, some archaeologists worked as spies to literally offer "on ground geographical knowledges" that, as David Price argues, were "highly valued in wartime intelligence circles." This involvement, however, created controversy when Franz Boas, the preeminent anthropologist, protested the involvement of anthropologists with U.S. military intelligence. Though Boas was not supported by a majority of his colleagues, the controversy has shaped the debates about the politics and ethics of anthropologists' relationship to military intelligence to this day, as addressed in González's chapter and by the Network of Concerned Anthropologists within the American Anthropological Association.

The imperial university was deeply embroiled in issues of war, labor, and protest throughout the first half of the twentieth century and during the earlier Red Scare. World War I and its aftermath saw the targeting and deportation of anarchists and antiwar socialists during the infamous Palmer Raids in a period of heightened nationalism and repression. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) was cofounded in 1915 by John Dewey and Arthur Lovejoy; the latter resigned from Stanford University over a controversy regarding the abuse of immigrant labor by the industrialist Stanford family. In 1940, the Rapp-Coudert Committee was established to "investigate 'subversive activities' at public and private colleges in New York." Faculty and students at the City College of New York were protesting fascism and capitalism through the 1930s, with progressive student groups staging mass protests and sit-ins. The committee actually subpoenaed and
questioned more than a hundred faculty, students, and staff; denounced more than eight hundred public school teachers and college faculty; and fired over sixty CCNY faculty.22

It is, of course, World War II and the ascendance of the United States as a global superpower that propelled the alliance between the U.S. state and the academy to new heights. The Manhattan Project and the development of the atom bomb sealed this intimate and soon inextricable link between scientific research and militarism. As R. C. Lewontin powerfully suggests, “It is not General Groves at his desk in the Los Alamos labs that has provided the symbolic image of the atom bomb project’s iconography but an Italian professor building an atomic pile under the spectator’s stands of the University of Chicago’s athletic field. It is there, not in the Nevada desert, that Henry Moore’s ambiguous fusion of a mushroom cloud and a death’s head memorializes the Bomb.”23 As U.S. and Allied forces launched themselves into the global theatre of war, they recognized that they needed condensed, accelerated training about the geographies and peoples they were encountering. Ironically, it was the Boasian commitment to field-based linguistic anthropology that created the capacity for “quickly learning and teaching the languages of the new theatres of warfare.”24 Further, Army Specialized Training Programs (ASTPs) were established on 227 college and university campuses,25 and some anthropologists helped create “pocket guides” for Army Special Forces. These booklets summarized a region’s geographical history and included gems of “cultural advice” such as “not approaching Egyptian women” and “not concluding that East Indian men holding hands are homosexuals,”26 early predecessors to the post-9/11 manuals on understanding “the Arab mind” or Islam used to train U.S. military interrogators and FBI agents in the War on Terror.

If the distilled study of “other cultures,” enabled by academic expertise, became important for warcraft in external theaters, other sets of research skills were used for the surveillance and containment of “others” within the nation-state. For instance, anthropologists at the Bureau of Indian Affairs monitored and influenced war-related opinion on Native American reservations.27 Some anthropologists were involved in studying Japanese American communities as they “adapted” to their lives in the concentration camps set up by the War Relocation Authority, “one of the most publicly visible and volatile topics relating to anthropology’s war time contributions.”28 Between 1945 and 1948, this rapid and intense distillation of “method” and “information” about world cultures consolidated in area studies, arguably a paradigm
shift in U.S. scholarship, and one that was based on an interdisciplinary approach that would literally carve out—and map—"regions" of the world.

By the end of World War II and the onset of the Cold War, the state-university compact to ensure that scientific knowledges would continue to serve U.S. global power was well assured. Noam Chomsky has argued that by 1945, U.S. wealth and power in the "international sphere probably had no counterpart in history." Out of this mesh of forces of capital and superpower politics and supremacy emerged a consensus that state (and corporate) funding for "research and development" in science and technology in the service of military development was vital for the growth of universities.

Warnings about the dangers of this deep alliance between the U.S. military and intelligence, civil society, and the academy came not only from the margins but also from the Oval Office itself. Dwight Eisenhower prophetically warned about consequences of the immense power inherited in what he called the "military-industrial complex." Interestingly, in an earlier draft of this famous speech, he had apparently inserted the word "academic" in the now famous mantra of power, but it was deleted. It was another politician, William Fulbright, who issued a clear warning of the dangers of academic collusion with the militarized state when he stated, "In lending itself too much for the purpose of government, a university fails its higher purpose."

These concerns about the narrowing of the sphere of democratic debate were also being raised by distinguished scholars (such as Hannah Arendt and John Dewey) but McCarthyism and a new wave of political repression ensured that questions were not asked about the business of war—or the reasons that the business of war was also becoming an academic business.

This intersection of Department of Defense, Pentagon, and research university interests resulted in massive amounts of funding and shifted the fiscal nature of universities' state patronage from land-grant, agricultural resources to the huge war chest of the defense establishment. This fiscal patronage was both overt and covert, involving individual academics and departments across the disciplines, not just the sciences, with support from military grants. Chomsky, for example, remembers that in 1960 the political science department at MIT was funded by the CIA; closed seminars were held and "they had a villa in Saigon where students were working on pacification projects for doctoral dissertations." As González points out in his chapter, "the CIA supported social science research throughout the 1950s and 1960s to perfect psychological torture techniques that were outsourced to Vietnam, Argentina, and other countries." World War II and the Cold War
had created, without a doubt, the prime “condition for the socialization of research and education.” At the height of the Cold War, social scientists were recruited to serve in military intelligence operations—whether gathering more “benign” forms of information, serving with the army in Vietnam, or teaching in the School of the Americas—and after 9/11, became “embedded” with the military in Afghanistan and Iraq.

It is important also to note the countervailing forces that exposed some of these practices of imperial cartography and research to critical scrutiny and engaged in social protest and academic dissent. The combined pressures of decolonization, the U.S. civil rights movement, and the anti-Vietnam War protests in the 1960s unmasked the collusion between knowledge production and U.S. warcraft at significant moments. For instance, a scandal erupted about Project Camelot, initiated by the Special Operations Research Office (SERO) in 1964 and aimed at Latin America, with the stated goal to “devise procedures for assessing the potential for internal wars within national societies.” When exposed in Chile, it drew “unwelcome attention” to the clear geopolitical, Cold War imperatives of area studies.

If area studies constituted a certain kind of imperial cartography, its design also had “unintended consequences,” as argued by Immanuel Wallerstein. Most importantly, it opened up “interdisciplinary studies” in new ways and dislodged traditional ethnography and Oriental studies, the dominant approaches for the study of “Others.” These shifts created space for more “radical” visions of interdisciplinarity and curricular formation in the 1970s—namely, in the demand for, and establishment of, both ethnic studies and women’s studies. Decolonizing and radical social movements (within and outside the United States), especially the antiwar movement, were profoundly important in carving out some space for alternative cartographies of knowledge—albeit marginal ones—within the university.

If the protest movements of the 1960s interrupted the hegemonic workings of the military-academy nexus, the post-9/11 historical moment, according to many, is a retrenchment and intensification of this matrix of power. It is important to recognize the paradox cohering within the processes of collusion and protest at work in the academic-military-industrial complex. On the one hand, if it were not for the ruptures of the 1960s, however short-lived, we as scholars in ethnic studies and women’s studies would not be employed in the very institutional sites that were created by those interventions. On the other hand, as Roderick Ferguson has argued and as Rojas and Gumbs suggest here, ethnic studies is increasingly part of an
institutional incorporation and recuperation of protest movements and dissenting scholarship that can reproduce the deeply imperial logics of management and violence. This recomposition and absorption rests in the very paradox of the material realities that greatly expanded the U.S. academy and historically allowed it to prosper—military funding and military science. It was a prosperity that meant, and continues to mean, the normalization and acceptance of great repression within the academy and beyond, as evoked by Godrej and De Genova. Both repression and protest, then, might be viewed as part of the Janus-faced coin of the imperial university as engendered by U.S. economic power, especially in the immediate postwar period: a global supremacy intimately connected to the state-military alliance that protected its global capitalist interests.

