

A gazelle stands in a dry, yellowish-brown landscape with sparse vegetation. A dashed white line runs horizontally across the middle of the image, separating the author's name from the title.

IRUS BRAVERMAN

**SETTLING
NATURE**

The Conservation Regime
in Palestine-Israel

SETTLING NATURE

SETTLING NATURE

THE CONSERVATION REGIME IN PALESTINE-ISRAEL

Irus Braverman



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS
MINNEAPOLIS
LONDON

Portions of the introduction were adapted from “Environmental Justice, Settler Colonialism, and More-than-Humans in the Occupied West Bank: An Introduction,” *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 4, no. 1 (2021): 3–27, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2514848621995397>. Portions of chapter 2 and 4 were originally published as “Wild Legalities: Animals and Settler Colonialism in Palestine/Israel,” *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 44, no. 1 (2021): 7–27, <https://doi.org/10.1111/plar.12419>. Portions of chapter 3 were originally published as “*Nof Kdumim*: Remaking the Ancient Landscape in East Jerusalem’s National Parks,” *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 4, no. 1 (2021): 109–34, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2514848619889594>. Portions of chapter 5 were adapted from “Silent Springs: The Nature of Water and Israel’s Military Occupation,” *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 3, no. 2 (2019): 527–51, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2514848619857722>.

Copyright 2023 by the Regents of the University of Minnesota

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published by the University of Minnesota Press

111 Third Avenue South, Suite 290

Minneapolis, MN 55401–2520

<http://www.upress.umn.edu>

ISBN 978-1-5179-1205-5 (hc)

ISBN 978-1-5179-1526-1 (pb)

Library of Congress record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022040910>.

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper

The University of Minnesota is an equal-opportunity educator and employer.

UMP BmB 2023

To River

Contents

Preface and Acknowledgments	ix
Introduction: Settling Nature	1
1. Policing Nature: Beit Jann, the Green Patrol, and the Mount Meron Nature Reserve	23
2. Reintroducing Nature: Persian Fallow Deer, European Goldfinches, and Mountain Gazelles	55
3. Landscaping Nature: Jerusalem's National Park System	91
4. Juxtaposing Nature: Wild Ass vs. Camel, Goat vs. Pine, Olive vs. Akkoub	123
5. Occupying Nature: The Wild West Bank and Wadi Qana Nature Reserve	163
6. Militarizing Nature: The Griffon Vulture and Israel's Nature Defense Forces	205
Conclusion: Unsettling Nature	247
Notes	269
Index	329

Preface and Acknowledgments

In retrospect, I have been collecting materials for this book since my birth. On that occasion, the State of Israel planted a tree in my name in Jerusalem's Peace Forest and issued a certificate to prove it. This sort of tree planting was not a rare or unique occurrence by any means. It has been performed upon every birth—every *Jewish* birth, that is.¹ Then there is my first name—*Irus*—which, as it happens, I share with only a handful of people on earth. It is the Greek name of a protected plant taxon that features on the logo of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel. Names are significant, especially when it comes to nature, and even more so when it comes to nation—names and flags. But flags aren't made only of cloth; they can be animals or plants as well. "Nature is our only flag," I recorded Israel's nature officials say again and again.

I remember the first scenic drive from the airport to Jerusalem, my hometown, after several years of absence when I studied for my doctorate in North America. It suddenly dawned on me that the landscape of pine forests at the hilltops and olive groves in the valleys, which I had previously perceived as a neutral backdrop to my life course, was in fact actively produced, idealized, and normalized (and, as I would later realize, also deeply dynamic and alive). Rather than a backdrop, this natural landscape has been central to the production of the Zionist state. Many years down the line, I encountered a similar reflection by the environmental humanities scholar Rob Nixon, who exiled himself from South Africa to the United States in 1980. He recounts: "After my fall into politics, the landscape around me seemed illusory. . . . My appreciation for the bird world has long since been bankrupted by politics. Nature shrank: it seemed unnatural."² Unlike Nixon, my appreciation of birds and the landscape has not shrunk in the course of understanding their political entanglements—quite the contrary: this understanding has in fact

deepened my recognition of the interconnections among forms of life. Still, I agree with Nixon that after seeing nature as imbued with politics, there is no real going back.

Shortly after finishing my first book, about trees and nationalism in Palestine-Israel, I paused my fieldwork in this region. I became a mother and needed to turn my energies elsewhere—certainly closer to the new home I was trying to establish for myself in Western New York. Fifteen years have passed since then. During this time, I've been working closely with conservation scientists from around the globe on issues ranging from zoo studies to genetic editing and coral conservation. So when I returned to Palestine-Israel in 2013, it was with a broader contextual understanding of Israeli environmentalism alongside a more developed methodological arsenal with which to tackle the ethnographic challenges of fieldwork in this region.

This book was not easy to write. I got especially bogged down in the last stage, while trying to strike the right tone for the project as a whole. On the one hand, I have been deeply committed to nature conservation and acutely aware of the fraught moment in which we live. Conservation is important now, maybe more so than ever. From this perspective, I could easily understand why some of my colleagues from the natural sciences perceive criticism of the conservation project as a betrayal of the nature protection agenda as a whole, especially in the polarized political climate we are currently living through.

Then there was my relationship with conservation colleagues from Palestine-Israel. This book tries to make sense of the many years of insider ethnography I pursued as part of this nature conservation community. I grew up in West Jerusalem in a neighborhood located right on what is commonly referred to as the Green Line—the internationally recognized armistice line drawn between Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and Syria in 1949. In my high school years, I would often head to the desert to work with the famed ornithologist Amotz Zahavi on warblers and shrikes. Closer to home in the Jerusalem mountains, I spent many nights bathing under the stars in the natural springs. When it was time for my mandatory military service, I was set on doing something, anything, related to wildlife and nature protection. I ended up educating soldiers about nature, initially in a military base located inside the old city of Jerusalem, where I experienced firsthand the eruption of the first intifada—the Palestinian uprising of 1987—and then in the armored corps in the southern desert of the Naqab-Negev.

During my military service, not only was I being indoctrinated but I was also indoctrinating others to the value of nature and to its powerful connection with the Jewish people. My passion for nature protection continued during the following years. I paid for law school by working as a tour guide and later became an environmental lawyer in the Israel Union for Environmental Defense, one of the main environmental law organizations in the country. In fact, my acquaintance with some of the officials interviewed for this book goes back to when I collaborated with the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) in drafting a petition against the Jewish National Fund's ecologically damaging afforestation practices. Later, I also trained in the Center for Third World Organizing and in the Midwest Academy in the United States and then worked as one of Israel's first community organizers on environmental justice issues. This included organizing a Yemenite community near Tel Aviv against the new Highway 6 and low-income communities in West Jerusalem in response to the city's urban renewal plans of *pinui-binui*. It therefore came as no surprise to anyone (but me, that is) that my academic career has, for the most part, examined the interface of nature and politics. Most recently, I have been working with marine scientists to document their uphill battles to save threatened coral species. With them, I have been mourning the decline of so many extant forms of life. I now teach climate change at the university to whomever will listen.

As someone who has dedicated her personal and academic life to more-than-humans, and especially to the plight of nonhuman animals categorized as both wild and threatened, my affinity is clear. Sharing the same values as many of the Israeli nature officials I engaged with for this book, my intention is to bolster, and certainly not to jeopardize, their important efforts to protect wild organisms and their habitats in this region and beyond.

This brings me to the other aspect of my commitment to more-than-humans. Along with many other scholars, I have come to view much European-based conservation as problematic for myriad reasons, and mainly for its imperial, colonial, racist, sexist, and capitalist foundations. Studying the problematic legacies of the European conservation movement, the alienation of many local communities—especially communities of color—from the environmental causes framed by this movement becomes clear. As anthropologist David McDermott Hughes points out in *Whiteness in Zimbabwe*, there is a reason why one does not find many people of color in national parks: "It is surprising, not that traditional parks are losing legitimacy, but

that they still retain any at all. Much of that staying power surely derives from the more symbolic aspects of white privilege.”³ For Hughes, parks and other conservation areas symbolize the era of European conquest. Environmental historian Jane Carruthers similarly denotes in her writing about South Africa’s Kruger Park that conservationists rallied support for the new protected area by “stressing the common heritage and values which wildlife represented for whites.”⁴ Michael A. Soukup and Gary E. Machlis (the latter was the science advisor to the director of the United States National Park Service) documented in the U.S. context that “in the process of creating nearly every national park, Native American rights to ownership were ignored and invalidated as these populations were pushed from their ancestral homelands.”⁵

That nature administration and settler colonialism are historically intertwined can be gleaned from the systematic state-orchestrated elimination of local and Indigenous peoples from national parks in the United States, Canada, Australia, and European colonies in Africa and Latin America. To be sure, projects of elimination of native populations also took place outside of natural areas and in other contexts than that of wildlife protection (indeed, even the definition of such areas as “natural” is already a colonial act in that it does not recognize the myriad natures outside of these enclosures). Furthermore, such projects of exclusion and dispossession have targeted and impacted many other communities alongside the Indigenous and local ones. However, my book explores the project of state dispossession of Palestinian communities through the designation of formal nature enclosures and state-imposed legal wildlife protections, and it is in this context that my account situates Israel’s regime of nature management amid other settler colonial projects. As documented in such other geopolitical contexts, in Palestine-Israel, too, the enclosure of nature in parks and reserves and the enforcement of wildlife species protections have served as technologies of dispossession in the hands of the state. As far as I am aware, this is the first comprehensive study of Israel’s nature conservation project through a settler colonial perspective. As I further explain in the introduction, I refer to this form of settler colonialism as “settler ecologies.”

Adopting a settler colonial perspective means a few things in this context. Usually, the main criticism of Israel is of its 1967 occupation of Palestinian territories, and its ongoing control over Palestinians beyond the Green Line in the West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. But my critique does not begin, or end, at the Green Line. Instead, I claim here that Israel

within the Green Line (which I refer to here as “1948 Israel”) is also implicated in the settler colonial project’s task of Palestinian dispossession. Studying the administration of nature conservation on both sides of the Green Line in fact helps drive home the important understanding that Palestine-Israel is governed by a single settler colonial regime that encompasses Israel’s 1948 and 1967 borders. This is certainly not a new revelation: the early Zionists themselves depicted their project as such.⁶ The recent resurgence of settler colonial studies brings novel insights into this framework, which can arguably be further strengthened through engagement with more-than-human perspectives.

