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The colonial roots of counter-insurgencies in international politics

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There is a state-centrism in the way insurgencies are conceived in international politics. Herein, policy and practice targeting insurgencies draw on the long-established scholarly perception that war-making is the vocation of the state and that the violence of non-state insurgent factions is a source of insecurity. However, this state-centrism also has a colonial legacy and is an outgrowth of the colonial hostility towards anti-colonial factions. In this article, I establish the colonial roots of the current standing of insurgencies in international politics. Empirically, I focus on the European Union's (EU) peacebuilding efforts in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt). These efforts are largely premised on the notion that state-building is synonymous with peacebuilding and are focused on furbishing the state-like institutions of the Palestinian Authority (PA). But, in doing so, this manner of peacebuilding also replicates the scholarly antagonism towards non-state armed factions and, with it, the logic of colonial counterinsurgencies, as it de-legitimizes the varied forms of insurgent politics that occur outside the institutional limits of the PA. In the end, it is not entirely surprising that this mode of engagement has not secured peace—especially since it is premised on a certain antagonism towards insurgent politics. Therefore, I conclude, a substantial understanding (and incorporation) of the political grievances that drive insurgent politics, and their appeal, is essential for effective peacebuilding.

Insurgencies are often stigmatized in policy discourses. This stigma is palpable, for instance, in the joint counterinsurgency doctrine of the Armed Forces of the United States. Here insurgent factions (and their violence) are described primarily as a source of insecurity that pushes "political regimes into overreactions" and "discredit[s] government forces" by drawing them into firefights that result in civilian casualties.[1] As the joint doctrine then underlines the importance of "understanding why and how an insurgency begins", it further elaborates that insurgents do not just "exploit existing grievances" of the population. Through their violent and disruptive operations, insurgents also "create new grievances by attacking governance institutions, causing insecurity, and worsening conditions for the local population."[2] A similar perception is evident in a European Union (EU) concept note on the "protection of civilians" in EU-led operations. Here "armed groups, terrorists and insurgents" are distinguished by their tendency to terrorize unarmed civilians through "sexual and gender-based violence, the threat of violence and/or killing, harassment [and] enslavement."[3] Equally, we could look to the

[1] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 2020), p. 3
[2] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterinsurgency,* p. 4
[3] European Union Military Committee, 'Protection of Civilians (PoC) in EU-led Military Operations Concept', *European External Action Service* 6730/15, 2 March 2015, p. 6, https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6730-2015-INIT/en/pdf.

writings of the former Director General of Police for the state of Punjab in India, Kanwar Pal Singh Gill, who formulated the counterinsurgency strategy (i.e., the Gill Doctrine) against the Khalistan liberation movement. Gill wrote, "the movement for Khalistan was created out of a pattern of venal politics, of unscrupulous and bloody manipulation, and a brazen jockeying for power that is too well documented to be repeated". Subsequently, justifying the need for violent state-led counterinsurgency measures, he declared, "The defeat of terrorism in Punjab…was unambiguously the result of the counter-terrorist measures implemented in the state [of Punjab] by the security forces…[T]he use of this coercive force was (and is) not just a necessary expedient, but a fundamental obligation and duty of constitutional government."[4]

Such antagonism towards insurgencies draws on the long-established scholarly perception that the ability to "injure, maim and kill"[5] is the vocation solely of the state.[6] Meaning, whether this state-centrism builds on a Weberian understanding of the state's monopoly over violence[7], a Hobbesian fear of the state of anarchy personified by insurgent factions[8] or the assumed synonymy between state-making and war-making evident in writings of Huntington, Finer and Tilly[9] – it is the state that is seen here as the legitimate practitioner of violence, as *the* guarantor of security and thus in need of protection from violent insurgent groups. However, this

[4] Kanwar Pal Singh Gill, 'Endgame in Punjab: 1988-1993' in Kanwar Pal Singh Gill and Ajai Sahni, eds., *Terror and Containment: Perspectives on India's Internal Security* (New Delhi: Gyan, 2001) p. 24.
[5] Somdeep Sen, 'To fight is to exist: Hamas, Armed Resistance and the Making of Palestine', *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 19:2, 2017, p. 205.
[6] Anna Leander, 'Wars and the Un-making of States: Taking Tilly Seriously in the Contemporary World' In Stefano Guzzini and Dietrich Jung, eds., *Contemporary Security Analysis and Copenhagen Peace Research* (New York: Routledge), pp. 69-80; Didier Bigo, 'Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations: Power of Practices, Practices of Power', *International Political Sociology* 5:3, 2011, pp. 225-258; Hannes Lacher, 'Putting the State in Its Place: The Critique of State-Centrism and Its Limits', *Review of International Studies* 29:4, 2003, pp. 521-541; John Hobson, *The State and International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Neil Brenner, 'Beyond State-Centrism? Space, Territoriality, and Geographical Scale in Globalization Studies', *Theory and Society* 28:1, 1999, pp. 39-78; Kenneth Waltz, *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).
[7] Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* [Transl. ed. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills] (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946).
[8] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London: John Bohn, 1651).
[9] Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States: AD 990–1992* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Samuel E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1962).

presumed sacrosanctity of the state – codified in scholarship and promulgated through state-centric policies and practices targeting insurgencies – is also an outgrowth of the colonial legacies of international relations. And, building on works that study the nature and ideology of colonial counterinsurgency campaigns[10], I argue that the present-day antagonism towards the scourge of insurgent violence is in fact an extension of the colonial hostility towards insurgent, anti-colonial factions. In this article I thus establish the colonial roots of the current standing of insurgencies in international politics.