What, then, are the “new” avatars of this imperial cartography? There are powerful historical continuities in the academy of the alliances among the natural and technological sciences, the social sciences, and the military-prison-industrial complex (MPIC), or the academic-MPIC. It is important to theorize, and map, the international political economies that underwrite the immensely powerful alliances among transnational corporate capital (especially in the business of war and prisons), the military industry, and the state. González draws attention to the $60 million Department of Defense–funded Minerva Consortium, which continues to provide funding to social science research projects connected to “national security.” The role of the academy in these alliances consolidates what Oparah calls “dangerous complicity,” which inform the politics of institutional—and disciplinary—survival in difficult economic times.

Certainly, there has also been resistance to the consolidation of the academic-military-industrial complex, for example, by the Network of Concerned Anthropologists and academics opposed to the Human Terrain System and by some scholars in the American Psychological Association during the heated debate about the role of psychological experts in torture practiced by the U.S. military in the War on Terror. There is also a long history of scientists who challenged the military imperatives of defense research—for example, offering an alternative definition of national security during the era of the Cold War and the nuclear arms race—and who were themselves regarded as “national security threats.”

But the question remains, is scholarly dissent simply the other face of the coin of academic repression—that is, are expressions of protest doomed to be incorporated into the imperial cartographies they resist or it possible for
them to create alternative mappings that resist recuperation? The chapters in this book allude to this enduring dilemma about resistance from within, directly and indirectly; some authors suggest that what is needed is a new paradigm that reframes the architecture of repression. For example, across distinctly different sites of (neo)colonialism and global capitalism, Oparah argues for an unmasking of a transnational carceral logic of “new” empire that traffics between the imperial core and its peripheries. She argues that it is not more, “countercarceral” knowledge that scholars resisting the “militarization and prisonization of academia” must produce in order to realize a postcarceral academy. Rather, academics must use their privilege to challenge the complicity of the academy with, and call for divestment from, prison and military industries. As Oparah and also Prashad eloquently suggest, the university must be reimagined as a site of solidarity with those engaged in struggles against neoliberal capitalism and organizing for the abolition of the academic-MPIC.

The chapters in this book provide analyses of imperial cartographies that can undergird this solidarity from within the academic-MPIC, uncovering the role of the carceral academy and exposing the hidden links between prison regimes in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as within the United States, not to mention secret prisons or “black sites” overseas. Orientalist constructions of terrorists or religious “fanatics” underwrite military interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan as well as counterterrorism programs in the United States. As scholars such as González have observed, counterinsurgency has a cultural front that rests on racialized understandings and management of populations, an argument that is extended in his chapter on intelligence training through new programs recruiting students of color for new, presumably cosmopolitan careers. Indeed, González argues that the new intelligence centers are predicated on a transnational, racial mapping where the “emphasis is on the importance of building an ethnically and culturally diverse pool of intelligence agents who might blend in more easily abroad” and on the need for “FBI agents who can speak to Muslim women that might be intimidated by men.” Curricular development in these new, multicultural sites of imperial knowledge production reproduce enduring racial/gendered stereotypes and old Orientalist binaries of the “East and West” necessary for new fronts of war.

This external Orientalized mapping is intimately coupled with racialized disciplinary regimes within the United States. If students of color in public universities are being targeted for intelligence training in more systematic
ways since 2001, then Oparah and Gumbs remind us of the historical presence of military recruitment and the prison industry at these same institutions. Oparah’s chapter remaps the indelible connections between U.S. militarization (abroad) and logics of carcerality (at home) through academic institutions that invest in and produce the capital, workers, and knowledges for an immensely profitable MPIC, one increasingly linked to foreign zones of occupation, such as in Palestine-Israel. These racialized, gendered, and classed mappings of an “empire within” are intimately linked to the subjugation of “foreign,” racialized others beyond U.S. borders—a simultaneous logic, and process, that is then used to contain, and target, dissent from within the imperial university.

**Academic Containment**

State warfare and militarism have shored up deeply powerful notions of patriotism, intertwined with a politics of race, class, gender, sexuality, and religion, through the culture wars that have embroiled the U.S. academy. The fronts of “hot” and “cold” wars—military, cultural, and academic—have rested on an ideological framework that has defined the “enemy” as a threat to U.S. freedom and democracy. This enemy produced and propped up in the shifting culture wars—earlier the Communist, now the (Muslim) terrorist—has always been both external and internal. The overt policing of knowledge production, exemplified by right-wing groups such as ACTA, reveals an ideological battle cry in the “culture wars” that have burgeoned in the wake of the civil rights movement—and the containment and policing demanded within the academy. Defending the civilizational integrity of the nation requires producing a national subject and citizen by regulating the boundaries of what is permissible and desirable to express in national culture—and in the university. As Readings observed, “In modernity, the University becomes the model of the social bond that ties individuals in a common relation to the idea of the nation-state.” Belonging is figured through the metaphor of patriotic citizenship, in the nation and in the academy, through displays of what Henry Giroux has also called “patriotic correctness”: “an ideology that privileges conformity over critical learning and that represents dissent as something akin to a terrorist act.”

This is where the recent culture wars have shaped the politics of what we call academic containment. For right-wing activists, the nation must be fortified by an educational foundation that upholds, at its core, the singular
superiority of Western civilization. A nation-state construed as being under attack is in a state of cultural crisis where any sign of disloyalty to the nation is an act of treachery, including acts perceived as intellectual betrayal. The culture wars have worked to uphold a powerful mythology about American democracy and the American Dream and a potent fiction about freedom of expression that in actuality contains academic dissent. This exceptionalist mythology has historically represented the U.S. nation as a beacon of individual liberty and a bulwark against the Evil Empire or Communist bloc; Third Worldist and left insurgent movements, including uprisings within the United States in the 1960s and 1970s and in Central America in the 1980s; Islamist militancy and anti-imperial movements since the 1980s; and the threat posed by all of these to the American “way of life.” The battle against Communism, anti-imperial Third Worldism, and so-called Islamofascism entailed regulating and containing movements sympathetic to these forces at home, including intellectuals with left-leaning tendencies and radical scholars or students—all those likely to contaminate young minds and indoctrinate students in “subversive” or “anti-American” ideologies.

What does it mean, then, to contain scholars who “cross the line” in their academic work or public engagement? Academic containment can take on many modalities: stigmatizing an academic as too “political,” devaluing and marginalizing scholarship, unleashing an FBI investigation, blacklisting, or not granting scholars the final passport into elite citizenship in the academic nation—that is, tenure. These various modalities of containment, which are discussed by Thomas Abowd, Laura Pulido, and Steven Salaita, among others, narrow the universe of discourse around what is really permissible, acceptable, and tolerable for scholars in the imperial university. All these modes are at work in the three important moments of ideological policing that we touch on here: World War I and the McCarthy era of the 1940s–1950s, the COINTELPRO era from the late 1950s to early 1970s, and the post-9/11 era or “new Cold War,” which is the major focus of this book.

Moments of social stress and open dissent about class politics in the United States during World War I and the first decades of the twentieth century make clear that containment worked in tandem with emerging definitions of “academic freedom.” As the U.S. professoriate began to build its ranks at the end of the nineteenth century and a few scholars challenged the status quo, “academic freedom” emerged as a way to deal with these dissenters as well as the “relative insecurity” felt by many in this new profession. Indeed, the tumult of the turn of the century led to a pattern within
the academy that has persisted—the exclusion of ideas as well as behavior that the majority did not like and an increasingly internalized notion that "advocacy for social change" was a professional risk for academics.

The AAUP's Seligman Report of 1915 reveals that the notion of academic freedom was, in fact, "deeply enmeshed" with the "overall status, security, and prestige of the academic profession." Setting up procedural safeguards was important, but its language regarding "appropriate scholarly behavior" and cautiousness about responding to controversial matters in the academy (by ensuring that all sides of the case were presented) suggested the limits of dissent. Academic freedom, then, is a notion that is deeply bound up with academic containment—a paradox suggested in our earlier discussion of protest and inclusion/incorporation in the academy and one that has become increasingly institutionalized since the formation of the AAUP.