Settling Nature proposes a fresh outlook for animal studies, too. Rather than decentering humans, which is often referred to as the “nonhuman turn,”⁷ my book brings attention to the ways in which colonial dynamics juxtapose between and thus alienate (certain) humans from (certain) nonhumans. Although the book affords only glimpses into multispecies lifeworlds, I am committed to revealing the dangerous implications of such colonial alienation between humans and nonhumans. In the face of this alienation, I insist on drawing nonlinear connections—“coralations,” as I call these elsewhere⁸—that might transform the divisive Green Line into multiple and fluid green nodes that not only expose the linkages between various forms of violence toward more- and less-than-humans but also offer a way out of this juxtaposed perspective. Specifically, telling more-than-human stories about vultures, goats, fallow deer, goldfinches, gazelles, wild asses, camels, boars, cows, olive trees, and za’atar and akkoub, alongside the specific habitats and landscapes in which they dwell, illuminates the violence of colonialism that has been naturalized through this landscape.

Another reason for deploying a settler colonial framework here is that it aligns Palestinians with Indigenous struggles around the globe. This alignment is contentious even among some Palestinians, who might prefer to characterize their struggle as one that focuses on national independence. However, seeing nature as a settler colonial project—*settling* nature, so to speak—calls attention to the shared technologies and methods of dispossession employed across different settler colonial contexts and to the need to strive toward their decolonization. As Brenna Bhandar points out in *Colonial Lives of Property*, the repertoire of legal technologies used across settler colonial sites is surprisingly limited.⁹ It is therefore helpful to depict and analyze them as such across multiple geopolitical contexts.

One final challenge in writing this book was its interdisciplinarity. While typically perceived as inherently good, the price of interdisciplinary engagement in academia is often not fully spelled out. For this book, my readers from environmental history have encouraged me not to fall into the theoretical jargon required of academics, while some of my colleagues in geography and critical theory felt that my storytelling style renders the underlying theory too elusive and that the book needs more theory to pull it together. Then there were my interlocutors from anthropology, who asked that I highlight my positionality vis-à-vis my interviewees and in relation to Palestinians and that I engage more explicitly with Indigenous scholarship. Finally, animal studies scholars wanted to read more about animal agency, while legal scholars asked that I center on legal technologies and administrative regimes and reflect on these in more legalistically formulated notes.

This multiplicity has resulted in a somewhat fragmented structure: while this preface is more anthropological in nature and lays bare my positionality, the introduction and conclusion are rather theoretical in their scope and provide multiple scholarly contexts for the book. Finally, the book's chapters are mostly composed of interwoven stories. The result is a book that will likely offer a challenging read across the disciplinary divides.

Before I move to giving thanks, one final comment. Although the book is based on in-depth interviews with more than seventy individuals, most of them Israeli nature officials, the arguments I make here are by no means personal. Rather, I seek to illuminate the structures within which these individuals operate. I suspect that some of what I wrote here might not be easy for many of my interlocutors to read. And yet I strongly believe that by underplaying the political and social context of nature administration and the structural realities within which it operates we may be inadvertently harming the more-than-human entities we so deeply care about. And it is in this spirit and for this reason that I felt compelled to write this book.



It is finally time to extend gratitude. I will start with Yehoshua Shkedy, chief scientist of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA), whose friendship I cherish and without whom this project would not have been possible. I am also grateful to Ohad Hatzofe, Yigal Miller, Amit Dolev, Ori Linial, and Naf-tali Cohen, all from INPA, for the many hours they have spent discussing

their work with me. My gratitude also extends to conservation experts from other organizations: Shmulik Yedvab, Nili Avni-Magen, Nili Anglister, Yossi Leshem, and Orr Spiegel. The environmental correspondent at Israel's daily newspaper *Haaretz*, Zafir Rinat, alerted me to the need for an in-depth study of this topic in multiple conversations spanning at least a decade, and my colleague and friend Quamar Mishirqi-Assad provided much-needed sisterhood, especially toward the end, when I was ready to give up this project. Many thanks also to Aviv Tatarski, Mazin Qumsiyeh, Dror Etkes, Alon Cohen-Lifshitz, Michael Sfard, Rade Najem, and Daphne Banai. While each has left their mark on this book, I am solely responsible for its content.

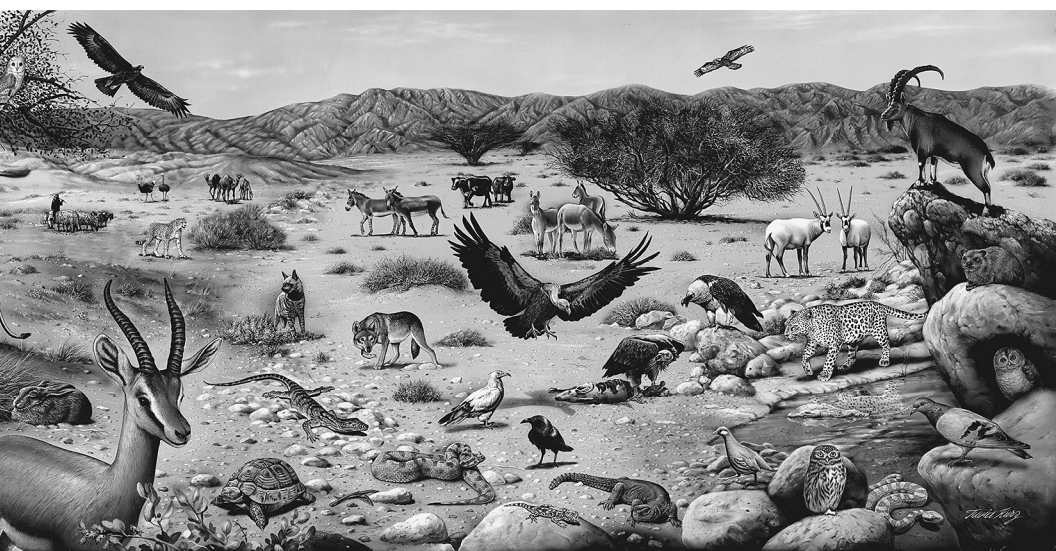
I would also like to acknowledge the intellectual community that has supported this project in the many years it took for it to come to fruition. My time at the Cornell Society for the Humanities as an ACLS Ryskamp fellow and at the National Humanities Center as a Hurford Family fellow was critical for imagining the breadth and then for crystalizing the essence of my research, as was my fellowship at the Rachel Carson Center in Munich, Germany. The Baldy Center for Law & Social Policy funded a book manuscript workshop for *Settling Nature* that took place in 2021. I am indebted to the four fantastic scholars who read the manuscript, provided detailed comments, and participated in ongoing conversations before, during, and after that workshop: Harriet Ritvo, Jean Comaroff, Bram Büscher, and Gadi Algazi. Each of these scholars has been a source of inspiration to me over the course of many years and I was honored by their generosity—their careful reading impacted the course of this book in important ways. Special thanks to Emily Reisman for facilitating the book manuscript workshop and for the many ways she supported this project in its final iterations. Tamar Novick, Quamar Mishirqi-Assad, Ariel Handel, Paul Sutter, Jessica Hurley, Lorraine Daston, Matthew Booker, Hagar Kotef, Rabea Eghbariah, Jamie Lorimer, Sandy Kedar, Anna Whistler, Guyora Binder, Jack Schlegel, John Pickles, Gabriel Rosenberg, James Holstun, Natalia Gutkowski, Megan Callahan, and Richard Ratzan read parts, or all, of the manuscript at different stages—I thank them for their help in thinking through and strengthening these parts. I would also like to thank my fantastic students at the University at Buffalo's "Environmental Justice in Palestine/Israel" seminar, and especially Gregory J. Lebens-Higgins and Margaret Drzewiecki, who continued to work with me, putting in hundreds of hours for interview transcriptions and editorial work. I offer

thanks, finally, to Ofek Ravid, who translated and transcribed most of the interviews that were conducted in Hebrew. Unless stated otherwise, all other translations from Hebrew in this book are mine.

I was fortunate to present different parts of the book at workshops and talks in various institutional settings: the Society for the Humanities at Cornell University; the Biopolitical Studies Research Network at the University of New South Wales in Sydney; the Law and Society Annual Lecture, Edinburgh Law School; Yale Law School; the Instituto de Ciências Sociais at the University of Lisbon; the Rachel Carson Center in Munich; the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts Conference in Toronto; the Middle Eastern Animals Workshop in Vienna; Clark University's Geography Department; the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History at Tel Aviv University; the Berlin-Brandenburg Colloquium for Environmental History; the Center for Global Ethnography at Stanford University; the University of North Carolina's Department of Geography; and the National Humanities Center.

Finally, I would like to thank my children, River and Tamar, who joined my many fieldwork trips to Palestine-Israel and who endured my absence on so many other occasions.

At its core, this book contests binaries. Binaries between nature and culture, human and nonhuman, settler and native, 1948 and 1967, domestic and wild, and mobility and immobility emerge throughout, demonstrating the violence inherent in this juxtaposed way of thinking. I dedicate this book to my son, River, who has been working through binaries himself, with courage that I can only wish upon the rest of the world.



Introduction

Settling Nature

We may find that more than we protect the environment, the environment will protect us.

—Shaul Goldstein, director, Israel Nature and Parks Authority,
“Tu B’Svat and the Case for Eco-Zionism”

Wars of extermination were precisely biopolitical wars, in which the weaponization of the environment was a critical element of the conflict.

—Amitav Ghosh, *The Nutmeg’s Curse*

Nature management is much more central to the settler colonial project than is commonly recognized. In Palestine-Israel,¹ the administration of nature advances the Zionist project of Jewish settlement alongside the corresponding dispossession of non-Jews from this space. *Settling Nature* documents nature’s power in the hands of the Zionist settler state. It is grounded in over a decade of in-depth ethnographic research in Palestine-Israel, encompassing roughly seventy interviews, mainly with Israeli nature officials, and hundreds of fieldwork observation hours. The book proceeds through two central lines of inquiry: on the one hand, it studies the protection of land through its designation by the settler state as a national park or nature

The right half of a larger poster entitled “Wild Animals of the Bible” displays an imaginary biblical menagerie in the Holy Land. The griffon vulture features at the center of this image, the Asiatic wild asses are situated behind the vulture, and the gray wolf is on her left; the gazelle is at the bottom left corner and the golden eagle appears on the top left, with camels, cows, sheep, and even a human shepherd in the distant background. *Settling Nature* relays the contemporary conservation management stories of many of these animals. Courtesy of D. Kalderon, www.holylandguides.com.

reserve; and on the other hand, it documents the settler state's protection of wild organisms, which often exceeds the boundaries of the protected territories. This dual protection scheme lies at the heart of the extensive, yet overlooked, conservation regime in Palestine-Israel.

Rather than a green facade for politics and despite the benevolent intentions of many individual nature officials, conservation as practiced by the settler state is acutely political. In fact, much Western nature management is so entrenched in colonial forms of knowledge and modes of thought that, unless intentionally resisted, its administration innately promotes their underlying structures. There are multiple settler ecological knowledges at work in Palestine-Israel. Ultimately, however, these merge into one overriding framework that assumes and accepts the fundamental power dynamics underlying this settler society. The deep ecological foundation of settler colonialism and, vice versa, the deep colonial foundation of ecological thought are key to understanding Israel's "settler ecologies"—a concept I coin and develop in this book.