Empirically, I focus on the European Union's (EU) peacebuilding efforts in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) that – under the guise of state-building – are primarily concerned with furbishing the state-like institutions and bureaucracies of the Palestinian Authority (PA). For one thing, this approach to peacebuilding replicates the scholarly antagonism towards insurgencies into practice as it restricts the realm of sanctioned politics to the institutional limits of the PA. But, more importantly, it also follows a colonial logic of counterinsurgency since it overlooks (and effectively delegitimizes) the political grievances of the Palestinian national movement as well as the varied forms of, often violent, insurgent politics that consequently find resonance in the context of a liberation struggle. Expectedly this 'brand' of engagement in the oPt has not resulted in peace – especially since it is premised on a certain antagonism towards insurgent politics. I therefore conclude that a substantial understanding (and incorporation) of the political grievances that drive insurgent politics, and their appeal is essential for effective peacebuilding. Below I begin with a discussion of the history of colonial

[10] Bart Luttikhuis & A. Dirk Moses, 'Mass violence and the end of the Dutch colonial empire in Indonesia', *Journal of Genocide Research*, 14:3-4, 2012, pp. 257-276; Helen Fein, *Imperial Crime and Punishment: The Massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and British Judgement, 1919-1920* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1977); Hugh Tinker, 'India in the First World War and after', *Journal of Contemporary History* 3:3, 1968, pp. 89-107; Irfan Habib, 'Jallianwala Bagh Massacre', *Social Scientist* 47:5/6, 2019, pp. 3-8; Kim Wagner, 'Savage Warfare: Violence and the Rule of Colonial Difference in Early British Counterinsurgency', *History Workshop Journal*, 85, 2018, pp. 217-237; Ranajit Guha, 'The Prose of Counterinsurgency' In Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, eds., *Selected Subaltern Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 45-86.

antagonism towards anticolonial insurgencies and their violence, before establishing the continuity of this legacy in the EU's state-building efforts in the oPt.

Insurgencies, counterinsurgencies and the colonial endeavour

A politics of difference is thus inherent to the conception of insurgencies and counterinsurgencies. There is a difference in material capabilities. Reis, for instance, notes that asymmetry defines the very nature of the conflict between the insurgent and counterinsurgent. He adds, since the former is "fundamentally weaker" than the traditional military in terms of its material capabilities, it has to "organise differently both for the purposes of combat and to violently challenge the political status quo."[11] Metz and Millen similarly consider insurgents and guerrilla factions to be "too weak" to engage in traditional warfare or seize power through "conventional means." Instead, insurgencies entail "protracted, asymmetric violence, ambiguity, the use of complex terrain (jungles, mountains, urban areas), psychological warfare, and political mobilization", since these tactics are meant to 'even out' the relative material asymmetry between the conflicting parties.[12] As a result, for insurgent factions, asymmetry *is* the tactical approach and strategy in warfare and not just a material reality.[13] In fact, while characterized as a "weapon of the weak", asymmetric tactics often ensure that such factions are formidable.[14]

But a distinction between the insurgent and counterinsurgent is not just a matter of the materiality of their tactical approach in warfare. It is a political affair that drives the

[11] Bruno C. Reis, 'The Myth of British Minimum Force in Counterinsurgency Campaigns during Decolonisation (1945-1970)', *Journal of Strategic Studies* 34:2, 2011, p. 250.
[12] Steven Metz and Raymond Millen, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the 21st Century: Reconceptualizing Threat and Response* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College Press, 2004), p. 2.
[13] Lukas Milevski, 'Asymmetry Is Strategy, Strategy Is Asymmetry', *Joint Forces Quarterly* 75:4, 2014, pp. 77-83.
[14] Barclay Bram Shoemaker, 'If terrorism and insurgency are the "weapons of the weak", why do they sometimes win?', *International Affairs Forum* 5:1, 2014, pp. 59-69.

stigmatization of insurgencies in policy discourses, where the politics of difference was animated by notions (il)legitimacy associated with the political project that drives the military actions of insurgents and counterinsurgents[15]. As I have argued earlier, these ideas of (il)legitimacy are intimately tied to the long-standing perception in the academic literature that political authority is granted to the state by "a collective" to rightfully practice its "coercive powers"[16]. But the conflict between the counterinsurgent and insurgent also entails a discursive "battle of ideas"[17]. And the "normative belief"[18] of the primacy of the counterinsurgent as the rightful practitioner of coercion prevalent in the academic scholarship is mobilized in policy discourses in order to (discursively) 'highjack'[19] the insurgency and place it outside the scope of sanctioned politics. This discursive trope was evident in the US Armed Forces' joint counterinsurgency doctrine, the EU concept note and the Gill Doctrine, as the politics of insurgents was deemed exploitative, venal, unscrupulous and manipulative. By extension, the military actions that resulted from this 'brand' of politics were also presumed to be one of upheaval and disorder[20]. Similarly, when Kilcullen likens insurgencies to cancer, he also views the politics of insurgents to be cancerous and illegitimate[21]. Of course, the venality of the insurgency subsequently serves as the backdrop for the material efforts of the counterinsurgent,

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[15] Ahmed Hashim, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2006); Bruce Hoffman, 'Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Iraq', *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 29:2, 2006, pp. 103-121; Louise Wiuff Moe, 'Counter-insurgency in the Somali territories: the "grey zone" between peace and pacification', *International Affairs*, 94:2, 2018, pp. 319–341; Robert Bunker, *Old and New Insurgency Forms* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College Press, 2006).

[16] David A. Lake, 'Relational Authority and Legitimacy in International Relations', 'Relational Authority and Legitimacy in International Relations', *American Behavioural Science*, 53:3, 2009, p. 333.

[17] Shane P. Mulligan, 'The Uses of Legitimacy in International Relations' *Millennium*, 34:2, 2006, p. 375.

[18] Ian Clark, *International Legitimacy and World Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 176.

[19] John Collins and Somdeep Sen, *Globalizing Collateral Language: From 9/11 to Endless Wars* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2021); John Collins and Ross Glover, *Collateral Language: A User's Guide to America's New War* (New York: New York University Press, 2001); Laleh Khalili, 'Gendered Practices of Counterinsurgency', *Review of International Studies*, 37:4, 2011, pp. 1471–1491; David Martin Jones and M.L.R. Smith, 'Myth and the small war tradition: Reassessing the discourse of British counter-insurgency', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 24:3, 2013, pp. 436-464.

[20] Daniel L. Byman, 'Friends Like These: Counterinsurgency and the War on Terrorism', *International Security*, 31:2, 2006, pp. 79–115; David Kilcullen, 'Countering global insurgency', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 28:4, 2005, pp. 597-617; David Kilcullen 'Counter-insurgency Redux', *Survival*, 48:4, 2006, pp. 111-130; Robert R. Tomes, 'Relearning Counterinsurgency Warfare', *The US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters* 34:1, 2004, pp. 16-28; Steven Metz, *Rethinking Insurgency* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College Press, 2007).