The academic repression of the McCarthy era received its impetus from President Truman's March 22, 1947, executive order that "established a new loyalty secrecy program for federal employees." However, the roots of institutional capitulation—by both administrators and faculty—when the state targeted academics who were communists or viewed as "sympathizers" are much deeper. It is also significant that the notion of "appropriate behavior" for faculty rested on a majoritarian academic "consensus" about "civil" and "collegial" comportment. For example, Ellen Schechter notes cases prior to the Cold War where scholars were fired not necessarily for their political affiliations per se but due to "their outspoken-ness." This repression from within—not just beyond—the academy reveals the cultures of academic containment where, as Pulido, Gumbs, and Rojas remind us, certain kinds of " unruliness" must be managed or excised.

The logic of academic containment was dramatically staged during the civil rights and antiwar struggles, when the FBI surveilled and arrested Black Power, anti-imperialist, and radical scholar-activists during the era of COINTELPRO (1956–1971). Angela Davis, most famously, was fired from UCLA by then California governor Ronald Reagan for being a member of the Communist Party. Some of these radical intellectuals went on to develop and establish programs in ethnic studies, critical race studies, and women's studies, fields that later became embroiled in the conservative attacks that unfolded in the 1980s and 1990s against the specter of an "un-American" and "divisive" multiculturalism. Works such as Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind*, Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals: How Politics has Corrupted Our Higher Education*, and in some ways also David Hollinger's
Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism generated anxieties about the presumed failure of university education to transmit an essential set of knowledges and a contentious debate about the divisiveness of multiculturalism and movements for group rights.52

Right-wing hysteria and neconserative moral panics in the culture wars were accompanied by liberal concerns that ethnic studies, and to some extent women’s studies and queer studies, were devolving into “identity politics.” Liberal-left intellectuals, such as Todd Gitlin, worried that ethnic and racial studies asserted an identitarianism that was an abandonment of a “proper” left politics. Salaita points out that Gitlin also criticized as irresponsible scholars who challenged the policies of the Israeli state, as have other progressive scholars open to critiques of militarism or colonialism—except in the case of Israel. In other words, the culture wars were fought not just between the right and left but within the liberal-progressive left as well.

In her painful—and politically revealing—experience with Chicana/o studies in California public institutions over the past twenty years, Rojas offers a glimpse “of the ways imperial projects order gender/sexual/racial politics at the public university” and the “resulting devastating violence deployed on subjects deemed dangerous to the colonial imaginary of a colonial, heteropatriarchal Chicano studies.” The difficult question that Rojas’s “testimonio” addresses is how to connect this hetero-masculinist logic and violence—what she calls heteropatriarchalities—to the “incorporation” of ostensibly liberatory, decolonizing projects such as Chicana/a studies that were birthed through the antiwar and antiracist movements of the 1960s. We view this perverse “incorporation” of ethnic studies as the result of a dangerous “internalization” of the imperial project of the university and also as meshing well with the hetero-masculinist and classed cultures that shape the dominant, everyday practices of the imperial academy. Containment is not abstract at all—it is marked decisively, and often violently, on specific kinds of bodies whose presence is definitively marked as “Other,” as evident in Aboud’s and Godrej’s chapters. If one speaks from already dangerous embodiments, structured historically, then that speech risks always being seen as a threat. The “natives” within the academy must be most careful and most civilized in their speech, as Rojas and Aboud suggest. Their queer/sexed/raced bodies mark always-possible threats. There are enough natives who perform the terms of civilization and capitulation and contain themselves: that is how empires have always ruled—through tokenism,
exceptionalism, and divide-and-rule. When it comes from “within,” containment and silencing—as Rojas shows us—can be the most devastating of all.

These stories of academic containment must be situated within the culture wars and also within the context of what Christopher Newfield, among other critics, calls a “long counterrevolution” against the gains of the civil rights and left movements of previous decades. Newfield argues that right-wing movements waged a cultural offensive that targeted “progressive trends in the public universities” as an important front of “roundabout wars” on the middle class, waged through the “culture wars on higher education”: “The culture wars were economic wars” against the new, increasingly racially integrated middle class, “discrediting the cultural framework that had been empowering that group.” In other words, the culture wars were also class wars staged on a racial battlefield, for the corporatization and privatization of the public university, as in California, occurred as it was becoming more racially integrated.

Several chapters illustrate the ways in which academic containment emerges with and though the containment of economic, racial, and cultural struggles. In Gumb’s chapter, the class wars are situated in the racial management of student of color and immigrant populations in the CUNY system in the post-civil rights era of open admissions and campus occupations by students; violent policing to enforce “law and order” accompanied rising incarceration rates of people of color. Similarly, Godrej’s chapter illuminates the ways in which protests of university privatization and nonviolent civil disobedience by students and faculty during the current budget crisis in the University of California have been met with police brutality by increasingly militarized campuses; casting these movements as a threat evades the structural violence of tuition hikes, exclusion, impoverishment, home foreclosures, and the “neoliberal disinvestment in the concept of education as a public good.”

In effect, the neoliberal structuring of the university is also a racial strategy of management of an increasingly diverse student population, as increasing numbers of minority and immigrant students have entered public higher education. Well-funded, neoconservative organizations and partisan groups, such as ACTA, David Horowitz’s Freedom Center, and Campus Watch, have placed ethnic studies, feminist and queer studies, and critical cultural studies in their bull’s-eye as the political project of leftist professors running amok in the academy and teaching biased curricula. In addition, campaigns such as Horowitz’s Academic Bill of Rights and Student Bill of Rights constructed
the figure of a new victim in the culture wars: the “American student” whose freedom to challenge these partisan faculty had been suppressed. According to these right-wing campaigns, “radical” scholars were force-feeding U.S. college students with anti-American views, and right-wing students were being marginalized and “discriminated” against due to their political ideology and affirmative action programs. Thus the language of marginalization and exclusion was turned on its head, as the discourse of right-wing victimhood and ideological discrimination was unleashed against the political movements and intellectual projects that opposed racial and class inequality.

In addition, the right appropriated the language of “diversity,” a key point of contradiction in the academic culture wars. For example, the “Students for Academic Freedom” campaign launched by Horowitz used the notion of “intellectual pluralism” to mask its well-orchestrated attack on the left. The cultural right manufactured a portrait of itself as the true advocate of intellectual pluralism and freedom, remaking diversity through a “free market” model based on the right to choice in the marketplace of ideas. The notion of choice, central to models of flexible accumulation and global economic competitiveness for proponents of neoliberal capitalism, underlies the tenet of intellectual choice. A “weak” multiculturalism and liberal notion of tolerance thus served the right well, for they used it to argue that the problem was not simply that of “diversity,” which they apparently embraced, but that there wasn’t enough “intellectual diversity” on college campuses. Teaching, and also research, was becoming one-sided, to the detriment of those upholding “true” American values, who were increasingly marginalized in hotbeds of left indoctrination into anti-Americanism on college campuses. In addition, as Pulido’s case study demonstrates, as faculty and administrators of color—not to mention women—have made their way into the ranks of university management, academic institutions can hide behind the language of racial (and gender) representativeness and tokenist inclusion to deflect critiques of systemic problems with faculty governance.

The strategic co-optation of the language of pluralism for academic containment is nowhere more evident than in the assault on progressive scholarship in Middle East studies and postcolonial studies and in the intense culture wars over Islam, the War on Terror, and Israel-Palestine. The 9/11 attacks and the heightened Islamophobia they generated allowed Zionist and neoconservative groups to intensify accusations that progressive Middle East studies scholars and scholars critical of U.S. foreign policy were guilty of bias and “one-sided” partisanship, as observed in accounts of censure,
suspicion, and vilification by Abowd, De Genova, and Salaita. The post-9/11 culture wars conjured up new and not-so-new phantoms of enemies—in particular, the racialized specter of the “terrorist.” This figure, and the racial panic associated with it, has been sedimented in the national imaginary as synonymous with the “Muslim” and the “Arab” since the Iranian Revolution of 1978–1979 and the First Intifada against Israeli occupation in the late 1980s. The War on Terror consolidated Orientalist caricatures of Muslim fanatics and Arab militants, but it is important to note that these also dredged up avatars of a historical logic of containment and annihilation of indigenous others. The native, the barbarian, and the foreigner converge in this cultural imaginary that legitimizes violence against anti-Western, uncivilized regions incapable of democratic self-governance and that is produced by expert knowledge of other peoples and regions. The wars in Iraq and “Af-Pak” and the global hunt for terrorists entailed an intensified suspicion and scrutiny of ideologies that supported militant resistance or “anti-American” sentiments and necessitated academic research on communities that were supposedly “breeding grounds” for terrorism.