The territorial reach of nature protection in Palestine-Israel is remarkable. To date, nearly 25 percent of the country's total land mass has already been designated as a nature reserve or a national park—and this process is swiftly accelerating.² The State of Israel currently boasts a stunning 530 nature reserves and national parks. Compare this with South Africa, which is fifty-five times larger than Israel with 19 national parks; Kenya, which is about twenty-six times larger with some 50 parks and reserves; 15 national parks in Greece; and 423 national parks in the United States, including its territories.³ Meanwhile, Palestine-Israel is the size of New Jersey or Belize.

Once designated for nature protection, the relevant lands, some of which are owned privately by Palestinians, will often be subject to numerous restrictions. Yet even when the owners are prohibited from cultivating or accessing their private lands, they are typically not entitled to compensation according to Israeli law. Nature reserves and parks are also the largest land category in Area C of the West Bank.⁴ Simultaneously, more than half of the reserves and parks in Palestine-Israel are designated as military training zones, imposing further restrictions on the use of these lands by local communities, mainly Palestinians. Of the hundreds of parks and reserves in Palestine-Israel, this book relates in greater detail the stories of Mount Meron in the Galilee, Silwan and Walaje in the Jerusalem region, and Wadi Qana in the northern West Bank (Figure I.1).⁵

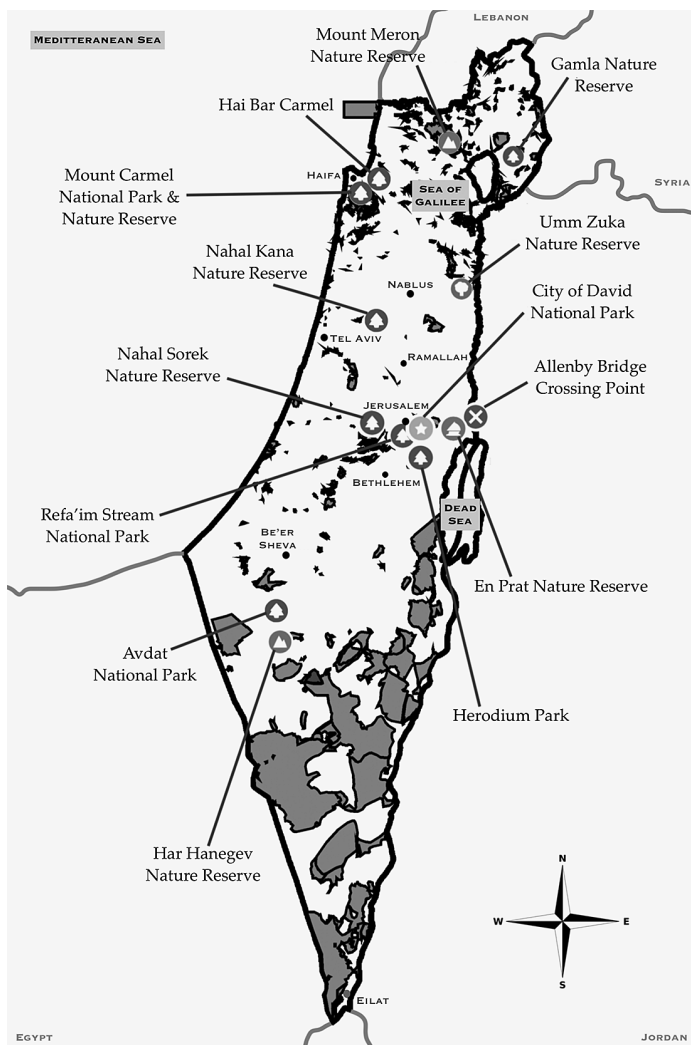


Figure I.1. Areas of nature reserves and parks as identified by the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA)—Israel’s administrative arm for nature management. In line with Israel’s official policy since 1967, the Green Line is not indicated also in this INPA map, onto which I added the nature reserves and parks discussed in this book. The Mount Meron (Jabal al-Jarmaq) Nature Reserve is at the top, Jerusalem’s City of David National Park (Silwan) and Refa’im Stream National Park (Walaje) are at the heart of the map, and the Nahal Kana Nature Reserve (Wadi Qana) is to the northwest of Jerusalem. Alternative maps that include the Green Line were hard to come by, and even when I did obtain such maps, technical requirements prevented all of them (except one) from being displayed in this book. Courtesy of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority.

Alongside its sovereign enclosure of land in the form of protected nature reserves and parks, Israel's conservation regime centers on the protection of wild fauna and flora. Generally, the early environmental history of colonial settlement was riddled with domesticated and farm animals.⁶ In the United States, for example, the European settlers were affiliated with cattle, pigs, and horses.⁷ As in these settler societies, the settlers in Palestine-Israel, too, have aligned with cattle and various other farm animals. Additionally, the Zionist settler state has since its early days exerted control through establishing a strong affinity with *wild* animals—and especially with biblical and reintroduced species such as the fallow deer, gazelle, wild ass, and griffon vulture (see, e.g., Figure I.2).⁸ Central to Israel's conservation scheme, these wild animals have introduced such changes into the landscape that it has come to “naturally” belong to the Jewish collective. As proxies of the Zionist settlers, these wild extensions of state agency also figure in displays of military power, underscoring the tight “coproduction”⁹ of nature and nation.

At the same time, the Palestinians have come to be associated with what Israel has classified over the years as “problem” species—black goats, camels, olives, hybrid goldfinches, and feral dogs. Two results have ensued from this association: first, those organisms most affiliated with the region's Palestinian communities, mainly nonhuman animals, have become targets for a highly restrictive movement regime. When these organisms—and, by extension, their Palestinian caregivers—defy such proscriptions, the Zionist state responds immediately by confiscating, quarantining, and even exterminating them. The second aspect of this association is that it has legitimized a politics of criminalization and blame: highlighting their affiliation with the animal and plant enemies of the ecological state, the state deems the local community responsible for the ecological decline in the region.¹⁰

Alongside the classic territorial wars in the name of nature, utilizing other-than-humans as a weapon ensures, as environmental historian Diana K. Davis notes, that “settlers bear no blame for the impacts because they are unfolding in the domain of ‘Nature’ . . . as if they occur independently of human interventions.”¹¹ Ecological warfare is thus distinguished from other human conflicts. “Indeed, it is not recognized as a conflict at all”¹² but as part of the natural order of things. In Palestine-Israel, too, the flora and fauna are deployed for ecological warfare, their alignment on one side or the other becoming that much more powerful precisely because they are typically not perceived as soldiers in human wars. This warfare is conducted here through lively



Figure 1.2. A dorcas gazelle (*Negev gazelle* in Hebrew), which is closely related to the mountain gazelle that I discuss later, is seen here drinking water near Israel's border with Egypt. Although the dorcas gazelle is classified as Vulnerable by the international Red List, in Palestine-Israel the population numbers are increasing and, as of 2021, numbered two thousand individuals. Photograph by Adi Ashkenazi, June 2021.

bodies by means of conservation management. Recruited by the State of Israel to fight on the front lines are the fallow deer, gazelles, wild asses, griffon vultures, and cows against the goats, camels, olives, akkoub (a thistlelike edible plant), and hybrid goldfinches on the Palestinian side. This biopolitical warfare has been orchestrated by Israel's nature administration, which has not shied away from taking hostages: the goats, olives, and edible za'atar and akkoub, all once aligned exclusively with the Palestinians, have shifted over the years to fight on the camp of the Jewish settlers.¹³

Amitav Ghosh captures the ecological warfare idea succinctly when he writes that "Indigenous peoples faced a state of permanent . . . war that involved many kinds of other-than-human beings and entities: pathogens, rivers, forests, plants, and animals all played a part in the struggle." Ghosh explains that "the Western idea of 'nature' is thus the key element that enables and conceals the true character of biopolitical warfare."¹⁴ While the past tense in Ghosh's account suggests that colonialism as a historical period is mostly over, this book's study of the conservation regime in Palestine-Israel illustrates that local, native, and Indigenous peoples are still being warred upon in this way.¹⁵

Situating Settler Ecologies

I refer to the coproductive relationship between settlers and nature as "settler ecologies." Settler ecologies operate in two interconnected ways: through protected natural spaces and via protected nonhuman bodies. Specifically, settler ecologies operate on territory through its statist and static enclosure in park regimes, and they exert control over bodies through the regulation and mobilization of animals, plants, and other forms of life. Settler ecologies are multiple, dynamic, heterogenous, and often also inconsistent; they are not necessarily explicit in their violence or even volitional. Instead, they are embedded in colonial structures and within scientific forms of knowledge that can seem dissonant with other aspects of the settler state. Precisely because of this obfuscation, nature administration has become a potent weapon in the hands of the settler state.¹⁶

The term *settler ecologies* is far from being the first to highlight the interconnection of nature, colonialism, and the state. Environmental historian Alfred W. Crosby's examination of "ecological imperialism" in his 1986 book

under the same title¹⁷ was one of the first such concepts, and was soon followed by a torrent of scholarship that investigated the coproductive relationship between colonialism and the environment in a variety of geopolitical and historical contexts: Diana K. Davis's "environmental colonialism,"¹⁸ Aimee Bahng's "settler environmentalism,"¹⁹ Elizabeth Lunstrum's "green militarism,"²⁰ Ken Saro-Wiwa's "ecological genocide,"²¹ Stasja Koot, Bram Büscher, and Lerato Thakholi's "green Apartheid,"²² and Mazin Qumsiyeh and Mohammed A. Abusarhan's "environmental Nakba."²³ Relatedly, the climate justice movement has recently popularized the concept "green colonialism."²⁴

While these concepts describe overlapping phenomena, they each illuminate unique angles of the nature-colonialism nexus. And whereas they are all relevant for nature administration in Palestine-Israel, none captures the full complexity of this project. Risking an even further fragmentation of the relevant literature, my coining of the term *settler ecologies* in this book serves to convey both the structural as well as the plural and dynamic components of the colonial administration of nature as configured through scientific modes of knowledge and practices, thereby hoping to knit together this field of splintering concepts. The term *settler ecologies* therefore illuminates how deeply entrenched the colonial mindset has become in the ecological way of thinking.