[21] David Kilcullen, *Counterinsurgency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 1.

that are then legitimized due to the presumption that the state is obligated to stand as vanguard against the insurgency's 'bad' politics. And what the counterinsurgent does is considered to be no more than a manner of "armed state (re)building" operating as an antidote to the insurgency's violent disaffiliation from sanctioned and legitimate forms of politics.[22]

This recognition of the political dimensions of the conflict between the insurgent and the state is often termed as a "population-centric" approach to "counterinsurgency theory and practice"[23]. But while this approach is integral to present day counterinsurgency campaigns, it is hardly a recent innovation. "Asymmetric warfare" was a central facet of colonial expeditions[24] and contemporary counterinsurgency logics and narrative of the venality of insurgency, builds on a legacy of colonial hostility towards anticolonial insurgent politics[25]. The long shadow of colonial antagonism is, for instance, evident in the scholarly works of Lieutenant General David Galula who served the French Army between 1939 and 1962 and pioneered the population-centric approach to counterinsurgencies. Galula was the first to conceptualize the conflict between the insurgent and the counterinsurgent as "essentially of a political nature" wherein political and military actions "cannot be tidily separated". Instead, he proposed, military actions need to be tallied against their political intentions, and vice versa[26]. Today he is considered a "later-day prophet" of counterinsurgency and Galula's writings have found global resonance in counterinsurgency campaigns like the US "surge" in Iraq in 2007[27]. Galula's *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (1964) was also extensively cited

[22] Larry Cable, 'Reinventing the Round-Wheel: Insurgency, Counterinsurgency, and Peacekeeping Post-Cold War', *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 4:2, 1993, p. 229.
[23] Thomas Rid, 'The Nineteenth Century Origins of Counterinsurgency Doctrine', *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, 33:5, 2010, p. 728.
[24] Laleh Khalili, *Time in the Shadows: Confinement in Counterinsurgencies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), p. 12.
[25] Rid, 'The Nineteenth Century Origins of Counterinsurgency Doctrine', p. 728.
[26] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (London: Praeger Security International, 2006 [1964]), p. 5.
[27] Douglas Porch, 'David Galula and the Revival of COIN in the US Military' In Celeste Ward Gventer, David Martin Jones and M.L.R. Smith, eds., *The New Counter-insurgency Era in Critical Perspective* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 173.

in the 2006 Counterinsurgency Field Manual of the US Army and listed in the "Annotated Bibliography" as an important source "that leaders can use to assess counterinsurgency situations and make appropriate decisions"[28].

It is often assumed that if we are able to disentangle the writings of the likes of Galula from the "unsavoury" political contexts in which they are embedded, we can still draw out "valuable lessons" that are relevant for contemporary counterinsurgency policymaking[29]. Yet, in keeping with the Galula's own assertion that the political and military facets of such a conflict cannot be neatly distinguished, it is also critical to acknowledge that his writings on counterinsurgencies builds on learnings from French colonial counterinsurgency campaigns. A sense of colonial antagonism towards anti-colonial insurgencies was thus central to Galula's influential work, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-1958* (1963). In it, he does not engage in a substantial discussion of the political grievances and aims of the Algerian national movement. Galula describes them solely as "a small group of leaders" who are concerned with "overthrowing the existing order". Further, he argues, insurgents are not just concerned with "attract[ing] supporters". Having the "freedom from any responsibility" of governing or maintaining state-like order, they are ideologically driven to use "any means toward their ends, including terrorism to coerce neutrals and to cow enemies"[30]. While describing the mandate of the counterinsurgent, Galula admits that the colonial state is ideologically weak, despite the colonial army being materially stronger than the insurgents. Nonetheless, Galula considers the (colonial) government to be endowed with a sense of legitimacy as it is responsible for maintaining "law and order" and countering the disorder of insurgent politics"[31].

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[28] Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency (Field Manual No. 3-24)* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 2006), p. 255.
[29] Wagner, 'Savage Warfare: Violence and the Rule of Colonial Difference in Early British Counterinsurgency', p. 219.
[30] David Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-1958*. (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1963[2006]), p. 5.
[31] Galula, *Pacification in Algeria, 1956-1958*, p. 5.

Of course, before Galula, British Army officer Major General Charles Edward Callwell was considered the most prominent theorist of counterinsurgency warfare[32]. But Callwell's writings also draw on lessons from British colonial counterinsurgency campaigns. Colonial antagonism (towards insurgent politics) was therefore unmistakable in *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* (1906) where he considers insurgents to be "savages and semi-civilised races"[33] and argues that it is their savagery that justifies the counterinsurgent's (i.e., the colonial state's) wartime measures. And, while these measures to crush the "insurrectionary movement" wreak havoc on the "savage lands", Callwell insists they are intended to have a moral effect on the insurgents[34].

Though, in a broader sense, the present-day politics of difference in counterinsurgencies all but replicates what Partha Chatterjee once called the "rule of colonial difference" i.e., a logic of colonial governance whereby the institutions and resources of the colonial state are mobilized to create and maintain a racialized hierarchy (and distinction) between the colonized and the colonizer. This distinction, Chatterjee argues, accounts for the very essence of colonial power.[35] The rule of colonial difference was then very much at play in colonial counterinsurgency campaigns as Western conceptions of "racial and cultural hierarchies" shaped "military thinking and practice" in the nineteenth century. Specifically, stereotypical notions of the colonized as "uncivilized people" gave the colonial counterinsurgency an evangelical quality that subsequently allowed colonists "to present their conquest of 'savages' as divinely ordained"[36]. As a discursive trope, Guha therefore termed this narrative the "prose

[32] Gian P. Gentile, 'The Selective Use of History in the Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine', *Army History*, 72, 2009, p. 22.
[33] Charles Edward Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice* (London: Harrison and Sons, St. Martin Lane, 1906), p. 21
[34] Callwell, *Small Wars*, p. 42
[35] Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p. 10
[36] Wagner, 'Savage Warfare: Violence and the Rule of Colonial Difference in Early British Counterinsurgency', p. 221.

of counterinsurgency" that was employed in service of the colonizer and meant to overlook the political grievances of the colonial subjects. With regard to the grievances that resulted in peasant uprisings under the British *Raj*, he elaborates that such "insurrections" were hardly "…spontaneous and unpremeditated affairs". On contrary they were a result of a considered decision to undo the colonial structures and institutions that have entrenched the insurgents' state of subalternity[37]. Yet, in the colonizer's prose, the history and politics of the colonized are rarely acknowledged. Instead, the rebellious peasant is conceived as "merely…an empirical person or member of a class"[38], disentangled from the political project to dismantle the *Raj's* colonial oppression. Moreover, as was the case in say the British colonial government's response to the Barasat uprising of 1831 and the Santal rebellion of 1855, the insurgent's politics was deemed as no more than a form of fanaticism that defies the "authority of the [colonial] state", leads to "atrocities on the inhabitants" and disturbs "the public tranquillity"[39].