The post-9/11 panic about Muslim terrorists and enemy aliens increasingly focused on the threat of “homegrown terrorism” as the War on Terror shifted its focus to “radicalized” communities within the United States, especially Muslim American youth. At the same time, as Godrej observes, the criminalization of those considered threats to national security has included the violent repression of Occupy activists and student protesters and indefinite detention authorized by the PATRIOT (Provide Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) Act and the National Defense Authorization Act. Protests focused on higher education thus blur into dissent against U.S. warfare and the homeland security state in a climate of heightened campus securitization and university collaboration with the FBI in the interest of “public safety.” Anarchists are considered domestic terror threats to be contained, and Muslim or Arab American students (or faculty) who are also anarchists are subjected to multiple levels of containment and scrutiny, as suggested in the chapter by Falcón et al. Academic containment is clearly part of a larger politics of repression and policing in the national security state that affects faculty and students as well as the campus climate in general.

While the FBI has interviewed unknown numbers of Muslim and Arab American college students and infiltrated and monitored Muslim student organizations since 9/11, counterterrorism experts have generated models of
“radicalization” of Muslim youth, especially males, invoking cultural pathologies of “hate” and alienation. Regimes of surveillance, detention, and deportation of terrorists, or terrorist sympathizers lurking within the nation, are underwritten by a gendered and racialized logic: the imperative to save women, particularly Muslim and Middle Eastern women, from inherently misogynistic Muslim and Middle Eastern men. Cultural knowledge and academic expertise are needed to refine policies of humanitarian intervention in these imperial cartographies of nations or cultures whose women are in need of rescue and nations or civilizations in need of saving, as brilliantly argued by Jasbir Puar in her work on U.S. and Israeli homonationalisms. While it is easy to critique overtly racist commentators in the culture wars, we must note that it is not just right wing but also liberal critics and scholars who worry that a new “political correctness” is supposedly silencing critiques of cultures and religious communities whose social norms are inherently antithetical to Western secular modernity (that is, Muslims and Arabs). This allegation ignores the deafening silences in many quarters—including in the academy—about ongoing state terror against particular, racialized populations.60

Indeed, the antiwar movement has been dismally weak on most college campuses since 2003–2004 and there have barely been any campus protests against the wars and drone attacks in Afghanistan and Pakistan that continue to be waged by Obama or against the prison at Guantanamo. A troubling trend since 9/11 is that U.S. liberal feminism concerned about the oppression of Muslim women—but not about the occupation, colonization, and devastation of their societies by warfare or neoliberal capitalism—has found perhaps unlikely allies in neocon activists in the culture wars, from Irshad Manji and Ayaan Hirsi Ali to Horowitz.61 And equally significantly, these external attacks on critical scholarship have occurred in a context where the neoliberal privatization of the university has accelerated and where attacks on women’s and gender studies, queer studies, and also ethnic studies programs have intensified.

In addition, we see a gendered and racial logic in academic containment where the figure of the “angry Arab” (or Muslim) male scholar is often subjected to policing by a deeply politicized notion of academic “civility.” There is a general uneasiness about male scholars of color as inappropriately aggressive if they challenge the status quo, especially in the context of U.S. nationalisms and nationalisms allied with U.S. hegemony—that is, American Zionist movements. This is evident from the string of campaigns targeting
Arab and Palestinian male academics in the United States, such as Sami Al-Arian, Joseph Massad, Rashid Khalidi, and Abowd, who alludes to the racial logic in the allegations drummed up against him by Zionist activists and the dismal, and in some cases hostile, response of the university administration.

So while there are indeed Arab and Muslim female academics who have been targeted by Zionist campaigns, notably the Palestinian academic Nadia Abu El Haj, it is evident that Arab and Muslim masculinities are framed in the culture wars as inherently violent and potentially perverse. At the minimum, they are insufficiently conforming to or excessively threatening to white American masculinity, and, at worst, they are an existential threat to the nation, but in either case they must be contained. On the other hand, Arab and Muslim femininities are viewed by this same Orientalist logic as inherently victimized and in need of protection, but it is generally difficult to view the Arab or Muslim male scholar as in need of saving and support within the framework of liberal white “civility.”

Abowd pinpoints the unease with “uppity” Arab male academics who challenge the powerful status quo in the academy in a climate in which Arabophobia, not to mention Islamophobia, has consolidated the conflation of critiques of Israel with sympathy for terrorism. This is a moment in which even campus boycott and divestment movements focused on Israel are attacked as “anti-Semitic,” as evident in the firestorm over the panel on boycott at Brooklyn College in 2013; there is a complex conflation of racialization, racism, gendering, and right-wing nationalism that is at work here, one that Puar and Salaita address. Furthermore, as Abowd notes, overtly racialized constructions and suspicion of Muslim male academics—or academics who might be Muslim—as inherently anti-Semitic and militant and who must be disciplined, emerge in unexpected moments and in academic spaces where one would assume this kind of blatant racial suspicion is impermissible. Falcón et al.’s chapter cites the poignant case of an Arab/Muslim American male student who was removed from the classroom by police and was considered a “threat” due to his radical, anti-imperialist critiques, which, not surprisingly, he felt increasingly fearful of expressing in class. Their chapter reminds us that we need to think more deeply about how the post-9/11 apparatus of policing and surveillance has affected students who feel the most vulnerable and has transformed the classroom environment.

The racial and gendered logic of academic containment is powerfully evident in De Genova’s autobiographical chapter, which suggests that the critique of white male scholars who directly challenge dominant ideologies
of militarism and U.S. foreign policy, if expressed in terms that unsettle the acceptable academic consensus in elite institutions, is also deeply troubling and compels other academics to distance themselves from dissent considered beyond the pale. Processes of racialization and gendering—the building of consensus around war and nation making—are intertwined with the daily work and lived experience of scholars within the university, making it a highly charged site in debates about the mission of higher education and the future of the nation-state.

Manifest Knowledges

The U.S. academy has been built, historically, on a set of conceptual and political foundations about what it means to educate people about freedom, democracy, and citizenship. The university is an institution that has roots in an Enlightenment project of liberal Western modernity and was founded as a space historically open only to male, propertied subjects. In addition, as we have argued and as the chapters demonstrate, the U.S. university has been a space where foundational histories of settler colonialism and Manifest Destiny have been buttressed, exposed, and contested. The linkages between the university and the global expansionism of the United States are thus crucial to explore if we understand the academy as an imperial university that produces what we call “manifest knowledges”—what is, and what can be, known about histories of genocide, warfare, enslavement, and social death and what are manifestly insurgent truths.

All the chapters in this book speak to this issue, some more directly than others. Gumbs brilliantly excavates pedagogies of both disciplining and subalternity in the teaching of English composition, which she describes as a tool for making expendable, minority student populations “composed” in the context of imperial racism and genocidal violence—manifest knowledges are enacted in both police brutality and overseas invasions, from New York to Grenada and Palestine. Black feminist poets June Jordan and Audre Lorde subverted the dictates of what Gumbs describes as “police English” in criminology programs that supported the pedagogy of police brutality, insisting instead on teaching black English and exploring how imperialism, in the United States and elsewhere, defined who was human.