Nature Administration in Palestine-Israel: A Brief Overview

Palestine-Israel sits at a unique biological and geological juncture, where Africa, Europe, and Asia meet.²⁵ As a result, this region boasts high biodiversity and unique landscapes.²⁶ Yet the early Zionist leaders seemed to have little appreciation for the natural and cultural wonders of the place. In fact, in his manifesto *The Jewish State*, Zionist leader Theodor Herzl called for the clearing of "wild beasts" in the new country by "driving the animals together, and throwing a melinite bomb into their midst."²⁷

Accompanying such an early Zionist approach toward the natural world was a narrative of progress that focused on greening the desert and paving the rest of the country with concrete.²⁸ As one of Israel's first conservation experts told me: "The ethos in those early days was to occupy wilderness—and that's how the Zionists first dealt with the landscape. Whatever wasn't cultivated—if it was a swamp, or sand dunes, or rocky terrains, or desert—was to be

conquered and made to bloom.”²⁹ This narrative of improvement is familiar from “neo-European” settlements the world over.³⁰ The early Zionist-European founders of the settler state indeed had no difficulty using the term *colonization* to describe their actions in Palestine.³¹

The Zionist approach toward the natural world evolved dramatically in the early twentieth century and was strongly impacted by the British during their rule in Palestine from 1917 through 1948.³² A. D. Gordon was the lead philosopher of the Labor Zionist movement. According to Gordon: “We have come to our homeland in order to be planted in our natural soil from which we have been uprooted. . . . If we desire life, we must establish a new relationship with nature.”³³ One of Israel’s early environmental protagonists, Knesset member S. Yizhar, declared similarly in a 1962 parliamentary speech: “A land without wildflowers through which winds can blow is a place of suffocation. A land where winds cannot blow without obstruction will be a hotel, not a homeland.”³⁴ The Zionist state thus diverged: with one arm it continued to pave the land with concrete, while with the other arm it began advocating for the demarcation and protection of perceived territories and bodies of wilderness.

The agency that regulates and administers nature protection in Palestine-Israel is the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (INPA). Established in 1963 and reauthorized under new legislation in 1998, INPA operates under two main statutory arms that reflect the dual mode of nature protection so characteristic of the conservation mindset: Israel’s Wild Animal Protection Act of 1955, which sets out to protect species, and its Nature and Parks Protection Act of 1998, which aims to protect habitat and territory. The Israeli wildlife legislation presumes, generally, that wild organisms are legally protected unless stated otherwise. Formally, such legal protections are some of the most powerful anywhere in the world. Defined as such, Israel is then authorized to protect wild flora and fauna both within the designated space and also when they venture beyond the boundaries of the reserves and parks into other parts of the state and beyond state lines. Legitimizing protection beyond territorial boundaries becomes important when considering that conservation is often a colonial and even an imperial technology of power.³⁵

Alongside the divide between species and habitat, another juxtaposition that has been foundational to the Israeli conservation regime is that between nature and culture, or wilderness and humans. Following the speech

by S. Yizhar from 1962, the Knesset established a two-tier system that distinguished reserves (wilderness or nature) from parks (humans or culture), managing each under a separate agency. This division lasted from 1963 until 1998, when the two agencies merged into one under the Israel Nature and Parks Authority or INPA. Still, the original division between nature reserves, on the one hand, and national parks (or just “parks” in the occupied West Bank because of its ambiguous legal status), on the other hand, lingers on. Accordingly, Israel’s nature reserve managers are usually concerned with the conservation of nature in its more pristine state, while the managers of national parks are typically more concerned with developing open spaces for tourism and recreational purposes (see, e.g., Figure I.3).³⁶ The Israeli distinction between parks and nature reserves is somewhat confusing because national parks in countries such as the United States and South Africa have come to mean something much closer to Israel’s nature reserves, while the parks in Palestine-Israel are usually subject to more intense management and larger visitor quotas than its reserves.³⁷

Despite Israel’s success in the sheer quantity and size of reserves and parks set aside for preservation and in its establishment of strong wildlife protections, nature conservation has faced multiple challenges in this region.



Figure I.3. Situated atop a steep hill northwest of Jerusalem, the Nebi Samuel Park in Area C of the occupied West Bank is the traditional burial site of the biblical Jewish and Muslim prophet Samuel. Israel destroyed the Palestinian village inside the park and relocated it in 1971. Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Generic license, Heritage Conservation Outside the City, Pikiwiki Israel. Photograph by Zeev Stein.

High population growth, pollution, waste production and disposal, illegal poisoning and hunting, habitat fragmentation, resource extraction, and climate change have all placed Palestine-Israel's habitats and wildlife under heightened threat: more than 50 percent of the mammals, 20 percent of the local birds, and 30 percent of the country's reptiles are currently endangered.³⁸

Amid these overwhelming challenges, Israeli conservationists have often described themselves as operating on "a lonely island," where "we have to fight to protect everything we have in terms of nature."³⁹ This sense of socio-political isolation, lack of trust, and ecological exceptionalism are central to Eco-Zionism[™],⁴⁰ an emerging approach among Israeli environmentalists that views "preservation and rejuvenation of the environment" as central to restoring Israel as "an exclusive nation of the Jewish people."⁴¹ INPA director Shaul Goldstein reflected: "In an increasingly polarized and divisive public sphere, a renewed pledge to the survival of the landscapes and habitats with which the Jewish People has been collectively entrusted has the potential to create a space of unity and cooperation where there might otherwise be discord and strife."⁴² But the Zionist narrative sounded by Goldstein that speaks about global unity in preserving the earth simultaneously ignores the local strife around this very project. Such disregard for the sociopolitical aspects of nature protection by Israel's top nature official arguably poses yet another serious threat to nature protection in this region.⁴³

Settler Ecologies across the Green Line

INPA operates on both sides of the Green Line—Israel's internationally recognized 1949 armistice line, parts of which in 1967 came to be known as the border between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. Within "1948 Israel," as the space "inside" the Green Line is often referred to and how I refer to this area throughout the book, INPA manages national parks and nature reserves under a detailed civil apparatus.⁴⁴ In the occupied West Bank, by contrast, what is confusingly called the Civil Administration in fact manages nature reserves and parks through a military regime established by Israel in 1967. My interlocutors described how nature protection is strictly enforced on the "Israeli" side of the Green Line, while in the territories it resembles the "Wild West."

The insistence on seeing the two geographies as governed by two distinct regimes serves to legitimize the 1948 borders as uncontested and solid, while

rendering the occupied West Bank as existing in a state of exception. Although this has been a common perception among many Israeli Jews and also internationally, for Palestinians the opposite typically goes without saying. As one Palestinian interlocutor told me: “There’s no real difference between 1967 territories and 1948 territories—they are *all* occupied territories.”⁴⁵ For a growing number of Jewish Israelis, too, Israel is one entity that spans both sides of the Green Line. Interestingly, this approach has come to be shared among Israel’s far right and its far left, the far right seeing the land of the forefathers as indivisible and the far left seeing this space as governed by one apartheid regime.⁴⁶ Israel has never recognized the Green Line as its official border and has deliberately not marked it on state maps since 1967.⁴⁷

After studying nature administration on both sides of the Green Line for at least a decade, I contend in this book that both are governed by Israel’s single settler colonial regime. I should take a moment here to clarify the double meaning of the term *settler* as it is used in Palestine-Israel: in popular discourse, the term refers to the Jewish population in the occupied 1967 territories only (except in East Jerusalem and the Golan), while in the settler colonial literature, it denotes the entire Jewish Israeli populace in Palestine-Israel, including those who reside within the Green Line. Unless stated otherwise, I use it here in the broader sense.

Although presenting itself as the liberal view for its recognition of the 1967 occupation, Israel’s legal narrative that depicts the 1948 and 1967 spaces and respective administrations as separate and even as diametrically opposed simultaneously contributes to the erasure of the myriad variations of settler occupation across this space that do not fall neatly into one legal geography or the other. This includes the “annexed” East Jerusalem and Golan Heights as well as the “disengaged” Gaza Strip. The confusion that ensues, legal and otherwise, is strategic.⁴⁸ One of the many aspects of Israel’s intentional ambiguity in nature management is the INPA rangers and administrators themselves, who often transition between the administrations. Much of the knowledge, experience, and strategies of management travel with them. Alongside these administrative occurrences, the Green Line has been actively erased by multiple arms of the Israeli state in myriad instances.⁴⁹ This book documents the interplay between the Green Line’s enactment and erasure through nature management.

In June 1967, Israel more than doubled its size by taking control of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Gaza, the Golan Heights (al-Jawlan),

and Sinai. The radical changes to the natural landscape after the 1967 war were described to me in abundant detail by Uzi Paz—one of the founders of Israel's nature administration, whose perspective I problematize in the book. According to Paz, Israel's nature officials were often the first Israelis to set foot in these areas. In his words: "The minute the borders were open, nature lovers of all types spontaneously flowed there. We were ecstatic about discovering these natural gems right in our backyard. The land of the forefathers had suddenly opened up. People saw something they felt was so beautiful that they voluntarily put up a sign: 'This is a nature reserve.'"⁵⁰ Only one month after the 1967 war ended, the nature authority had already paved paths into several natural sites in the occupied territories. "We ran around frantically and got to know these areas," Paz told me. "The nature administration was certainly the first civil body in the occupied territories. . . . And we very quickly mapped out our requests of nature reserves for authorization and signature by the military commanders."⁵¹ In the Golan Heights in particular, large areas were demarcated and designated as reserves in a very short time.⁵² Reports in the daily press about special ordinances for defending and managing nature reserves in the West Bank appeared as early as August 16, 1967.⁵³

The logic behind establishing protections in the occupied territories in the early days—before the occupation became a long-term event—reveals the mindset of Israel's conservationists at the time. Paz explained: "Politics had no relevance here. We believed that nature protection is a universal value, whether we controlled this area or not, . . . whether for Israelis or for the world's citizens, whether for this generation or for the next one." As for the local communities, according to Paz, "There were none. . . . In Sinai there were Bedouins—and they continued to live their lives. They were an inseparable part of the landscape." Versed in the criticism of the colonial legacies of nature conservation in Africa, Paz proclaimed that nature protection in Israel was nothing like it: "The protections [we established] came from the love of nature, without even a drop of politics in it. It was pure and totally clean of such thoughts. All the implications—political, social, anthropological, whatever—weren't on the table at all."⁵⁴

Despite his insistence otherwise, it is impossible to ignore the similarities between the Zionist and other settler colonial depictions of discovery, dispossession, and elimination of the natives through their characterization as either completely irrelevant to, or an integral part of, nature. Eventually, this

narrative has taken a turn toward blaming these natives for what would then be presented as the region's environmental decline. The "declensionist" narrative, as it is referred to in the environmental history literature, is also familiar from other colonial contexts.⁵⁵ In all fairness, Paz did insist that it was a mistake for Israel to declare nature reserves in areas where the Palestinians privately owned large portions of the land, such as in the northern West Bank. However, his statement implies that the declaration of nature reserves elsewhere was legitimate from his perspective. This reflects the prevalent mindset among the various Israeli officials I interviewed, illustrating the ease with which power can be exerted under the banner of nature.