The same prose was present in *Political Trouble in India 1907-1917* (1917), a report by James Cambell Ker that documents revolutionary and anti-colonial activities in India for the colonial administration's Director of Criminal Intelligence. For the large part these activities were described as seditious acts meant to undermine the authority of the colonial state. Here too there was little by way of recognition of the colonized's grievances[40]. This survey of seditious and revolutionary movements led to the establishment of a "Sedition Committee" that further raised the alarm regarding revolutionary movements and eventually resulted in the "Revolutionary and Anarchical Crimes Act" or the Rowlatt Act of 1919[41]. The law expanded the colonial administration's powers and allowed it to enforce harsh measures to suppress

[37] Guha, 'The Prose of Counterinsurgency', p. 45
[38] Guha, 'The Prose of Counterinsurgency', p. 46.
[39] Guha, 'The Prose of Counterinsurgency', p. 48-49.
[40] James Cambell Ker, *Political Trouble in India, 1907-1917* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1917).
[41] Habib, 'Jallianwala Bagh Massacre', p. 3.

anticolonial political activities and maintain order in the colony[42]. The most noteworthy consequence of the law was the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh in Punjab[43] where a public meeting had been organized to protest the Rowlatt Act. The colonial antagonism towards anti-colonial insurgencies was subsequently self-evident in the words of Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer who oversaw the massacre. In his report on the killings in Jallianwala Bagh, Dyer wrote:

> I fired and continued to fire till the crowd dispersed, and I considered that this is the least amount of firing which would produce the necessary moral and widespread effect it was my duty to produce if I was to justify my action. If more troops had been at hand the casualties would have been greater in proportion. It was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd, but one of producing a sufficient moral effect, from a military point of view, not only on those who were present, but more specially throughout the Punjab.[44]

To be sure, this prose of counterinsurgency was not unique to the British or French colonial enterprise either. Equally, it animated other colonial counterinsurgencies like the efforts of the Dutch administration in the era of decolonization in Indonesia. Indonesian anticolonial and revolutionary activities were also deemed to be acts of extremism, while their often-brutal suppression by the Dutch colonial forces were considered necessary acts of policing, meant to "restore peace and order"[45]. Meaning, while in practice, these acts of policing resulted in large-scale violence like the massacre in Rawagedeh in 1947, they were rationalized as unintended consequences of "legitimate military action"[46].

Admittedly, compared to the colonial campaigns against revolutionary and anticolonial activities, contemporary counterinsurgencies operate in vastly different political circumstances. MacDonald notes that much of the "successes" of colonial counterinsurgencies

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[42] Tinker, 'India in the First World War and after', p. 92.
[43] Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885-1947* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Kim Wagner, *Amritsar 1919: An Empire of Fear & The Making of a Massacre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019); KL Tuteja, 'Jallianwala Bagh: A Critical Juncture in the Indian National Movement', pp. 25-61.
[44] Fein, *Imperial Crime and Punishment: The Massacre at Jallianwala Bagh and British Judgement, 1919-1920*, p. 21.
[45] Luttikhuis & Moses, 'Mass violence and the end of the Dutch colonial empire in Indonesia', p. 266.
[46] Luttikhuis & Moses, 'Mass violence and the end of the Dutch colonial empire in Indonesia', p. 267.

can be attributed to a "relatively permissive international context and broad domestic support for imperialism". In comparison, present-day counterinsurgencies have to contend with "normative and material shifts in the international system" and a relatively less permissive international political landscape[47]. Nonetheless, despite operating in different political contexts, I have argued here that counterinsurgencies today replicate a colonial politics of difference. The next section will then explore the role of this colonial logic of counterinsurgency in the EU's state-building efforts in the oPt.

The EU and the coloniality of its counterinsurgent state-building in the oPt

The making of the EU has often been likened to the making of an empire. The former President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso once admitted,

> …sometimes I like to compare the European Union as a creation to the organization of empires…because we have the dimensions of empires. But there is a great difference. The empires were usually made through force with a centre that was imposing a dictate, a will on the others and now we have what some authors called the first non-imperial empire. We have, by dimension, 27 countries that freely decided to work together to pool their sovereignty…I believe it's a great construction and we should be proud of it.[48]

Similarly, Zielonka explains that with its enlargement into eastern Europe the EU can no longer be considered a "Westphalian federation". Instead, it displays the features of a "neo-medieval Empire" that encompasses several disparate "political units", multiple levels of governance, unclear territorial boundaries and a limited ability to project external power[49]. Marks thus places the EU on a historical trajectory of empire-making in Europe that begins with the Roman Empire. He further argues that, not unlike its predecessors, the EU is "exerting *imperium*

[47] Paul K. MacDonald, 'Retribution Must Succeed Rebellion: The Colonial Origins of Counterinsurgency Failure' *International Organization*, 67:2, 2013, p. 262.
[48] See video of the speech: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2Ralocq9uE
[49] Jan Zielonka, *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 1.

(power, authority)" – albeit, without violence or exploitation – as it strives to exercise authority over a European population "with diverse histories, languages and religions"[50].