There is by now a robust body of scholarship in several fields such as American studies, Native American studies, indigenous studies, ethnic studies, queer studies, and feminist studies that has challenged canonical tenets
of U.S. history and Manifest Destiny. Yet it is also very apparent that manifest knowledges about state violence and imperialism continue to be contested in the settler colony and its academy—including knowledge about U.S. support for other states' violence and settler colonial policies, as pointed out by Salaita, Gumbs, Falcón et al., and Puar, as well as by Abowd and Oparah. Manifest knowledges thus involve the production, and policing, of foundational truths about a global apparatus of settler colonialism that extends beyond the United States to other imperial and colonial sites. Scholarship and critical teaching of U.S. foreign (imperial) policy in Iraq and Afghanistan and, in particular, of U.S. support for the Israeli state and its colonial and apartheid policies have long come under fire from a constellation of right-wing and pro-Israel think tanks and groups. Critiques of the contradictions between a state practicing discrimination based on religion and race and its self-professed image as an exemplar of "liberal democracy," in a sea of backward and antidemocratic Arab and Muslim nations, began to mount around the world and, gradually, in the United States, particularly on college campuses. There has been growing condemnation of Israel's illegal occupation, especially in the wake of the massacre of civilians in Gaza in 2008-2009, the murder of international solidarity activists aboard the humanitarian aid flotilla trying to break the siege of Gaza in 2010, and the second war on Gaza in fall 2012. As Abowd notes, the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement in the United States has grown since 2008-2009, but this has also led to an unprecedented demonization of Palestine solidarity and Muslim American student groups, who became increasingly engaged with antiwar activism and progressive-left alliances after 9/11. American Zionists rejected the possibility that there could be "human rights" for Palestinians—a population synonymous with "Islamic Jihad."64

For instance, in 2010, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) blacklisted Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), a Palestine solidarity organization with autonomous campus chapters across the nation, as one of the top ten anti-Israel organizations in the United States—along with the Muslim Student Association, the leftist antiwar coalition ANSWER, and Jewish Voice for Peace—for daring to "accuse Israel of racism, oppression and human rights violations."65 The ADL was outraged that "SJP chapters regularly organize activities presenting a biased view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, including mock 'apartheid walls' and 'checkpoint' displays, presentations by sensationalist anti-Israel speakers and longer programs like Palestine Awareness and Israeli Apartheid weeks," featuring "speakers who described Israel as an
‘ethnocentric racist society’ and Zionism as ‘inherently undemocratic.’” The report, and the scare quotes therein, revealed precisely what was so effective about these student protests but so threatening to a group such as the ADL, which has long masqueraded as an antiracist organization advocating for civil rights—except in the case of Israel-Palestine, where it supports racial discrimination and the suspension of civil rights.66 Salaita astutely observes that this contradiction arises from a situation in which “support for Israel is actually necessitous of proper multicultural consciousness” for academics and so considered normative and apolitical, while support for Palestinian rights is considered indecently “political.” The academic battle over the permissibility and boundaries of knowledge production about Israel-Palestine has thus become one of the most charged sites of manifest knowledges in the imperial university today.

As SJP activists began using creative protest strategies, erecting mock checkpoints and simulacræ of the Israeli “security wall” in the middle of campuses, the racial politics of Israeli state technologies of policing, segregation, encampment, collective punishment, and displacement of Arabs and Muslims suddenly erupted into plain sight in the U.S. academy. This provoked a vicious backlash from those who had long sought to suppress these “facts on the ground” and support the Israeli state’s exceptionalism, including in the academy, as noted by Salaita and Puar. The ADL, for example, has a long history of blacklisting and harassment of faculty who are critical of Israel, such as Noam Chomsky and William Robinson, a sociologist at UC Santa Barbara who was accused of anti-Semitism for his critique of Israel’s war on Gaza in 2009.67 The threat of “deportation” from the academic nation—which can and has resulted in the loss of livelihood—creates a stifling climate of repression in which many faculty and doctoral students engage in self-censorship, altering their research agendas and teaching for fear of threats to their careers.

The ADL is just one of many prominent, off-campus groups active in the culture wars related to Israel-Palestine that regularly intervenes in college campuses and documents cases of anti-Semitism conflated with “anti-Israelism” and, consequently—as Puar notes in her chapter and Salaita has observed elsewhere—promotes the indivisibility of Israel and Jewishness.68 This tactic has been taken to new levels in campaigns to define campus activism critical of Israel as racist and anti-Semitic and hence in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, as well as in the California State Assembly resolution HR 35, mentioned by Prashad, which makes a similarly stunning move.69
But the point is also, as Salaita has argued, that groups such as the ADL have used the language of liberal humanism and tolerance, civil rights, and antiracism to promote and consolidate the commonsense that "support for Israel is a prerequisite of responsible multicultural citizenship," nowhere more evident than in the U.S. academy.20 Furthermore, Puar’s groundbreaking work on homonationalism incisively critiques the ways in which the production of Israel as gay friendly and thus liberal and modern has made Israeli “pinkwashing” of its repression and violence against Palestinians, including queer Palestinians, an effective strategy for recruiting liberal gays and lesbians worldwide. This liberal, “multicultural conviviality” conflates American and Israeli exceptionalisms and produces a commonsensical pro-Israelism that defines acceptable national belonging and multicultural citizenship here in the United States—not simply in Israel or only for Jewish Americans.21 This manifest knowledge has become a cornerstone of notions of “civility” and of academic freedom in the U.S. academy, as indicated by Abowd’s chapter as well as De Genova’s observations of the fliers attacking him as betraying Israel, not just the United States, after 9/11. This is because, as Salaita points out, allegiance to U.S. state power is conflated with loyalty to Israel.

At the same time, the book is unique in situating an analysis of the Palestine issue, which often seems “exceptional” in the U.S. academy, in relation to a longer genealogy of settler colonialism and a broader structure of McCarthyism that extends beyond Middle East studies and implicates fields such as feminist, queer, and ethnic studies. It is in this regard that Gumbs’s eloquent chapter on the poetics of solidarity offers a different window into the writing and pedagogy of June Jordan and Audre Lorde, situating it in relation to their anti-imperialist critiques of the Israeli assault on Palestine and also the U.S. invasion of Grenada in the 1980s. Puar also interrogates the ways in which Israeli homonationalism is entangled with the politics of global gay and lesbian organizing and anti-Muslim racism in Europe and the United States and undermines transnational queer and feminist solidarity through regimes of censure within and beyond the academy. Manifest knowledges are, thus, produced and regulated in multiple sites, and these chapters offer alternative archives of composition and citation, censure and solidarity.

As the normative commonsense and also the censorship of the Palestine question has begun to dissolve somewhat in the academy in recent years and the Arab uprisings shifted the dominant narrative about the “Arab and Muslim world,” if ever so slightly, a new front of the culture wars has shifted its focus to solidarity with Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim queers and women
who must be rescued by the West from homophobia, honor killings, or other “cultural crimes.” Puar points out that the “woman question,” as a rationale for colonial domination, has increasingly been replaced by the “homosexual question,” harnessing sexual rights to a discourse of racial and cultural superiority and buttressed by academic knowledge circuits. As Gums argues, in an earlier moment, black feminist writers developed a queer poetics of survival and insurgent knowledge production in the context of racial panic over saving white femininity from the threat of minority and immigrant males and in an era of assaults on the self-determination of Third World nations. Manifest knowledges of gender and sexuality are thus intimately bound with colonialist and racial logics of rescue and freedom in modernity that infuse the culture wars.72

Falcón et al. bring the question of manifest knowledges as a queer and feminist question into the classroom and into the context of transnational feminist pedagogy and collaboration as part of their Collective of Antiracist Scholar Activists. They grapple collectively with what it means to teach antiracist, feminist critiques of capitalism, imperialism, and heteronormativity while not falling prey to the university’s demand for “superserviceable feminism” and “competitive individualist” scholarly production as women scholars with and without tenure-track positions. The form of their coauthored chapter/dialogue creatively expresses their desire for challenging the demands for neoliberal productivity while being cognizant of their complex institutional positions and the opportunities available as academics to teach feminist, critical race, and postcolonial theory. As scholar-activists, their pedagogy and collaboration become a method for resisting manifest knowledges, not just about U.S. imperial culture, but about what it means to be a “proper” productive academic. As hinted at in our opening reflections on the Occupy student movement, Falcón et al.’s chapter calls on us to create anti-imperialist spaces of knowledge production and pedagogy within our classrooms and “occupy” the imperial university.