After 1967, the next radical legal change to the natural landscape in the West Bank was in the aftermath of the Oslo Accords—a pair of agreements signed between the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in the 1990s that created the Palestinian Authority and that tasked it with limited self-governance of parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.⁵⁶ The Oslo II Accord organized the Israeli-occupied West Bank into three administrative divisions—Areas A, B, and C—pending a final status accord, which never took place. Area A is administered by the Palestinian Authority, Area B is administered by both the Palestinian Authority and Israel, and Area C is administered by Israel. Under this Oslo regime, nature reserves that were located within A and B areas were handed over to the Palestinian Authority.⁵⁷ As of 2021, Area B contained thirteen reserves administered by the Palestinian Environment Quality Authority, eight of which were actively managed by their rangers.⁵⁸ Comprising 61 percent of the occupied West Bank, Area C contains all of the Jewish Israeli settlements in the West Bank as well as the majority of nature reserves and parks.⁵⁹ Two-thirds of the nature sites in Area C were simultaneously declared as military firing zones.⁶⁰

After Oslo II, neither side made any new declarations of nature reserves or parks in their respective areas in the West Bank.⁶¹ This deep freeze changed abruptly when, in January 2020, then Israeli right-wing defense minister and later prime minister Naftali Bennett declared seven new nature reserves and the expansion of twelve others in Area C. Approximately 40 percent of these reserves were on lands privately owned by Palestinians.⁶² "We will continue to develop the Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria," Bennett announced during the designation ceremony.⁶³ This single statement already encapsulates the intimate relationship between the conservation of natural habitats and the takeover of land for Jewish settlement. "The reserves will

speed up his appearance before the International Criminal Court as a war criminal,” the Palestinian Foreign Ministry declared in response, referring to Bennett.⁶⁴

Clearly, the natural terrain in Palestine-Israel is hotly contested and the stakes in its designation as such are high. According to one INPA official: “The battle over territory is stronger than anything. It’s stronger than the landscape, and it’s certainly stronger than nature.”⁶⁵ I disagree with this official’s pitting of territory against nature. If anything, the new declarations demonstrate that nature is the settler state’s strongest weapon for territorial take-over. Nature’s power lies precisely in its invisibility as such.

The Nature of Settler Colonialism

This book is strongly interdisciplinary. It draws considerably on the emergent scholarship on settler colonialism in Palestine,⁶⁶ and especially as this scholarship relates to more-than-humans.⁶⁷ The book also draws extensively on critical animal studies, environmental history, and political ecology—and on critical work on nature conservation and colonialism in the context of national parks in particular.⁶⁸ I show here, essentially, that the colonial project perpetuates violence to all forms of life, both nonhuman and human, and that such instances of violence across the more-than-human spectrum are not only coproduced but also exacerbated by one another. The ostensible tensions between seeing nature as a way of protecting marginalized non-human lives and seeing it as a way to exploit and eliminate marginalized human lives are imperative to the work of settler colonialism.

The scholarship on settler colonialism in Palestine asserts, in a nutshell, that settler societies aim to dispossess and replace their native inhabitants, thereby allowing the settlers to view themselves as the “new native” and legitimizing their territorial claims.⁶⁹ “Territoriality is settler colonialism’s specific, irreducible element,” Australian scholar Patrick Wolfe writes in this context. For him, adherence to a logic of elimination distinguishes settler colonialism from colonialism, which is premised, instead, on exploitation (a distinction that this book challenges).⁷⁰ Highlighting the structural elements of Israel’s occupation, the settler colonial framework moves beyond seeing the occupation as a series of isolated events or as limited to the 1967 territories. At the same time, it also explains Israel’s myopic focus on territorial dispossession.

While I do not intend to debate the finer theoretical points of the settler colonial framework, nor the ways in which it does or does not map perfectly onto the historical and political dynamics of Palestine-Israel,⁷¹ it is important to articulate briefly three ways in which this framework is useful for this book's study of settler ecologies in Palestine-Israel. First, the settler colonial framework helps explain the power of Israel's settler ecologies, which are embedded in physical infrastructures, expressed through racialized more-than-human biopolitics, and administered through a single nature apparatus that operates on both sides of the Green Line. The dispossession of Palestinians in the hands of the Zionist settler state occurs, centrally, in the ecological realm, which explains the focus of settler ecologies on land and the invisibilizing power of nature as structure. Settler colonialism thus shares with settler ecologies three fundamental themes: territoriality, (infra)structure, and dispossession or elimination.

Second, settler colonialism has brought about a sharper focus on the plight of local, native, Indigenous, and First Nations peoples.⁷² Using this framework in the context of settler ecologies therefore serves to highlight avenues for solidarity between Palestinians and Indigenous movements across the globe for their continued practices of dispossession in the name of nature. The notion of a pristine wilderness devoid of humans has figured strongly in the colonial mindset of national parks,⁷³ portraying the African continent⁷⁴ and tropical islands⁷⁵ as an "unspoiled Eden."⁷⁶ This Eden, like that of the first national parks in the United States, "had to be created before it could be protected," as historian Mark David Spence instructs,⁷⁷ in a process that often entailed the displacement of local and Indigenous communities.⁷⁸ Political scientist Kevin Dunn documents along these lines how "vast sections of the African continent [were] established as centrally controlled protected spaces in the name of the Western cultural practice of conservation."⁷⁹ Utilizing the lens of settler colonialism, one can see more clearly the strong ties between conservation and dispossession in Palestine-Israel.

Third and finally, settler colonialism offers avenues for resistance to the elimination of the native and, with it, visions for decolonized futures.⁸⁰ In this sense, the value of the settler colonial framework lies in the alternative political futures it helps imagine.⁸¹ Urban geographer Omar Jabary Salamanca and his colleagues argued, accordingly, that "the Palestinian struggle against Zionist settler colonialism can only be won when it is embedded within, and

empowered by, broader struggles—all anti-imperial, all anti-racist, and all struggling to make another world possible.”⁸²

Similar to the other myriad juxtapositions that animate settler ecologies in Palestine-Israel, however, the juxtaposition between settler and native must also be scrutinized if we are to move toward such decolonized futures. Within the ecological world, scientists have come to criticize the term *native* for its arbitrary historical baselines and the devastating consequences for non-native and “invasive” species.⁸³ Moving across the divide to the human realm, one might want, similarly, to challenge the native-settler dialectic of the colonial nation-state.⁸⁴ As Mahmood Mamdani puts it:

The nation made the immigrant a settler and the settler a perpetrator. The nation made the local a native and the native a perpetrator, too. In this new history, everyone is colonized—settler and native, perpetrator and victim, majority and minority. Once we learn this history, we might prefer to be survivors instead.⁸⁵

Whereas this book documents the contemporary settler ecologies of the colonial state, it is important to keep in mind the hopeful trajectory of moving beyond the native-settler juxtaposition—alongside other settler colonial binaries, which are key to its operation as such⁸⁶—to unsettle settler ecologies. Since, at its core, ecology is about coexistence and relationality,⁸⁷ this concept could perhaps also show us the way out of the colonial present.⁸⁸

One final comment is warranted in this context. Rana Barakat cautions that the “settler dominated framework in the scholarship is the attempted devaluation and eventual erasure of the Native history of and presence on the land.”⁸⁹ This is certainly not my intention here. Instead, I use my own privileges to reveal the underlying logics of settler ecologies in Palestine-Israel. For this reason, my central interlocutors for this book were the Israeli officials who are in charge of nature’s administration. I invite others, with other positionalities, to complement this project and advance it in myriad other ways, including through in-depth studies of Palestinian forms of resistance that would pave the way toward decolonizing ecologies.

The Book’s Structure

This book straddles two forms of nature protection used by the Zionist state—the first, territorial and static protection through the designation of parks

and reserves, is discussed in chapters 1, 3, and 5; and the second, biopolitical and versatile protection through animal and plant bodies, is discussed in chapters 2, 4, and 6. The three territorial chapters present the stories of three nature reserves and parks in Palestine-Israel: chapter 1 focuses on the Galilee within 1948 Israel and discusses the state's nature-policing technologies; chapter 3 moves to the liminal legalities of annexed East Jerusalem, detailing how green grabbing works in the production of biblical landscapes; and chapter 5 enumerates the more explicitly violent technologies of dispossession used by Israel's military occupation regime in the northern West Bank.

Interwoven between the territorial chapters, the biopolitical chapters tell stories about animals and plants, specifically discussing fallow deer, gazelles, goldfinches, camels, wild asses, goats, sheep, olive trees, wild boars, akkoub and za'atar, and griffon vultures. This lively procession takes off with chapter 2's story of the reintroduction of biblical animals by military general Avraham Yoffe, the first director of Israel's nature authority, thereby highlighting the positive aspects of making life; it proceeds with chapter 4's study of juxtaposed forms of life and the importance of necropolitics—the management of death—for conservation; and it ends with chapter 6's transboundary nature of birds and their militarization. My intention in structuring the book in this fashion is to highlight how these two central forms of dispossession—sovereign power and biopolitics—lean on and support one another to form settler ecologies that apply across Palestine-Israel. And while there is a certain logic to their progression in this manner, each chapter can also be read on its own. The passages that follow provide a detailed account of each chapter.

As a significant ecological asset, Mount Meron (Jabal al-Jarmaq) was the first nature reserve to be declared formally by Israel in 1964 and the largest reserve in the Galilee. Opening my book with this particular reserve intends to refute the perception that land appropriation on such high scales occurs mainly in the West Bank. Indeed, at least 20 percent of the Mount Meron Nature Reserve is located on land that is privately owned by the non-Jewish Druze residents of the village of Beit Jann, and the reserve has encircled the village and stifled its growth. The element of policing assumes center stage in the contemporary management of the nature reserve, which is enforced through INPA's paramilitary unit: the Green Patrol. Operating within the confines of 1948 Israel, the Green Patrol demonstrates the close ties between nature protection and the militarized protection of land for the exclusive benefit of the Jewish settler society. The chapter ends with a contemplation

of the regulation of cattle ranching within the boundaries of the reserves, which leads into my focus on animals in the next chapter.

Chapter 2 focuses on INPA's reintroductions of extirpated species mentioned in the Bible, thus foregrounding the link between the return to the Holy Land of four-legged biblical animals and that of two-legged humans. The chapter kicks off with the reintroduction of the Persian fallow deer, one of the rarest deer species in the world, and concludes with the less encouraging story of the mountain gazelle. In between the deer and the gazelle, a discussion of the management of the European goldfinch highlights INPA's assumptions of nature-human separation and its corresponding ideas about species contamination. Animal bodies and mobilities, such as those of goldfinches trafficked through border crossings and via East Jerusalem, mirror the hybridity and the fluidity of the landscape, defying its fixed boundaries and resisting its normalization. Finally, this chapter begins to chart the relationship between hunting and conservation in Palestine-Israel, shifting the focus back to the importance of territory—my topic in the next chapter.