However, any conception of the EU as an empire would need to account for the "decisive role of colonial imperialism" in the making of its positionality in international politics[51]. At its very inception, the European Economic Community (EEC) was concerned with ensuring that the territoriality of the "new community [was] not delimited by the European land mass". Instead, the colonies in possession of European states were seen as being equally in the purview of its territorial responsibilities[52]. In this sense, say the Treaty of Rome or a construction like Eurafrica that was meant to ensure "complementarity" and "interdependence" in relations with Africa[53] were, in their essence, a way of extending the "colonial management" of territories beyond Europe, under the pretext of a "customs unions"[54]. That said, the colonial legacy of the EU is not just a matter of institutional continuities. It is also a matter of the ideological and discursive construction of the very idea of 'Europe' in general and 'the EU' in particular. Implicit in ideas of the normative power of the EU[55] are fetishized notions of metropolitan socio-cultural superiority and the 'backwardness' of the postcolonial milieu in Africa, Asia and Latin America[56]. This is visible in the assumption that "norms and rules developed in the context of EU polity-building and policy-making" are unequivocally 'good' and universally

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[50] Gary Marks, 'Europe and Its Empires: From Rome to the European Union' *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 50:1, 2012, pp. 1-2.
[51] Peo Hansen & Stefan Jonsson, 'Imperial Origins of European Integration and the Case of Eurafrica: A Reply to Gary Marks' 'Europe and Its Empires' *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 50:6, 2012, p. 1029.
[52] Hansen & Jonsson, 'Imperial Origins of European Integration and the Case of Eurafrica', p. 1029.
[53] Guy Martin, 'Africa and the Ideology of Eurafrica: Neo-Colonialism or Pan-Africanism?' *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 20:2, 1982, p. 221.
[54] Peo Hansen & Stefan Jonsson, *Eurafrica: The Untold History of European Integration and Colonialism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 244.
[55] Lisbeth Aggestam, 'Introduction: Ethical Power Europe?' *International Affairs*, 84:1, 2008, pp. 1–11; Ian Manners, 'Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?' *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 40:2, 2002, pp. 235–258; Ian Manners, 'Normative Power Europe Reconsidered: Beyond the Crossroads' *Journal of European Public Policy* 13:2, 2006, pp. 182–199; Ian Manners, 'The Normative Ethics of the European Union' *International Affairs* 84:1, 2008, pp. 45–60; Ian Manners, 'Global Europa: Mythology of the European Union in World Politics' *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 48:1, 2010, pp. 67–87.
[56] Ueli Staeger, 'Africa–EU Relations and Normative Power Europe: A Decolonial Pan-African Critique' *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 54:4, 2016, 54:4, p. 982.

applicable. Nicolaidis terms this belief "EUniversalism"[57] and it is the foundational ethos that drives the criteria for EU membership that candidate countries are expected to fulfil on their path towards European integration[58]. Further, this assumption of the normative superiority of the EU is mobilized beyond the territorial limits of Europe as it establishes a global hierarchy wherein the European-ness (and Western-ness) is seen as synonymous with modernity[59], while the non-European (and non-Western) world is considered devoid of the same[60].

Not surprisingly then the EU replicates this coloniality in its bilateral relations with Palestine. In general, being the largest single donor, the EU has a multiplicity of humanitarian and political priorities that shape its engagement with the oPt. For instance, the 1997 Euro-Mediterranean Interim Association Agreement on trade and cooperation between the European Community and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) elaborates that the EU is concerned with promoting diplomatic dialogue, "liberalization of trade", "balanced economic and social relations", "social and economic development" in the oPt as well as "regional cooperation"[61]. The European Union-Palestinian Authority Action Plan – first approved in 2013 and extended until the end of 2021 – specifies that the relaunching of the peace process,

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[57] Kalypso Nicolaidis, 'Southern Barbarians? A Post-Colonial *Critique* of EUniversalism' In Kalypso Nicolaïdis, Berny Sébe and Gabrielle Maa, eds., *Echoes of Empire: Memory, Identity and Colonial Legacies* (London: I.B. Tauris), p. 289.

[58] Cris Shore, *Building Europe: The Cultural Politics of European Integration* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Peo Hansen, 'European Integration, European Identity and the Colonial Connection' *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5:4, 2002, pp. 483–498; Somdeep Sen, 'On Colonial Self-Perceptions: The European Union, Turkey and the "bad" leader' *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 22:6, 2020, pp. 763-782.

[59] The synonymy between "European-ness" and modernity is indeed foundational to the normative power of the EU. Though, this does not preclude European states that are not members of the EU from drawing a similar synonymy while formulating their normative role in international politics. However, their mobilization of ideas of "European-ness", "Western-ness" and modernity is outside the scope of the empirical focus of this article (cf. Gérald Berthoud, 'The 'Spirit of the Alps' and the Making of Political and Economic Modernity in Switzerland' *Social Anthropology*, 9:1, 2001, pp. 81–94; Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Volker H. Schmidt, 'Multiple Modernities or Varieties of Modernity?' *Current Sociology*, 54:1, 2006, pp. 77–97).

[60] Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Gurminder Bhambra, 'Wither Europe? Postcolonial Versus Neocolonial Cosmopolitanism' *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 18:2, 2016, pp. 187–202; Sanjay Seth, 'Is Thinking with "Modernity" Eurocentric?' *Cultural Sociology*, 10:3, 2016, pp. 385–398.

[61] European Commission, 'Interim Association Agreement on Trade and Cooperation', L 187, 1997, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:21997A0716(01):EN:HTML

the reduction of "poverty and social exclusion", the facilitation of "territorial management and access" and the improvement of the "quality of education, research and innovation" in the oPt are some of the most important policy priorities of the EU[62]. Between 2014 and 2020, as part of its European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) framework, the EU also contributed €2.2 billion in financial assistance to the oPt. This included contributions to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), support for the private sector as well as initiatives for attracting foreign investment to the oPt[63].