Heresies and Freedoms

Following from the production of manifest knowledges and logic of academic containment in the imperial university, the chapters in this section explore how liberal codes of academic freedom are undermined or consolidated as neoliberal privatization weakens spaces of critique in the academy. The chapters by De Genova, Prashad, and Dominguez in the concluding section of
the book, as well as other chapters, critique what could be described as the “holy grail” of academic freedom, one of the pillars upon which academic liberalism builds its edifice and which is central to the academic wars. We argue that there is a narrowing of the field of possible dissent in the U.S. academy precisely because of the ways in which the repression of knowledge production and the resistance to academic repression are both constituted through notions of academic freedom and academic heresies.

We gestured earlier to how the development of “academic freedom” took place against the backdrop of World War I and the early twentieth century precisely because of the nonconformity of individual scholars in class and wartime politics. Academic freedom emerged as a way to both negotiate a sense of professional insecurity as well as construct a measured response to matters of “national interest” (such as anticapitalist or antiwar protest). This was a critical time for establishing the protocols of professionalism for academia. Ellen W. Shrecker, in her magisterial study of McCarthyism’s effects on the academy, argues that the pivotal Seligman Report by the AAUP in 1915 “reveals how deeply enmeshed the notion of academic freedom was with the overall status, security and prestige of the academic profession.” It is apparent that academic freedom continues to be fragile given the increasing professionalization of the academy and hypercompetitiveness of the academic job market.

Indeed, De Genova’s experience of “crossing the line” at Columbia University, in the post-9/11 climate of hypernationalism, is part of a genealogy that he traces to 1917, when Columbia penalized two faculty members for their public opposition to World War I. A controversy arose at the time about the distinguished historian, Charles Beard, who remarked in 1916 (during debates about U.S. “neutrality”) that the “world’s strongest republic could certainly withstand the inconsequential effort of a single ‘To Hell with the Flag’ comment.” Outraged trustees at Columbia interrogated Beard about his comment and political views in an unpleasant echo of De Genova’s own account of academic repression. Though Beard was eventually “exonerated,” he resigned when his two colleagues at Columbia were terminated due to their political views. A powerful precedent about the boundaries of political—especially antistate—speech was set into motion.

Where were “academic freedom” and the AAUP during this ferment? The newly created organization kept a distance from the unrest enveloping the Columbia campus and was “unwilling to offer its limited assistance to those being driven off campuses.” Schecter argues that the AAUP’s early
discussions of academic freedom sought primarily to protect faculty from outsiders’ "meddling" with scholar’s teaching and research by setting up "procedural safeguards." But these safeguards could not adequately address political dissidence or any political positions that were considered "unsympathetic" by the majority of academics. What appeared to be "protection" was really about perceptions, and evaluations, of institutional loyalty and "appropriate" behavior that would not jeopardize the professionalism and status of academia.

When the litmus test of the AAUP’s politics and "academic freedom" arrived four decades later, in the form of McCarthyite repression, the academy's capitulation to state imperatives and the subsequent destruction of many individual careers and lives should not come as a surprise. Prashad points out that faculty were expelled for their relationship to the Communist Party under the guise of defending academic freedom, for to be a Communist was to be enslaved by dogma and to be unfree. Academic freedom was constructed through a negative and reactive polarity to create the narrow boundaries for "permissible dissent" rather than a positive protection in support of dissent. Clyde Barrow observes, "It created an intellectually defensible zone of political autonomy for the professoriate, which . . . sufficiently circumscribed as to exclude as unscholarly whatever political behavior the leading member of the academic community feared might trigger outside intervention." Even when university presidents could have protected their faculty, most did not, as in the case at the University of Washington discussed by Prashad. The fact that some university administrators could, and did, resist assaults on academic freedom showed that universities could have defied state repression—but most chose not to.

Loyalty to the institution and profession was built on a hegemonic consensus (including among "liberal" faculty) of protecting economic security, most importantly for the majority. Indeed, adherence to this "corporate ideal" was premised on the artificial bifurcation of "politics" and "administration" so that the (administrative) protection of tenure (and other procedural safeguards) could be seen as outside of the realms of the "political." As the chapters by De Genova, Prashad, and Salaita suggest, this ideologically constructed bifurcation continues to haunt radical and progressive scholars in battles over tenure, employment, and teaching today, even if the particular definition of what constitutes the threshold of the "political" shifts over time in the imperial university.

Clearly, if academic freedom is invoked as a "holy grail" in regulating and
containing the proper subjects of the imperial nation, the “bad” citizen of the academy is considered heretical. As Ricardo Domínguez and Pulido, Abowd, and De Genova eloquently discuss, acts of transgression of the boundaries of belonging to the academic nation illuminate how narrow, and fragile, the universe of dissent is. While it is perhaps easy to pinpoint, if not always to counter, the campaigns of right-wing and conservative scholars and activists against academic dissent, these chapters highlight an important point—that for academics, censorship and repression generally comes wrapped in a liberal mantle, and it is waged through the language of diversity, dialogue, and, often, academic freedom itself. Right-wing and neoconservative activists—or what Prashad calls “cultural vigilantes”—in the culture wars have not only strategically reshaped the discourse of diversity and feminism, as alluded to earlier, but also appropriated the language of “academic freedom.” Indeed, right-wing groups such as Horowitz’s Students for Academic Freedom have used the notion of “intellectual pluralism” to police teaching and invoked academic freedom as a new ideological battle cry for the right. So the following are the crucial questions: How is it possible to transform academic freedom into a justification for the closing down, rather than opening up, of intellectual and political debates? What inheres in the principle of academic freedom that allows it to be appropriated, apparently seamlessly, by those who align themselves with the political and economic status quo?

The answers lie, to a large extent, in the definition and utilization of academic freedom as a liberal principle and in the paradoxes that this liberal politics generates in the academy and beyond. Prashad argues that the liberal precept of academic freedom draws on John Stuart Mills’s conception of the necessity of “contrary opinions” for providing checks and balances for social norms but not for enabling a “transformative political agenda.” A Eurocentric genealogy of academic freedom would trace it to notions of critical pedagogy in German universities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, intertwined with notions of economic and political liberalism embedded in Enlightenment modernity.

Cary Nelson, the renowned president of the American Association for University Professors (AAUP), who for many U.S. academics represents the face of institutionalized academic freedom, writes, “Academic freedom thus embodies Enlightenment commitments to the pursuit of knowledge and their adaption to different political and social realities.” The AAUP issued the Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure in 1915, and for some scholars, such as Robert Post, this declaration is
the “greatest articulation of the logic and structure of academic freedom.”

According to Post, this is because it conceptualizes academic freedom as based on “compliance with professional norms” specific to academic labor and on the safeguarding of scholarly expertise that produces “professional self-regulation” and “professional autonomy” for faculty. Yet even Post acknowledges that there is a paradox inherent in this conceptualization based on academic labor, for these professional norms are not so easily defined and so academic freedom is “simultaneously limited by, and independent of, professional norms.”

A critic of the AAUP’s unwillingness to protect scholars targeted by McCarthyism suggests the AAUP upholds procedural freedom without an understanding of the importance of expanding its understanding of political freedom: “Stripped of its rhetoric, academic freedom thus turns out to be an essentially corporate protection. And as we trace its development during the Cold War, we should not be surprised to find that it was involved more often to defend the well-being of an institution rather than the political rights of an individual.”

Other scholars, such as Judith Butler, also point out that the AAUP’s formulation of academic freedom intended to “institutionalize a set of employer-employee relationships in an academic setting,” not to guarantee academic freedom as an individual right. While she agrees with Post that academic freedom should not be rooted in “individual freedom” or simply in First Amendment rights of freedom of expression, she goes further to point to the collusion between the university and the state in defining professional norms and professional freedom in scholarship and to emphasize that expectations of what is permissible for academics are always historically evolving and often politically motivated. So these professional constraints are contingent and contested, not fixed; Butler argues, “As faculty members, we are constrained to be free, and in the exercise of our freedom, we continue to operate within the constraints that made our freedom possible in the first place.”