The national park system situated in and around Jerusalem is at the book's heart in chapter 3. Although the densely populated villages of East Jerusalem are hardly the typical settings for a national park, the Jerusalem park system is the largest network of national parks in Palestine-Israel. This chapter explores two national parks in the Jerusalem region: the City of David and Refa'im Valley. The greening of Jerusalem's urban landscape is a central feature of the remaking of this landscape into *nofkdumim*—what it supposedly looked like during biblical times. Through this biblical making of the landscape, East Jerusalem is transformed into an accessible and even popular tourist destination for Jewish visitors from around the world. Ironically, the landscape's Judaization requires the Palestinians' continued agrarian practices, and so Palestinian labor must be recruited for the resurrection of the Jewish landscape. On the other end of the display of an authentic Jewish landscape, a compartmentalized reality is at play that depicts the Palestinian landscape as deteriorated and depleted, therefore justifying its elimination by the Zionist state for noncompliance with the biblical ideal. The landscape's making is therefore simultaneously an unmaking: an erasure of the existing landscape, which in turn lends itself to the elimination of certain humans and their affiliated nonhuman others from this space.

Oscillating from the territorial focus back into the realm of other-than-human lives, chapter 4 foregrounds the importance of the rule of law—and

the concepts of hyperlegality, illegality, and criminalization in particular—for settler ecologies in Palestine-Israel. The chapter's first part details Israel's criminal indictment against a Bedouin man and his camel for drinking precious water that INPA intended for the reintroduced Asiatic wild ass. The camel story is followed by the story of the wild ass's reintroduction, unraveling the landscape as a site of binary juxtapositions. The camel is juxtaposed with the wild ass, the goat with the pine tree, and the "uprootable" olive with protected edible herbs. At the same time, and respectively so, the domestic is juxtaposed with the wild, culture with nature, and, finally, the native and Indigenous are juxtaposed with the settler state. These juxtapositions lean on each other, reinforcing, naturalizing, and thus legitimizing the power and the seeming inevitability of the juxtaposed mindset so characteristic of settler ecologies.

Of the book's land-based accounts, chapter 5 documents the most explicit example of nature-based dispossession on the territorial front as it unravels in the context of the Wadi Qana Nature Reserve: an idyllic green valley nestled in the northwestern corner of the West Bank. Abutting the reserve is the Palestinian village of Deir Istiya. The residents of Deir Istiya own much of the land in the reserve and have used it over many centuries for agricultural and recreational purposes. This chapter details the wide-ranging strategies used by INPA, alongside those used by other Jewish agencies and groups, to dispossess Deir Istiya's residents from their lands situated within the nature reserve and to challenge their livelihood in this place. The springs in the wadi (valley) have served as a particular target in the battle over recreational presence and so water emerges here as an additional matter of dispossession. The story of Deir Istiya is but one of numerous stories of green and blue grabbing across the West Bank. It also highlights similar takeover practices, though often less overt, that occur inside the Green Line—and the unitary agenda underlying the settler ecologies of both spaces. Toward the end, the chapter contemplates the management of wild boars across Palestine-Israel, leading us into the final animal-focused chapter of the book.

Returning to animals, chapter 6 tells the story of the griffon vulture. As an impressively large raptor with a wingspan that can reach ten feet, the vulture is "a good animal to think with" about borders and how they are experienced across the political divides in Palestine-Israel. INPA has fought an uphill battle against the vulture's decline, investing in captive breeding efforts that require advanced digital technologies. Such technologies have

also enabled Israel's nature agency to map and track these birds beyond the state's sovereign jurisdiction, effectively partaking in a form of ecological exceptionalism and imperialism. Thinking with vultures also illuminates the symbiotic relationship between INPA and the Israeli army, which portrays itself as nature's number one advocate—this, despite its *de facto* actions as the environment's number one enemy. In its final part, the chapter shows how the dangerous practice of sharing the sky with migratory birds was transformed by the Israeli Air Force, in conjunction with the state's bird experts, into a totemic kinship with these birds that has received international acclaim.

The book's conclusion revisits a few of the sites and themes discussed throughout: the courtroom of the camel case highlights the role of legal institutions in settler ecologies; the houses newly slated for demolition in East Jerusalem emphasize the deep irony of displacement alongside development and the privileging of certain landscapes over others; and the incomprehensible violence by soldiers toward children foraging protected plants in the southern West Bank region demonstrates the militarization of settler ecologies and their geographic and legal ambiguity along the 1948–1967 lines. By highlighting the vortex-like nature of violence in Palestine-Israel, these tragic anecdotes plant the seeds for possible reimaginings of nature that transcend the grip of settler ecologies.

Notes

Preface and Acknowledgments

1. Irus Braverman, *Planted Flags: Trees, Land, and Law in Israel/Palestine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
2. Rob Nixon, *Dreambirds* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 102, 104.
3. David McDermott Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 132.
4. Jane Carruthers, *The Kruger National Park: A Social and Political History* (Pietmaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1995), 62.
5. Michael A. Soukup and Gary E. Machlis, *American Covenant* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2021), 23.
6. Brenna Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property: Law, Land, and Racial Regimes of Ownership* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2018), 120.
7. Richard Grusin, ed., *The Nonhuman Turn* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).
8. Irus Braverman, *Coral Whisperers: Scientists on the Brink* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018), 11.
9. Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property*, 31–32.

Introduction

1. Palestine-Israel refers to any part of the contested geographic area of the State of Israel's post-1967 territories, including the occupied West Bank, Gaza, and Golan Heights (al-Jawlan). I deliberately chose to use a hyphen rather than the more common slash (as in "Palestine/Israel") to highlight my intention to move beyond the bifurcation of this space toward its decolonization. As for the order, it seemed both historically accurate and also more just to place Palestine first. See also Kareem Estefan, "Walking the Hyphen in Palestine-Israel," *Performance Journal* 49 (2016): 11–12; and Moriel Rothman-Zecher, "In Praise of the Dash in 'Israel-Palestine,'" *The Leftern Wall* (blog), September 14, 2016, <http://www.thelefternwall.com>.

2. Shoshana Gabay, "Israel Environment & Nature: Nature Conservation," Jewish Virtual Library, accessed July 28, 2022, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org>. Compare this to 3 percent of the total land mass in the United States, or 1.5 percent in the lower forty-eight states. See "National Park System," National Park Service, accessed August 11, 2022, <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/national-park-system.htm>.

3. "Explore Parks," South African National Parks, accessed July 31, 2022, <https://www.sanparks.org/parks>; "Overview," Kenya Wildlife Service, accessed July 31, 2022, <http://www.kws.go.ke>; "Greece," Protected Planet, accessed August 18, 2022, <https://www.protectedplanet.net>; Rocío Lower and Rebecca Watson, "How Many National Parks Are There?," *NPF Blog* (blog), January 22, 2021, <https://www.nationalparks.org>.

4. Imadeddin, "Current Status of Nature Reserves in Palestine," *Journal of Entomology and Zoology Studies* 5, no. 1 (2017): 618.

5. A brief explanation about my choices for place-names throughout the book is warranted here. Like natural landscapes, names are sites of colonial power and also of resistance: they normalize certain stories and make them seem natural. See, e.g., David Grossman, *The Yellow Wind* [in Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: New Library, 1987), and his reflections on "word laundering." In this book, I attempt to disturb the hegemony of the Hebrew language when it comes to naming places and organisms and refer to them also by their names in Arabic and their Palestinian references, which are at times very similar to the Hebrew and Israeli ones (e.g., Naqab-Negev, Golan-Jawlan; Qana-Kana; Kelt-Qelt; East Jerusalem vs. east Jerusalem) and at other times more overtly different and political (Six Day War vs. 1967 war; occupied West Bank vs. Judea and Samaria). The task of renaming and disturbing has proven to be complicated for various reasons. First, this book is written in English, which itself is not a neutral language and brings its own colonial trajectories. Second, this study is ethnographic: my central interlocutors refer to the Hebrew names, which are often also the official names of the parks, reserves, and organisms. Finally, there is a practical limit to how much one can break down language while still constructing sentences that make sense on other fronts. In any case, my success in more consciously using names here is admittedly partial, and there is still much work to be done on this front.

6. Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

7. Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). See also William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003).

8. This Zionist nature management approach has its roots in Europe and the United States. Indeed, the same U.S. government that actively pursued habitat destruction in the early nineteenth century just as actively promoted reserves and protection of species in the late nineteenth century.

9. For a discussion of this term, see Sheila Jasanoff, "The Idiom of Co-production," in *States of Knowledge: The Co-production of Science and the Social Order*, ed. Sheila Jasanoff (London: Routledge, 2004), 1–12.

10. This declensionist narrative is explained in Diana K. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary of Rome: Environmental History and French Colonial Expansion in North Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2007). For an in-depth discussion of criminalization in the name of nature, see chapters 2, 4, 5, and conclusion, this book. See also Karl Jacoby, *Crimes against Nature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); and Louis Warren, *The Hunter's Game* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1997). For the declensionist narrative in the Palestine-Israel context, see, e.g., Gadi Algazi, "From Gir Forest to Umm Hiran: Notes on Colonial Nature and Its Keepers" [in Hebrew], *Theory & Critique* 37 (2010): 233–53; Rabea Eghbariah, "The Struggle for Akkoub & Za'atar: On Edible Plants in Palestinian Cuisine and Israeli Plant Protection Laws" [in Hebrew], in *Studies in Food Law*, ed. Yofi Tirosh and Aeyal Gross (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 2017), 497–533; Natalia Gutkowski, "Bodies That Count: Administering Multispecies in Palestine/Israel's Borderlands," *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 4, no. 1 (2021): 135–57; Penny Johnson, *Companions in Conflict: Animals in Occupied Palestine* (Brooklyn: Melville House, 2019); and Tamar Novick, *Milk and Honey: Technologies of Plenty in the Making of a Holy Land* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, forthcoming).

11. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary*, 58.

12. Davis, 58.

13. See, in particular, chapters 2, 4, and 5.

14. Amitav Ghosh, *The Nutmeg's Curse* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 57–58. See also V. Anderson, *Creatures of Empire*; and Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*.

15. Ghosh was widely criticized for having agreed to accept the Israeli Dan David prize in 2010, stating that he "[does] not believe that a boycott of Israel would serve any useful tactical purpose at this time." Quoted in Shivam Vij, "'Boycott of Israel Would Not Serve Any Useful Tactical Purpose': Amitav Ghosh," *Kafila*, April 20, 2010, <https://kafila.online>.

16. In this book, Palestinians are defined broadly as including Bedouins and Druze. See, similarly, Lila Abu-Lughod, "Imagining Palestine's Alter-Natives: Settler Colonialism and Museum Politics," *Critical Inquiry* 47, no. 1 (2020): 5–6.

17. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*.

18. Davis, *Resurrecting the Granary*.

19. Aimee Bahng, "The Pacific Proving Grounds and the Proliferation of Settler Colonialism," *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 11, no. 2 (2020): 45–73 (adopting La Paperson's [K. Wayne Yang] term).