Yet, since the first donor conference dedicated to the "reconstruction and development in the West Bank and Gaza" was held in 1993[64], international donors have been increasingly concerned with "building and sustaining…institutions and bureaucracies" as encompassed by the state-like PA[65]. State-building has therefore been a central focus of the EU as well. The European Union-Palestinian Authority Action Plan, for instance, notes that the EU previously supported the Palestinian government's "Palestinian Reform and Development Programme (PRDP) 2008-2010"[66] and the "National Development Plan (NDP) 2011-2013"[67]. Both programs were concerned with furbishing the institutions of the PA, in preparation for the future, sovereign Palestinian state[68]. The Action Plan further underlines the EU's commitment to institutional and legislative reform that would result in a state that is "based on the rule of law and respect for human rights within a functioning deep democracy and with accountable

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[62] European Commission, 'European Union-Palestinian Authority Action Plan: Political Chapeau', 2013 [2018], https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/eu-palestine_action_plan_2013.pdf, pp. 1-12.
[63] European Commission, 'Palestine – Southern Neighborhood', 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/near_factograph_palestine_en.pdf.
[64] Rex Brynen, *A Very Political Economy: Peacebuilding and Foreign Aid in the West Bank and Gaza* (Washington, DC: United States Institute for Peace, 2000), p. 3
[65] Somdeep Sen, *Decolonizing Palestine: Hamas between the Anticolonial and the Postcolonial* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2020), p. 92.
[66] Palestinian National Authority, 'Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP) (2008-2010)', 2008, https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-208834/
[67] Palestinian National Authority, 'National Development Plan, 2011-2013. Establishing the State, Building our Future', 2011, http://www.mot.gov.ps/wp-content/uploads/Portals/_Rainbow/Documents/Establishing%20the%20State%20Building%20our%20Future_%20NDP%202011-13.pdf.
[68] European Commission, 'European Union-Palestinian Authority Action Plan', p. 1.

institutions"[69]. In 2008, the EU established Mecanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion et d'Aide Socio-Economique, or PEGASE that provides direct financial support to the PA and covers "recurrent costs such as civil employee salaries and pensions, social expenditure, private sector arrears and essential public services". This assistance is meant to reduce the "large budgetary deficit" of the PA, decrease its debt to public sector and, in keeping with the PDRP, support state-building efforts and institutional reform[70]. In 2020 PEGASE received €159.05 million in contributions, of which €85 million were allocated for public sector salaries and pensions[71]. Responding to a letter of invitation from the PA in October 2005, the EU also established the European Union Police Mission for the Palestinian Territories (EUPOL COPPS). The mission supports the "establishment of sustainable and effective policing arrangements under Palestinian ownership"[72].

Support for state-building measures, in and of itself, cannot be considered a colonial mode of engagement; though this primacy of the state is codified within the academic literature. To that we could add that the state-centrism that is integral to the disciplinary myth of International Relations, also goes on to shape the common consciousness of those educated in the field. This hierarchy that places statecraft above other forms of (insurgent) politics is relayed through the curricula of International Relations courses and, as Vitalis argues, the norms and traditions of the discipline (along with its state-centrism) influence the intellectual orientation of generations of students "who will become public intellectuals, politicians and policymakers"[73]. As is the case with regard to the EU's role in Palestine, these public intellectuals, politicians and

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[69] European Commission, 'European Union-Palestinian Authority Action Plan', p. 5.
[70] European Commission Technical Assistance Office for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 'PEGASE: Direct Financial Support to the Palestinian Government Sustaining Palestinian institutions', 2009, https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/westbank/documents/eu_westbank/directfinancialsupport_en.pdf
[71] European Commission, 'European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations-Palestine', https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/countries/palestine_en
[72] European Union Institute for Security Studies, 'EUPOL COPPS – Council Joint Action', 2005, p. 315, https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep06972.42.pdf
[73] Robert Vitalis, *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), p. 5.

policymakers then go on to further propagate this disciplinary state-centrism through policy and practice. Yet, in a political context that is defined by a Palestinian national struggle and the effort to dismantle an Israeli occupation, the EU also defines state-building as a synonymous with peacebuilding. This synonymy, I would argue, mirrors the colonial prose of counterinsurgency as it fails to recognize the grievances of the national struggle and the manners of nationalist insurgent politics that exceed the scope of state-building activities. For instance, the Council Joint Action statement that establishes EUPOL COPPS outlines the need for support in "political, security, economic, humanitarian, and institution building fields" in order to build an independent Palestinian state. Yet, this eventual arrival of this state is not seen as the culmination (or recognition) of the Palestinian struggle for independence. Neither does the document mention the Israeli occupation. Instead, the (Palestinian) state is seen solely as a way of ensuring "peace and security with Israel and [Palestine's] other neighbours"[74]. Similarly, a report on the first decade of The European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), published by the EU's Institute for Security Studies, does little to recognize the grievances of the Palestinian 'insurgent' or outline the aspiration of the Palestinian liberation struggle, in its assessment of the EUPOL COPPS. Instead, as a reference to the political context, it mentions "the ongoing power struggle between Israel, the PA and Palestinian factions" and notes that the mission has "raised the profile of the EU" in matters of policing, rule of law, conflict management and counter-terrorism efforts in the oPt[75].

For its part, the European Union-Palestinian Authority Action Plan underlines the EU's commitment to the two-state solution and, in doing so, acknowledges that "settlements [and] the separation barrier were built on occupied land, demolition of homes and evictions, are

[74] European Union Institute for Security Studies, 'EUPOL COPPS – Council Joint Action', p. 313.
[75] Esra Bulut, 'EUPOL COPPS' In Giovanni Grevi, Damien Helly and Daniel Keohane, eds., *European Security and Defence Policy: The First 10 Years (1999-2009)* (Paris: European Union Institute of Security Studies, 2009), p. 289.

illegal under international law and constitute an obstacle to peace"[76]. Nonetheless, there is no acknowledgement that Palestinian insurgent politics is a consequence of these violations of Palestinian rights in the oPt. Instead, the Action Plan also sanctions state-building as the sole means of mitigating the conflict and securing the rights and freedoms of Palestinians and places *other* modes of insurgent political responses in the category of "terrorism" and as a threat to Israeli security and the two-state solution[77]. The broader framework of the EU's engagement in the oPt is, however, framed by its commitment to the Middle East Peace Process. Herein the EU specifies its position with regard to contentious issues such as the borders of the forthcoming Palestinian state, the Israeli settlement movement, the status of Jerusalem as well as the future of Palestinian refugees. The EU, as a member of the 'Quartet'[78], recognizes that resolving these issues is key to achieving a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and securing Palestinian sovereignty. Further it pledges its practical, economic political support to "advancing the Palestinian state-building process, promoting good governance and encouraging economic recovery with a view to enhancing the viability of the future Palestinian state". But here too state-building is considered a means of securing Israel[79] against Palestinian insurgent politics (or what is termed as "terrorism"), rather than an acknowledgement of the political grievances and aspirations of the Palestinian national movement[80].