We take these critiques of an individually based, constrained, and “weak” notion of academic freedom further, arguing that academic freedom is perhaps not tenable as a basis for a just struggle for “freedom,” if that struggle needs to be defined by affirmative principles rooted in progressive or left conceptions of freedom, justice, and equality, as suggested by Prashad. In other words, academic freedom is not, and should not be, the holy grail of dissent. Academic freedom is generally understood—and operationalized in the U.S. academy today—as an ideologically neutral principle of freedom.
of expression and First Amendment rights. It is thus a libertarian, not just liberal, notion of individual freedom, and it is framed as a core principle of Western modernity and democracy, serving both the liberal-left and the conservative-right. In this model, neo-Nazis or antiabortion advocates have the same rights to academic freedom in the university as do queer activists or antiwar proponents. There is no progressive ethos built into the principle of academic freedom, and this is what makes it easily available for recuperation and resort by the right as much as the left. Prashad makes the important observation that even the academic left often tends to take refuge in the "safe harbor" of academic freedom rather than engaging in a struggle for "genuine campus democracy" and labor rights for workers on campuses and for the right to education as a public good and for a "culture of solidarity," as evoked by Domínguez.

Perhaps one of the most ironic examples of what could be described as the use of academic freedom as a smoke screen for larger struggles over other kinds of freedoms was the cancellation of the AAUP’s own conference on academic boycotts, slated to be held in 2006 at the Rockefeller Conference Center in Bellagio, Italy. The conference featured a diverse group of scholars with a range of views on the strategy of academic boycott—some in favor, some opposed—within the context of the emerging, global debate about the Palestinian call for an academic boycott of Israeli academic institutions, inspired by the boycott of South African institutions in the apartheid era. However, under mounting pressure from Israeli and pro-Israel academics, the meeting was cancelled.

The AAUP, instead, published online many of the papers intended for presentation at the conference, but it also issued a report strongly condemning the academic boycott. Joan Scott and Harold Linder, who had helped organize the conference and later edited the online publication, expressed dismay that the conference was canceled, but they also concluded that the AAUP’s "principled opposition to academic boycott" was an expression of its commitment to academic freedom. While Joan Scott later revised her position in an eloquent essay, this seemingly contradictory position is an argument that is often used in opposition to the academic boycott, in the case of Israel, and it expresses a deeper paradox that illuminates the fault line at the core of academic freedom—as does the entire saga of the failed conference. Is it possible that closing off the possibility of a boycott of academic institutions—in the context of their complicity with military occupation and
apartheid policies—is an expression of academic freedom, or is it a denial of that academic freedom? And whose academic freedom is being upheld?

Lisa Taraki, a sociologist at Birzeit University in the West Bank who was scheduled to present at Bellagio, noted in her paper, “I think that the abstract ideas of academic freedom and the free exchange of ideas cannot be the only norms influencing the political engagement of academics. Often, when oppression characterizes all social and political relations and structures, as in the case of apartheid South Africa or indeed Palestine, there are equally important and sometimes more important freedoms that must be fought for, even—or I would say especially—by academics and intellectuals.”88 Omar Barghouti, a Palestinian intellectual who is, like Tarakai, a cofounder of the Palestinian Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI), argued that the AAUP was “privileging academic freedom as above all other freedoms.” Citing Judith Butler, he argued that this position excluded the freedom of “academics in contexts of colonialism, military occupation, and other forms of national oppression where ‘material and institutional foreclosures . . . make it impossible for certain historical subjects to lay claim to the discourse of rights itself.’ . . . Academic freedom, from this angle, becomes the exclusive privilege of some academics but not others.”89

Barghouti and Taraki make two crucial points: First, they state that academic freedom cannot trump other rights to freedom (and other freedoms)—the right to freedom of mobility for students and scholars to attend college, to travel to conferences, and to do research; the collective right to self-determination; the freedom from occupation and racial segregation; and, in essence, the freedom to live in peace, dignity, and equality. As suggested by our introductory vignettes, the freedom and right to education of students living in zones of occupation and war overseas must be linked to the freedom of students and scholars working—and protesting—within the imperial university. Proponents of the academic boycott of Israeli institutions argued that the campaign is, thus, in support of and produces academic freedom, and also supports human rights for all—as it was in the boycott of South African institutions. Second, they allude to the selectivity of the principle of academic freedom—why South Africa and not Palestine?—and the ways in which the U.S. academy (like the Israeli academy) and professional associations such as the AAUP are firmly embedded in a political context while pretending to be outside or above it.90

This adjudication of neutrality and self-professed impartiality is, in fact, a political stance, as argued by Salaita and illustrated by De Genova’s
reflections on the limits of academic solidarity with radical critiques of U.S. imperialism. The holy grail of academic freedom shores up the political commitments and investments—not to mention the intellectual freedoms—of powerful academics and constituencies and fails to protect the commitments and interventions of the heretics who are less powerful or far outside the status quo. This is powerfully illustrated by the intense political campaign targeting De Genova for his “blasphemous” criticism of U.S. military violence and Domínguez’s farcical play about his experience of being investigated by the FBI and UC San Diego due to the Electronic Disturbance Theater’s “virtual sit-in” protesting the UC fee hikes and the Transborder Immigrant Tool project. We must ask, why is it that some cases of academic “blasphemy” provoke an outpouring of sympathy and support from colleagues while other cases are considered too heretical to warrant (ready) solidarity?

Nelson’s own writing on academic freedom is instructive in revealing the AAUP president’s political position on academic freedom and its limits—just one instance of exceptionalisms in the intense debate about academic freedoms and heresies among distinguished, progressive scholar-activists. In No University Is an Island: Saving Academic Freedom, Nelson denounces “major fractions of the Left,” especially academics, who have apparently “grown increasingly hostile and unforgiving toward Israel.” Nelson’s sweeping statements include anecdotal observations of departments (unnamed) that have apparently refused to consider job candidates who do not support the two-state solution or who support Israel, proclaiming without any specific evidence that there is a hostile academic environment for “faculty and students with sympathies for Israel.” One wonders if Nelson is speaking of the same U.S. academy that the authors in this book—and so many other scholars—inhabit and work in or whether he is, indeed, living on “an island.”

We discuss the Bellagio train wreck and Nelson’s position here because of the prominent role of the AAUP in adjudicating and defining the boundaries of academic freedom—and academic heresies—as evident in more recent controversies. Despite the AAUP’s otherwise impressive record on issues related to academic labor, the issue of Palestine-Israel seems to be a sticking point for the organization, as is the case in so many other liberal-progressive spaces, including academic ones—precisely because it is obfuscated through a discourse of academic freedom. This illustrates the fault lines in a principle of academic freedom that evacuates politics, in selective instances, or circumscribes and contains what is proper politics for academics, shaping the
stance that scholars can or should take in response to twenty-first-century occupation, settler colonialism, wars, apartheid, and encampment.

Steven Best, Anthony Nocella II, and Peter McLaren, in their edited volume on academic repression, incisively observe that academic freedom, in fact, functions as an “alibi for the machinery of academic repression and control” and ends up justifying the “absorption of higher education into the larger constellation of corporate-military power.” Academic repression, they argue, is constitutive of the academic-military-industrial complex, a framework that situates the university squarely within, and not outside of, the network of state apparatuses of control, discipline, surveillance, carcerality, and violence, as alluded to by Dominguez and as argued by Godrej, Oparah, and Gumbs. In other words, as Taraki and Barghouti also suggest, it does not make sense (for progressives-leftists) to fight for academic freedom outside of the struggle against neoliberal capitalism, racism, sexism, homophobia, warfare, and imperialism. To state it more clearly, there can be no true “freedom” in the academy if there is no such freedom in society at large.

The holy grail of academic freedom, defined within the liberal parameters critiqued by Prashad, has been institutionalized as a limited and problematic horizon for progressive academic mobilization. Academic freedom maintains the illusion of an autonomous university space in a militarized and corporate society such as the United States and in a “surveillance society and post-constitutional garrison state” that continues to be consolidated under Obama, as suggested by Dominguez and other authors. This does not mean giving up entirely on invoking academic freedom, for it can be, and is, often strategically used as a minimal line of defense to introduce critical ideas and broaden public debates within the academy. However, progressive campaigns organized around the principle of academic freedom often run into a profound fault line in their mobilization, if not also organized around larger political principles. In our experience, campaigns focused on organizing in defense of scholars targeted since 9/11, especially those working in Middle East and Palestine studies, often end up struggling with these same contradictions if they attempt to cohere simply around “academic freedom” rather than a more rigorous (progressive) political consensus, given how fractured the academic left is when it comes to Middle East politics and Israel-Palestine.