20. Elizabeth Lunstrum, "Green Militarization: Anti-poaching Efforts and the Spatial Contours of Kruger National Park," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104, no. 4 (2014): 816–32.

21. Ken Saro-Wiwa, *Genocide in Nigeria: The Ogoni Tragedy* (London: Saros International, 2000).

22. Stasja Koot, Bram Büscher, and Lerato Thakholi, "The New Green Apartheid? Race, Capital and Logics of Enclosure in South Africa's Wildlife Economy," *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* (June 28, 2022).

23. Mazin B. Qumsiyeh and Mohammed A. Abusarhan, "An Environmental Nakba: The Palestinian Environment under Israeli Colonization," *Science under Occupation* 23, no. 1 (2020): n.p.

24. Guillaume Blanc, "'Green Colonialism': The Background behind a Western Outlook on African Nature," interview, *iD4D*, January 7, 2021, <https://ideas4development.org>; Naomi Klein, "Let Them Drown: The Violence of Othering in a Warming World," *Positions Politics*, 2021; V. M. Ravi Kumar, "Green Colonialism and Forest Policies in South India, 1800–1900," *Global Environment* 3, no. 5 (2010): 100–125; Susanne Normann, "Green Colonialism in the Nordic Context: Exploring Southern Saami Representations of Wind Energy Development," *Journal of Community Psychology* 49, no. 1 (2021): 77–94.

25. Uzi Paz (former director, Nature Reserve Unit, and INPA's chief scientist), Zoom interview by author, January 12, 2021.

26. "Israel Environment & Nature: National Parks & Nature Reserves," Jewish Virtual Library, 2008, accessed August 2, 2022, <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org>.

27. Theodor Herzl, "The Jewish State," in *The Zionist Idea*, ed. Arthur Hertzberg (New York: Atheneum, 1981), 221, quoted in Alon Tal, *Pollution in a Promised Land: An Environmental History of Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 155.

28. Uzi Paz, *Land of the Gazelle and the Ibex: Reserves and Nature in Israel* [in Hebrew] (Givataim: Masada, 1981).

29. Paz, interview. See also Sandra M. Sufian, *Healing the Land and the Nation: Malaria and the Zionist Project in Palestine, 1920–1947* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); and Rachel Gottesman et al., eds., *Land. Milk. Honey: Animal Stories in Imagined Landscapes* (Tel Aviv: Park Books, 2021).

30. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*. See also Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

31. Brenna Bhandar, *Colonial Lives of Property: Law, Land, and Racial Regimes of Ownership* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2018), 120–21, and references mentioned in these pages. See also Gabriel Piterberg, *Returns of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel* (New York: Verso, 2008).

32. See, e.g., Novick, *Milk and Honey*; David Schorr, "Horizontal and Vertical Influences in Colonial Legal Transplantation: Water Bylaws in British Palestine," *American Journal of Legal History* 61 (2021): 308–31; and Alon Tal, "Enduring Technological Optimism: Zionism's Environmental Ethic and Its Influence on Israel's Environmental History," *Environmental History* 13, no. 2 (2008): 275–305. On Zionism as a colonial enterprise that was enabled and supported by the British Mandate, see Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate*, trans. Haim Watzman (New York: Henry Holt, 2001); and Naomi Shepherd, *Ploughing Sand: British Rule in Palestine, 1917–1948* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2000).

33. Quoted in "Quotes on the Preservation of Israel's Environment," *Aytzim*, accessed August 20, 2020, <https://aytzim.org>.

34. *Divrei ha-Knesset*, December 3, 1962, 331, quoted in Tal, *Pollution*, 163.

35. See, e.g., Bernhard Gissibl, *The Nature of German Imperialism: Conservation and the Politics of Wildlife in Colonial East Africa* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2016); and Thomas M. Lekan, *Our Gigantic Zoo: A German Quest to Save the Serengeti* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020). On my Foucauldian-inspired use of the term *technology* in this book, see, e.g., Michael C. Behrent, "Foucault and Technology," *History and Technology* 29, no. 1 (2013): 54–104.

36. Gabay, "Israel Environment."

37. Tal, *Pollution*, 163–64.

38. Zafrir Rinat, "They Don't Live Here Any More," *Haaretz*, April 6, 2017. See also Michal Sorek et al., "State of Nature Report 2018," *HaMaarag*, December 2008; and SPNI, "Conservation of Endangered Birds of Prey in Israel" (project proposal, n.d.), <https://natureisrael.org>.

39. Shaul Goldstein (director, INPA), in-person interview by author, Tel Aviv University, December 30, 2019. See, similarly, Eitan Bar-Yosef, *A Villa in the Jungle: Africa in Israeli Culture* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Van Leer Institute Press & Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2013).

40. "Eco-Zionism" was trademarked by the Jewish National Fund in 2012.

41. Raymond Russell et al., *The Renewal of the Kibbutz: From Reform to Transformation* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2013). See also "Green Zionist Alliance: The Grassroots Campaign for a Sustainable Israel," Aytzim, accessed August 20, 2020, <https://aytzm.org>; Irus Braverman, "The Jewish National Fund, Trees, and Eco-Zionism" [in German], in *Jüdischer Almanach*, ed. Gisela Dachs (Jerusalem: Leo Baeck Institute, 2021), 168–77; and Jewish National Fund (JNF), "Eco-Zionism™: The Connections Are Natural," accessed January 26, 2022, <https://www.jnf.org>.

42. Shaul Goldstein, "Tu B'Shvat and the Case for Eco-Zionism," *New York Jewish Week*, January 25, 2016, <https://www.jta.org>. In December 2021 (in the last stages of writing this book), Goldstein stepped down from the position of INPA director after more than a decade in this job.

43. Similarly, Susanna Hecht and Alexander Cockburn write in the Amazon context: "Forest people's movements are profoundly revolutionary because they take the questions of Nature and social justice as ineluctably tied together, not as a consumerist green 'add-on' to another agenda, but as the deep heart of the story." Susanna B. Hecht and Alexander Cockburn, *The Fate of the Forest: Developers, Destroyers, and Defenders of the Amazon* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), ix.

44. "About Us—The Israel Nature and Parks Authority," Israel Nature and Parks Authority, accessed July 28, 2022, <https://en.parks.org.il>. See also Zafrir Rinat, "Israel Declares Five New National Parks and Nature Reserves," *Haaretz*, June 26, 2017.

45. Mazin Qumsiyeh (director, Palestine Museum of Natural History), in-person interview and observations with author, Bethlehem, Palestine, December 29, 2019.

46. Jewish settlers as well as post-Zionist Jews are increasingly challenging the separation of this space, seeing it as governed by one regime. See, e.g., Marco Allegra, Ariel Handel, and Erez Maggor, eds., *Normalizing Occupation: The Politics of Everyday Life in the West Bank Settlements* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017); and B'Tselem, "Apartheid," January 12, 2021.

47. On Labor politician Yigal Allon's decision in 1967 to remove the Green Line from Israel's official maps, see, e.g., Gershon Gorenberg, "Draw the Line: How Israel Erases Itself," *Daily Beast*, July 13, 2017. In August 2022, a decision by the Tel Aviv municipality to design and disperse maps that include the Green Line to two thousand classrooms was barred by the Israel Education Ministry. Or Kashti, "Tel Aviv and the Israeli Government Spar Over School Maps Showing 1967 Borders," *Haaretz*, August 23, 2022.

48. On constructive ambiguity, see Meron Benvenisti, *The Sling and the Club* [in Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: Keter, 1988), 49; and Ariel Handel, Galit Rand, and Marco Allegra, "Wine-Washing: Colonization, Normalization, and the Geopolitics of Terroir in the West Bank's Settlements," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 47, no. 6 (2015): 1351–52.

49. See, e.g., Irus Braverman, "Another Voice: The Green Line's Final Breaths: Life beyond the Rockets," *Buffalo News*, May 19, 2021; B'Tselem, "The [Green] Line Is Long Gone," January 5, 2016; and Meron Rapoport, "The Green Line Is Dead. What Comes Next?," *+972Magazine*, April 1, 2022.

50. Paz, interview.

51. Paz, interview.

52. Paz, *Land of the Gazelle*, 2.

53. Military Order 89, "Order Concerning Public Parks: Amendment to the Law of Public Parks and the Preservation of Nature, 1963," August 16, 1967, in Jamil Rabah and Natasha Fairweather, *Israeli Military Orders in the Occupied Palestinian West Bank, 1967–1992* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre, 1993), 13.

54. Paz, interview.

55. See note 10.

56. On the Oslo Accords, see, e.g., David Makovsky, *Making Peace with the PLO: The Rabin Government's Road to the Oslo Accord* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1996); and Petter Bauck and Mohammed Omer, eds., *The Oslo Accords: A Critical Assessment* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2017).

57. Imadeddin, "Current Status," 619.

58. Eng. Khaled Salem (information systems, GIS & RS department director, Environment Quality Authority, Palestine), email communication with author, January 30, 2022. A 2017 map drawn by the Palestinian Environment Quality Authority (EQA) divides the Palestinian occupied territories into sixteen governorates, also showing the one and only nature reserve designated in Gaza in 2000 in Wadi Gaza. See "Academic Cooperation with the Environment Quality Authority to Refine Strategies for Biodiversity Conservation in Protected Areas in Palestine," map on p. 15, MRV, August 31, 2021, <https://www.palestinature.org>. I was unable to include the EQA map as an image because of the publisher's printing requirements for maps and other line art. This only underlines the imbalance in mapping capacities between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. See, e.g., Jess Bier, *Mapping Israel, Mapping Palestine: How Occupied Landscapes Shape Scientific Knowledge* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2017). On Wadi Gaza, see, e.g., Abdel Fattah Nazmi Abd Rabou and Kamel Abu-Daher, "Environmental Tragedy of Wadi Gaza" [in Arabic] (conference paper, Fourth Conference of Arts Faculty, May 2019).

59. "Planning Policy in the West Bank," B'Tselem, February 6, 2019.

60. Dror Etkes, "A Locked Garden," Kerem Navot, March 2015. On military zones within the Green Line, see Amiram Oren, *The Spatial Price of Security: Military Land Uses in Israel, Needs and Impacts* [in Hebrew] (Haifa: University of Haifa Press, 2005); and Amiram Oren and Rafi Regev, *Land in Khaki: Land and Military in Israel* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Carmel Press, 2008).

61. Naftali Cohen (kamat Ratag, Civil Administration and INPA), in-person interview and observations with author, Karnei Shomron and Wadi Qana, occupied West Bank, August 1, 2019.

62. "Israel Creates Seven 'Nature Reserves' in Occupied West Bank," *Al Jazeera*, January 15, 2020.

63. Moshe Gilad, "Bennett Declares Nature Reserves That Already Exist to Promote the Rightwing Agenda," *Haaretz*, January 16, 2020.