Though, the colonial prose of counterinsurgency was already inscribed into the very foundations of the institutions and bureaucracies of statecraft (and state-building) in the oPt. On September 9, 1993 Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman and Fatah leader

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[76] European Commission, 'European Union-Palestinian Authority Action Plan', pp. 4.
[77] European Commission, 'European Union-Palestinian Authority Action Plan', pp. 18-19.
[78] The UN, US and Russia are the other members of the 'Quartet'.
[79] In fact, the presidency conclusions of the Berlin European Council meeting in March 1999 explicitly states: "The European Union is convinced that the creation of a democratic, viable and peaceful sovereign Palestinian State on the basis of existing agreements and through negotiations would be the best guarantee of Israel's security and Israel's acceptance as an equal partner in the region" (European Parliament, 'Berlin European Council 24 and 25 March 1999: Presidency Conclusions', https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/ber2_en.htm)
[80] European Union External Action Service, 'Middle East Peace Process', https://eeas.europa.eu/diplomatic-network/middle-east-peace-process/337/middle-east-peace-process_en

Yasser Arafat and Prime Minister of Israel Yitzhak Rabin exchanged "Letters of Mutual Recognition". Rabin's letter acknowledged that the PLO was the "representative of the Palestinian people" and agreed to begin negotiations. Arafat, in his communication, "recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security" and accepts the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. Additionally, he declared, "the PLO renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence and will assume responsibility over all PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance, prevent violations and discipline violators"[81]. This declaration was significant in that it marked a stark departure from Arafat's 1974 speech at the UN where he insisted that the "freedom fighter's gun"[82] was inalienable to the Palestinian national struggle[83]. More significantly though, by renouncing violence and assuming the (counterinsurgent-like) responsibility of preventing future violent acts as well as disciplining 'violators', it replicates the colonial prose of counterinsurgency as Arafat discursively criminalizes the often-violent forms of insurgent politics that find resonance in a revolutionary and liberation context.

The "Letters of Mutual Recognition" were followed by the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangement or the Oslo Accords. As the first agreement between the State of Israel and the PLO, it established the PA and the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). Together, they represented an interim mechanism for self-governance that, at the time, was touted as the institutional precursor to the future, sovereign Palestinian state[84]. But while the Accords failed to secure Palestinian sovereignty, the Fatah-led PA has prevailed and institutionally ensured the continuation of the prose of counterinsurgency. Specifically, with the financial and political support from donors like the EU, state-building processes have

[81] 'Letters of Mutual Recognition between Israel and the PLO', *Security Dialogue*, 25: 1, 1994, 124.
[82] 'Palestine at the United Nations', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 4:2, 1975, p. 192.
[83] Somdeep Sen, '"It's Nakba, Not a Party": Re-Stating the (Continued) Legacy of the Oslo Accords', *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 37:2, 2015, p. 168
[84] Sara Roy, 'Why Peace Failed: An Oslo Autopsy' *Current History*, 2002, 101:651, pp. 8–16.

assumed a sacrosanctity as a vanguard against Palestinian insurgent politics – or, as Arafat termed them, 'violators' – and as a presumed pathway to peace. Consequently, the PA bifurcates the spectrum of Palestinian politics into categories of (il)legitimacy. Herein, statecraft and the PA encompass the realm of official, sanctioned and legitimate politics and entrance into this realm is reserved for factions that have renounced insurgent tactics. These factions are then recognized as political representatives who are stakeholders in peace negotiations[85]. More significantly though, they are also granted access to the state-like resources of the PA in order to police and govern the Palestinian population. Ostensibly, its state-like political mandate allows the PA and its functionaries to posture as "'neutral' law enforcement bodies" that maintain security and order[86]. Yet, in practice, it mirrors the logic of counterinsurgency in Ker's *Political Trouble in India 1907-1917*, Callwell's *Small Wars* or the British *Raj*'s response to the Barasat uprising. Meaning, it works to disrupt Palestinian insurgent politics.

This propensity to disrupt was evident in June 2021 with the death of activist Nizar Banat while in custody of the PA's security forces and the PA's suppression of the protests that followed[87]. Though, alongside its authoritarianism[88], the PA has a longer history of employing policing

[85] Sen, '"It's Nakba, Not a Party": Re-Stating the (Continued) Legacy of the Oslo Accords', p. 167

[86] Alaa Tartir, 'Securitizing Peace: The EU's Aiding and Abetting Authoritarianism' In Alaa Tartir and Timothy Seidel, eds., *Palestine and Rule of Power*: *Local Dissent vs. International Governance* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), p. 233. See also: Dimitris Bouris, *The European Union and Occupied Palestinian Territories: State-building without a state* (London: Routledge, 2013); Dimitris Bouris, 'The European Union's role in the Palestinian Territories: state-building through Security Sector Reform?' *European Security*, 2012, 21:2, pp. 257-271; Dimitris Bouris & Beste İşleyen, 'The European Union and Practices of Governing Space and Population in Contested States: Insights from EUPOL COPPS in Palestine' *Geopolitics*, 2020, 25:2, pp. 428-448; Tariq Dana, 'The prolonged decay of the Palestinian National Movement' *National Identities*, 2019, 21:1, pp. 39-55; Patrick Müller & Yazid Zahda, 'Local perceptions of the EU's role in peacebuilding: The case of security sector reform in Palestine' *Contemporary Security Policy*, 2018, 39:1, pp. 119-141.

[87] Somdeep Sen, 'The PA was always meant to 'kill' the Palestinian cause', *Al Jazeera English* (6 August 2021), https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2021/8/6/the-pa-was-always-meant-to-kill-the-palestinian; Mariam Barghouti, 'Who is the Palestinian Authority protecting? Not us', *The Washington Post* (2 July 2021), https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/07/02/nizar-banat-palestinian-authority-protests-violence/

[88] Dana El Kurd, *Polarized and Demobilized: Legacies of Authoritarianism in Palestine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); Alaa Tartir, 'Criminalizing Resistance: The Cases of Balata and Jenin Refugee Camps' *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 2017, 46:2, pp. 7–22; Tahani Mustafa, 'Damming the Palestinian Spring: Security Sector Reform and Entrenched Repression' *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 2015, 9:2, pp. 212-230.