Critics of the academy, such as Readings, make a fundamental point: “The University is not going to save the world by making the world more
true,” and it must be viewed as all institutions are, not as an exceptional space or site of radicalism and “redemption” but as a site where “academics must work without alibis, which is what the best of them have intended to do.” In other words, the university is an institution within an imperial nation-state—a point understated by Readings—and so any struggle waged within or against it must not romanticize its progressive possibilities and must be squarely situated within a struggle that extends beyond its hallowed walls. This is what the Occupy movement, discussed at the outset, attempted to do on many campuses, and this is also why it was so brutally suppressed—because it made a linkage between the university and larger structures of power, as in earlier movements of student uprising, that was fundamentally threatening to the imperial university.

Conclusion: Decolonizing the University

Scholars working in zones of occupation, militarism, settler colonialism, and imperialism, here and there, call on us to recraft our notion of “academic freedom” by focusing unflinchingly on the larger structural forces and deeper alliances between the MPIC and the academy. If we heed this call seriously, we are moved to think about the question of freedom—academic and otherwise—in a much deeper way. Ultimately, our project is to decolonize the imperial university, and the chapters here help us understand how imperial cartographies produce manifest knowledges and logics of academic containment that structure the U.S. academy and its repression. Academic heresies and insurgencies are constitutive of this critique of the holy grail of academic freedom and of the spaces that we can create in our pedagogies and academic work through forms of intellectual guerilla warfare and theaters of dissent, as suggested by Rojas and Dominguez, among others. This involves not shying away from forms of speech and scholarship that compel unease, as De Genova courageously suggests—challenging genocide, “death,” and the many forms of violence under white supremacy and in the settler colonial state. We can build on Gramsci’s critical work on hegemony in thinking of insurgent spaces within the academy that must be fostered in alliance and direct engagement with those “organic intellectuals” or movements beyond the university, even as those alliances are surveilled or censured. If this book is a project of solidarity—one we hope will continue to evolve through our web archive—it aims to help support and build dissent focused on dismantling empire, and thinking freedom otherwise.
Notes


8. For an incisive exploration of some of these contradictions, see Mary E. John, “Postcolonial Feminists in the Western Intellectual Field: Anthropologists and Native Informants?,” Inscriptions 5, no. 6 (1989): 49–74.


13. See, for example, Erin O’Connor and Maurice Black, "Academic Freedom and


15. Bill Readings, The University in Ruins (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996). 2. It is important to note here, though, that Readings’s argument about “Americanization” of the university is embedded within his subtle readings of globalization in the current period and not a wholesale argument about U.S. hegemonic expansion. We use his term to signal this early twentieth-century model that is certainly about the latter, especially in epistemological and curricular formations as Bascara outlines.

16. For the most comprehensive study of the emergence of these ideas in the history of anthropology, see George Stocking, Race, Culture and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

17. For example, some of the earliest British ethnologists were also colonial administrators—who became experts on the languages and “customs and manners” of the natives whom they tried to both understand and control. See Peter Pels, “From Texts to Bodies: Brian Houghton Hodgson and the Emergence of Ethnology in India,” in Anthropology and Colonialism in Asia and Oceania, ed. Jan van Breman and Akitoshi Shimizu (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999), 66; Sita Venkateswar, Development and Ethnocide: Colonial Practices in the Andaman Islands (Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2004).


24–38. McFate’s article provides a fascinating and detailed analysis of the Boas controversy.


21. Ibid., 22.

22. Ibid., 21.


24. Price, Anthropological Intelligence, 74. The 1942 Intensive Language Program was “designed to plug American campuses directly into war prepared-ness” (Price, Anthropological Intelligence, 75).


27. Ibid., 27.

28. Ibid., 165.


33. Giroux, The University in Chains, 161. He notes, "ACTA is not a friend of the principle of academic freedom, nor is it comfortable with John Dewey's notion that education should be responsive to the deepest conflicts of our time, or Hannah
Arendt’s insistence that debate and a commitment to persuasion are the essence of a democratically oriented politics.”


35. Chomsky, “The Cold War and the University,” 181. Half of MIT’s $200 million budget in 1969 was funded by the military (Ibid., 182); see also Feldman, *Universities in the Business of Repression*, 208, for a table on 1983 DOD Contracts at MIT.


37. For the role of anthropological expertise and training in war, see Price, *Anthropological Intelligence*, and also Roberto González’s chapter. For more contemporary analysis, see John D. Kelly et al., *Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency*.

38. For a detailed discussion of Project Camelot and the Chilean exposé, see Wallerstein, “The Unintended Consequences of Cold War Area Studies,” 220–23.


42. See Alfred McCoy, *A Question of Torture: CIA Interrogation from the Cold War to the War on Terror* (New York: Henry Holt, 2006).


46. Readings, *The University in Ruins*, 181.


48. See Ellen W. Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 12–23. In the 1890s, scholars such as Robert T. Ely, a prominent economist, were targeted for their critique of industrialists and what was viewed as pro-Left views. In Ely’s case, a member of the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents charged him with supporting strikes and unions. Faced
with losing his job, Ely capitulated. Schrecker notes that Ely’s victory was an important sacrifice in terms of the practice of “academic freedom” by “accepting the Regent’s authority to censor his political views and more significantly by accepting a restricted notion of appropriate academic behaviour” (italics ours). See Schrecker’s comprehensive and brilliant analysis of this “foundational” moment of academic “containment” (in our terms), 15–17.

49. See Schrecker, No Ivory Tower, 15.
50. Ibid., 18.
51. Ibid., 63.
53. Newfield, Unmaking the Public University, 268.
54. Ibid., 5–6.
55. Ibid., 3–5.
56. The bills are promoted by Students for Academic Freedom, whose webpage has the credo, “You can’t get a good education if they’re only telling you half the story”; http://www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org.
58. Newfield, Unmaking the Public University, 115–21.
60. Chatterjee and Maira, “An Open Letter to All Feminists.”
61. Maira, “‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ Muslim Citizens.”
63. For example, David Horowitz’s ad in the New York Times in 2011 defaming 150 U.S. scholars who supported the academic and cultural boycott of Israel as anti-Semitic proponents of “blood libel” against Jews.


70. See Salaita, Israel’s Dead Soul, 14.

71. Ibid., 3.


73. Schrecker, No Ivory Tower, 18.


75. Ibid., 228.

76. Ibid., 14.

77. Ibid., 229.


80. Ibid., 71.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid., 75.

83. Schrecker, No Ivory Tower, 23.

85. Ibid., 128.
90. The AAUP called for divestment from corporations complicit with apartheid South Africa in 1985 and acknowledges that this was a “form of boycott,” if not an academic boycott as such. Joan W. Scott et al., “On Academic Boycotts,” AAUP, http://www(aaup.org/report/academic-boycotts.
91. It is interesting to note here the chilling parallels of Dominguez’s surreal interview with FBI agents at UCSD with what happened in the McCarthy period: “It was not uncommon for a faculty member to be called to an administrator’s office to be interrogated in the presence of an agent of the FBI or some other government operations. It was believed quite appropriate for academic administrators to initiate an investigation into the political life of faculty.” See Lionel S. Lewis, Cold War on Campus (Piscataway, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1987), 251.
93. Ibid., 110.
94. This was made more apparent in the controversy that erupted about the issue of AAUP’s Journal of Academic Freedom on academic boycott that included several articles in support of the boycott and was followed by a rebuttal by Nelson and criticism by pro-Israel academics. See Journal of Academic Freedom 4 (2013), http://www(aaup.org/reports-publications/journal-academic-freedom/volume-4.
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid., 27, 29.
98. Readings, The University in Ruins, 144–45, 171.