64. "Israel Creates Seven."

65. Anonymous (INPA official A), telephone interview by author, September 11, 2018.

66. See, e.g., Omar Jabary Salamanca et al., "Front Matter," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 1 (2012): i–iv, and the contributions to that special issue. See also Anne de Jong, "Zionist Hegemony, the Settler Colonial Conquest of Palestine and the Problem with Conflict: A Critical Genealogy of the Notion of Binary Conflict," *Settler Colonial Studies* 8, no. 3 (2018): 364–83; Hagar Kotef, *The Colonizing Self: Or, Home and Homelessness in Israel/Palestine* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2020); Nadim N. Rouhana and Areej Sabbagh-Khoury, "Settler-Colonial Citizenship: Conceptualizing the Relationship between Israel and Its Palestinian Citizens," *Settler Colonial Studies* 5, no. 3 (2015): 205–25; Lorenzo Veracini, "What Can Settler Colonial Studies Offer to an Interpretation of the Conflict in Israel-Palestine?," *Settler Colonial Studies* 5, no. 3 (2015): 268–71; and Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 387–409. See also the references in the following notes.

67. See, e.g., Amahl Bishara et al., "The Multifaceted Outcomes of Community-Engaged Water Quality Management in a Palestinian Refugee Camp," *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 4, no. 1 (2021): 65–84; Irus Braverman, "Captive: Zoometric Operations in Gaza," *Public Culture* 29, no. 1 (81) (2017): 191–215; Irus Braverman, "Environmental Justice, Settler Colonialism, and More-than-Humans in the Occupied West Bank: An Introduction," *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 4, no. 1 (2021): 3–27; Diana K. Davis and Edmund Burke III, *Environmental Imaginaries of the Middle East and North Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011); Ramez Eid and Tobias Haller, "Burning Forests, Rising Power: Towards a Constitutionality Process in Mount Carmel Biosphere Reserve," *Human Ecology* 46, no. 1 (2018): 41–50; Gutkowski, "Bodies That Count"; Emily McKee, *Dwelling in Conflict* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016); Emily McKee, "Water, Power, and Refusal: Confronting Evasive Accountability in a Palestinian Village," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 25, no. 3 (2019): 546–65; Anne Meneley, "Hope in the Ruins:

Seeds, Plants, and Possibilities of Regeneration,” *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 4, no. 1 (2021): 158–72; Novick, *Milk and Honey*; Qumsiyeh and Abusarhan, “An Environmental Nakba”; Sophia Stamatopoulou-Robbins, *Waste Siege: The Life of Infrastructure in Palestine* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2020); and Omar Tesdell, “Wild Wheat to Productive Drylands: Global Scientific Practice and the Agroecological Remaking of Palestine,” *Geoforum* 78 (2017): 43–51.

68. See, e.g., William M. Adams and Jon Hutton, “People, Parks and Poverty: Political Ecology and Biodiversity Conservation,” *Conservation and Society* 5, no. 2 (2007): 147–83; Dan Brockington, *Fortress Conservation: The Preservation of the Mkomazi Game Reserve, Tanzania* (Oxford: James Currey, 2002); Dan Brockington et al., *Nature Unbound: Conservation, Capitalism and the Future of Protected Areas* (London: Earthscan, 2008); Jane Carruthers, *The Kruger National Park: A Social and Political History* (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1995); Kevin C. Dunn, “Environmental Security, Spatial Preservation, and State Sovereignty in Central Africa,” in *The State of Sovereignty*, ed. Douglas Howland and Luise White (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 222–42; James Fairhead, Melissa Leach, and Ian Scoones, “Green Grabbing: A New Appropriation of Nature?,” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 39, no. 2 (2012): 237–61; David Hulme and Marshall Murphee, eds., *African Wildlife and Livelihoods* (Oxford: James Currey, 2001); James Igoe, *Conservation and Globalization: A Study of National Parks and Indigenous Communities from East Africa to South Dakota* (Belmont: Wadsworth/Thompson, 2004); Lunstrum, “Green Militarization”; Francis Massé and Elizabeth Lunstrum, “Accumulation by Securitization: Commercial Poaching, Neoliberal Conservation, and the Creation of New Wildlife Frontiers,” *Geoforum* 69 (2016): 227–37; Roderick P. Neumann, *Imposing Wilderness: Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Nancy Lee Peluso, “Coercing Conservation? The Politics of State Resource Control,” *Global Environmental Change* 3, no. 2 (1993): 199–217; Paige West, James Igoe, and Dan Brockington, “Parks and Peoples: The Social Impact of Protected Areas,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35 (2006): 251–77; and Megan Ybarra, “‘Blind Passes’ and the Production of Green Security through Violence on the Guatemalan Border,” *Geoforum* 69 (2016): 194–206.

69. But see Rana Barakat, “Writing/Righting Palestine Studies: Settler Colonialism, Indigenous Sovereignty and Resisting the Ghost(s) of History,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 8, no. 3 (2018): 349–63.

70. Wolfe writes: “In contrast to the kind of colonial formation that Cabral or Fanon confronted, settler colonies were not primarily established to extract surplus value from indigenous labour. Rather, they are premised on displacing indigenes from (or replacing them on) the land.” Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: Cassell, 1999), 1–2. See also Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism,” 388. Veracini echoes Wolfe when he writes that “while the suppression of indigenous and exogenous alterities characterises both colonial and settler colonial formations, the former can be summarised as domination for the purpose of exploitation, the latter as domination for

the purpose of transfer." Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 34. See also Lorenzo Veracini, *The Settler Colonial Present* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 6, 27, 40. Indeed, both Wolfe and Veracini draw a sharp analytical separation between settler colonies as eliminatory formations and franchise colonies as exploitative ones. This sharp separation is also the foundation for Veracini's odd division between colonialism in 1948 Israel versus settler colonialism in the 1967 territories. By contrast, this book provides multiple examples for the imbrication of exploitation and elimination across the entire space. See also Sai Englert, "Settlers, Workers, and the Logic of Accumulation by Dispossession," *Antipode* 52, no. 6 (2020): 1647–66. For further criticism of Wolfe's categories, see Rachel Busbridge, "Israel-Palestine and the Settler Colonial 'Turn': From Interpretation to Decolonization," *Theory, Culture & Society* 35, no. 1 (2018): 91–115.

71. Ann Laura Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Time* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2016), 42–46. See also Abu-Lughod, "Imagining," 3.

72. Abu-Lughod, "Imagining," 3; Busbridge, "Israel-Palestine"; Scott Lauria Morgensen, "Theorising Gender, Sexuality and Settler Colonialism: An Introduction," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (2012): 2–22; Steven Salaita, *Inter/Nationalism: Decolonizing Native America and Palestine* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016); Salamanca et al., "Front Matter"; Waziyatawin, "Malice Enough in Their Hearts and Courage Enough in Ours: Reflections on US Indigenous and Palestinian Experiences under Occupation," *Settler Colonial Studies* 2, no. 1 (2012): 172–89.

73. Lunstrum, "Green Militarization"; Roderick P. Neumann, "Moral and Discursive Geographies in the War for Biodiversity in Africa," *Political Geography* 23, no. 7 (2004): 813–37; Peluso, "Coercing Conservation?"

74. David Anderson and Richard Grove, eds., *Conservation in Africa: Peoples, Policies and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 4.

75. Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

76. D. Anderson and Grove, *Conservation in Africa*; Grove, *Green Imperialism*; Lunstrum, "Green Militarization"; Neumann, "Moral and Discursive Geographies"; Peluso, "Coercing Conservation?"

77. Mark David Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of National Parks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4. See also Roderick P. Neumann, "Nature-State-Territory: Towards a Critical Theorization of Conservation Enclosures," in *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements*, ed. Richard Peet and Michael Watts (London: Routledge, 2004), 195–217; Jacoby, *Crimes against Nature*; and Warren, *The Hunter's Game*.

78. See, e.g., Adams and Hutton, "People, Parks and Poverty," 155.

79. Kevin C. Dunn, "Contested State Spaces: African National Parks and the State," *European Journal of International Relations* 15, no. 3 (2009): 436.

80. Dunn, 436.

81. Abu-Lughod, "Imagining," 14.

82. Salamanca et al., “Front Matter,” 5. See also Areej Sabbagh-Khoury, “Tracing Settler Colonialism: A Genealogy of a Paradigm in the Sociology of Knowledge Production in Israel,” *Politics & Society* 50, no. 1 (2022): 44–83.

83. See, e.g., Mark Davis, *Invasion Biology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

84. See also Robert Nichols, *Theft Is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2020), 7.

85. Mahmood Mamdani, *Neither Settler nor Native: The Making and Unmaking of Permanent Minorities* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2020), 355. See also Raef Zreik, “When Does a Settler Become a Native? (With Apologies to Mamdani),” *Constellations* 23, no. 3 (2016): 351–64; and Yuval Evri and Hagar Kotef, “When Does a Native Become a Settler? (With Apologies to Zreik and Mamdani),” *Constellations* 29, no. 1 (2022): 3–18.

86. As I discuss in chapter 4.

87. Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 2.

88. Derek Gregory, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan. Palestine. Iraq* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2004).

89. Barakat, “Writing/Righting,” 355.

1. Policing Nature

1. Yehoshua Shkedy (chief scientist, INPA), Zoom interview by author, November 3, 2020.

2. Shai Koren (regional manager, Upper Galilee, INPA), telephone interview, August 12, 2019, and Zoom interview, February 13, 2021, both by author.

3. Rade Najem (mayor, Beit Jann), Zoom interview by author, February 14, 2021.

4. Koren, interview.

5. Oren Yiftachel and Michaly D. Segal, “Jews and Druze in Israel: State Control and Ethnic Resistance,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21, no. 3 (1998): 485.

6. Dan Rabinowitz, *Overlooking Nazareth: The Ethnography of Exclusion in Galilee* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Kais Firro and Qays M. Firro, *The Druzes in the Jewish State: A Brief History* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 134–35.

7. Firro and Firro, *The Druzes in the Jewish State*, 135.

8. Yiftachel and Segal, “Jews and Druze,” 485. See also Jeremy Forman and Alexandre Kedar, “Colonialism, Colonization and Land Law in Mandate Palestine: The Zor al-Zarqa and Barrat Qisarya Land Disputes in Historical Perspective,” *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 4, no. 2 (2003): 491–539.

9. Koren, interview. However, many Druze from Beit Jann were unwilling to accept compensation in protest. Yiftachel and Segal, “Jews and Druze,” 489.

10. Haim Yacobi, *The Jewish-Arab City: Spatio-Politics in a Mixed Community* (London: Routledge, 2009), 9; Oren Yiftachel et al., eds., *The Power of Planning: Spaces of Control and Transformation* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2001), 120.

11. Yiftachel and Segal, “Jews and Druze,” 486.