mechanisms that are meant to circumscribe the violent insurgent politics (targeting Israel) of armed factions like Hamas that opposed the criminalization of Palestinian armed struggle[89]. In the aftermath of the Oslo Accords, Hamas's members and leadership were arrested, deported and assassinated by the Fatah-led PA's security forces[90]. When Hamas won the 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), it assumed the role as the governing entity at the helm of the PA. Yet, it did so without renouncing its military operations and ventured to 'blur' the Oslo-mandated demarcation between the realm of official politics and that of the insurgency[91]. Subsequently, Hamas faced Fatah's counterinsurgent tactics that included an attempted coup[92]. Eventually, following a military confrontation between the two factions, Hamas took over the Gaza Strip in June 2007 and the Palestinian coastal enclave has since been under a siege[93]. And the still prevalent political division between Hamas and Fatah has stood as a metaphor for the political fragmentation that has resulted from what Mandy Turner calls a colonial mode of "*mission civilisatrice*" i.e., a mission to create Palestinian "partners of peace" who operate in keeping with the (counterinsurgent) logic of western peacebuilding efforts[94] and antagonistic to the logic of the insurgency (and the insurgent).

Whether as extension of its own colonial legacy or through its insistent political and financial investment in a brand of counterinsurgent state-building that is antagonist to Palestinian insurgent politics, I have argued here that the EU's engagement in the oPt shaped by a colonial

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[89] Nigel Parsons, 'Israeli Biopolitics, Palestinian Policing: Order and Resistance in the Occupied Palestinian Territories' In Laleh Khalili and Jillian Schwedler, eds., *Policing and Prisons in the Middle East: Formations of Coercion* (London: Hurst & Company, 2010), p. 73.

[90] Wendy Kristianasen, 'Challenge and Counterchallenge: Hamas's Response to Oslo', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 1999, 28:3, p. 19; Beverly Milton-Edwards and Alastair Crooke, 'Elusive Ingredient: Hamas and the Peace Process' *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 2004, 33:4, p. 4; Sen, *Decolonizing Palestine: Hamas between the Anticolonial and the Postcolonial*, p. 90.

[91] Somdeep Sen, 'Bringing Back the Palestinian State: Hamas between Government and Resistance', *Middle East Critique*, 2015, 24:2, pp. 211-225.

[92] David Rose, 'The Gaza Bombshell', *Vanity Fair* (3 March 2008), http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2008/04/gaza200804.

[93] Yezid Sayigh, 'Inducing a Failed State in Palestine', *Survival*, 2007, 49:3, pp. 7–39.

[94] Mandy Turner, 'Completing the Circle: Peacebuilding as Colonial Practice in the Occupied Palestinian Territory' *International Peacekeeping*, 2012, 19:4, pp. 494; see also Mandy Turner, 'Peacebuilding as counterinsurgency in the occupied Palestinian territory' *Review of International Studies*, 41, 2015, pp. 73-98

prose. But seeing as this 'brand' of peacebuilding has been ineffective, in the next section I propose reparative approaches that counter the coloniality of present-day counterinsurgency policies.

Postscript: On reparative approaches

This article establishes the colonial roots of the current standing of insurgencies in international politics. Specifically, I have argued, contemporary counterinsurgency policy approaches are shaped by the prose of colonial counterinsurgency campaigns and their antagonism towards anti-colonial factions. And just as anticolonial insurgent factions were stigmatized in the colonial discourse as solely a source disorder, so too do contemporary counterinsurgency approaches treat insurgent politics as positioned *outside* the scope of sanctioned politics. Empirically, I demonstrate that this colonial logic of counterinsurgency foundationally animates the EU's peacebuilding efforts in the oPt. The EU's efforts are largely focused on building and sustaining the state-like institutions of the PA as it considers state-building to be synonymous with peacebuilding. However, this manner of engagement in the oPt helps bifurcate the Palestinian political landscape in a way that accords statecraft a sense of legitimacy as a sanctioned mode of politics. At the same time, following a colonial *modus operandi*, Palestinian insurgent politics that are animated by the values and grievances of the Palestinian liberation movement, are also placed outside the realm of sanctioned politics.

It is, of course, self-evident that this mode of peacebuilding has done little to secure peace or Palestinian sovereignty. But the logic of colonial counterinsurgency is also not meant to operate as a mechanism of political reconciliation. On contrary, it is animated by a politics of difference that is antagonistic to insurgent politics. As a reparative approach, I propose that any effective peacebuilding effort would need to rethink (and remake) the epistemological foundation of present-day policy approaches to insurgencies. This rethinking would need to be to be rooted,

not in a sense of (colonial) antagonism, but in a commitment to understanding how and why insurgent politics find resonance in revolutionary and anticolonial contexts. To this end, the violence of insurgent factions – theorized in scholarship as a source of insecurity and contrarian to the Weberian understanding of the state's monopoly over the means of war-making – requires de-stigmatization. Further, a reparative approach would require a deeper engagement with scholarly works on the politics of revolutionary, anticolonial violence that recognize the fact that historically insurgent tactics have found resonance as not just tools of disorder. But for the political community that espouses these tactics, they are equally a mode of communication[95] that is evocative of the resilience of their political identity and aspiration[96]. That said, any recognition of how and why insurgent tactics find resonance would, in effect, result in a recognition of the underlying political grievances. Doing so counters not just the discursive tropes of the colonial prose that overlooks the political grievances of the insurgents. It also brings into focus the political projects of the insurgencies and recognizes that – especially with regard to peacebuilding efforts – substantially addressing the political grievances of insurgents is essential for effective policymaking.

[95] Mark Muhannad Ayyash, 'Hamas and the Israeli State: A "Violent Dialogue"' *European Journal of International Relations*, 16:1, 2010, pp. 103–123.

[96] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (London: Pluto Press, 1952); Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963); Frantz Fanon, *Towards the African Revolution*. (New York: Grove Press, 1964); Manisha Gangahar, 'Decoding Violence in Kashmir' *Economic and Political Weekly*, 48:4, 2013, pp. 35–42; Emmanuel Hansen, 'Frantz Fanon: Portrait of a Revolutionary Intellectual' *Transition* 46, 1974, pp. 25–36; Laleh Khalili, *Heroes and Martyrs of Palestine: The Politics of National Commemoration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe—The Chimurenga War* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1981); Marifeli Perez-Stable, *The Cuban Revolution: Origins, Course, and Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Rosemary Sayigh, *The Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries* (London: Zed Books, 1979)