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Scripting climate futures: The geographical assumptions of climate planning

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A B S T R A C T

Since 1992, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the global governing apparatus of climate planning, has privileged the sovereignty of territorial states. Contemporary political geographical scholarship has since called into question the coherency of the state as a unitary entity and as the sole legitimate arbiter of international politics. This article extends these contributions to planetary climate change adaptation. Through discourse analysis and the multi-scalar institutional and political history of climate planning, this article examines how normative discursive parameters enact prevailing political dynamics that script material futures. Drawing on recent climate planning reports of Palestine and Israel, this article investigates how state discourses operate within an asymmetric geopolitical context where issues of territoriality, sovereignty, and statecraft remain fractured and contested. Climate planning in Israel/Palestine exposes two key institutional constraints of climate governance. First, technical-managerial principles prescribe ahistorical adaptation measures that inadequately address inherently political constraints. Second, the elision of political-economic and historical-cultural contingencies in favor of a universalizing geophysical representation of climate change elides the systemic production of differentiated vulnerability. Consequential of an anachronistic politics of recognition within the UNFCCC, the conditions of climate governance may ultimately embolden the asymmetric status quo. I conclude by highlighting the spatial manifestations (both material and symbolic) of Israeli sovereign violence and the chronic indeterminacy of Palestinian territoriality produced by discursive climate futures.

1. Introduction

Territorial politics are deeply embedded in climate change planning. This article is informed by critical discourse and political analysis of state climate change plans to examine how strategic settler colonial and geopolitical factors have structured the domain of climate planning in Israel/Palestine. The quasi-State of Palestine's[1] (2016) and the State of Israel's (2018) respective National Communication reports to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (hereby UNFCCC or Convention) serve as the primary political mobilizations interrogated in this article. Representing national climate planning efforts, these reports are both emblematic and productive of wider politics and contestations. Climatic changes surely transcend political boundaries and logically invite cause for collective action. Yet the projection of prevailing

political dynamics into the sphere of climate planning signals the need to take written reports seriously as they claim to represent, and thereby produce, a state's coherent blueprint for action. Climate planning ultimately represents a convergence of geopolitical maneuverings, technical-managerial framings, and uneven struggles over geography. When analyzed together, Israeli and Palestinian climate discourses reveal how the colonial past and present continue to be inscribed and countered in plans that script the future.

My intension in positioning Israeli and Palestinian narratives in dialectical tension does not seek to create an optics of parity where none exists. Rather, in comparing these discourses I hope to ultimately rethink the oppositional territorial-bounded-state paradigm forged within the global institutional framework of climate planning. The UNFCCC serves as the supranational governing apparatus that organizes nationally

coordinated adaptation and mitigation projects to climate change. All members to the Convention are required to submit National Communication reports to the Conference of the Parties upon ratifying the agreement and every few years thereafter. While Israel joined the Convention as a signatory member in 1992, the recent accession of Palestine in 2016 marks a shift in representation for the quasi-state. Urgent questions arise around the role of non-sovereign states under military occupation or armed conflict within the project of planetary climate planning. The case of Israel/Palestine ultimately unsettles numerous institutional prescriptions with implications for global governance structures beyond this setting.

Political geographers have increasingly examined or contested the geophysical impacts of climate change as a catalyst of conflict in the Middle East (Fröhlich et al., 2017). Shifting from the material to the discursive, this article turns instead to the geographical implications around statehood, territory, and nature that emerge in national climate planning discourses. I position climate reports as discursive formations embedded in and productive of wider national strategies. Discourse, as promulgated by Foucault (1978), can refer to the production of knowledge and meaning systems, always already entangled in wider social orders and power relations.[2] Discourses form coherent bodies of meaning that *produce* rather than simply represent an account of reality, generating "knowledge" about particular objects or concepts. I turn to climate reports to examine how certain discourses, such as the Israeli plan, gain the status of "truth" and in effect determine what can be said or known about reality. Yet "resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power," Foucault (1978, pp.95–96) reminds us. Alternative discourses, such as Palestine's plan, contest and resist this hegemonic exercise of power, while also exposing a form of entrapment. Climate reports are thereby positioned as discursive constructions, opening and foreclosing divergent realities.

Discursive productions of climate change merit our attention precisely because of the modes in which they reproduce, legitimate, and stake claims in material futures. Climate reports, in particular, enact infrastructural futures by endowing water, energy, military, and other state infrastructures with legitimacy under the guise of climate proofing. Perhaps most central to UNFCCC National Communications are their economic implications. Submitted to the Conference of the Parties, the largest climate governing authority, reports ultimately inform the distribution of global financial provisions (UNFCCC, 2009, p. 6). I thereby approach climate reports with the understanding that they produce power-laden material realities. In the context of Israel/Palestine, climate discourses remain performative enactments of competing exercises of sovereignty, self-determination, occupation, and resistance that have long characterized the political geography of this territory. Grappling with the temporalities of near-future climate change and the slow violence of climate vulnerability, these reports offer insight into asymmetric claims of territorial futures.

Situated in emerging geopolitical ecological and settler colonial literatures, this analysis questions how climate planning, with its own set of immense spatial and temporal uncertainties, operates within an already uncertain political context of protracted occupation. I begin by mapping the entangled geopolitical ecological and settler colonial contexts in which representatives of Palestine and Israel have forged their respective National Communication reports. Framing my analysis through questions around the politics of representation and the scope of discretion prescribed by UNFCCC technical-managerial guidelines, I then comparatively examine the productions of Palestinian and Israeli climate planning. Arriving at the institutional inadequacies of the

UNFCCC, I argue that existing normative principles and the planetary scale of climate planning fail to perceive the systemic vulnerabilities that non-sovereign entities in protracted crises like Palestine bring forth. I conclude by considering how the asymmetric production of climate vulnerability rests on historically contingent geopolitics embedded in the global climate governance structure as well as geographically contingent conditions of settler colonial occupation. The ahistorical and depoliticizing imperatives, or deficiencies, of the UNFCCC ultimately convey the need for political transformation and alternative forms of decolonial climate justice.

2. Political geographies of climate change in Israel/Palestine

Political geographical analysis has illuminated the territorial logics and systemic violence long informing statecraft in Israel/Palestine. These interventions have proffered the 'politics of verticality' extending geographical analysis to the aerial and subterranean (Weizman, 2007) and the processes of 'politicide' (Amir, 2017; Kimmerling, 1983, 2003) or 'spacio-cide' (Hanafi, 2009) to illustrate how territorial fragmentation, spatial regulation of bodies, and material de-development (Roy, 1999) of Palestinian institutions have undermined territorial-bounded-state sovereignty. Within this volatile geography, climate change has gained increasing attention, often positioned as a "threat multiplier" that can further destabilize relations (CNA Corporation, 2007; EcoPeace MiddleEast, 2019, p. 8). Yet the formulation of climate change as an extra-territorial incursion has been contested by political geographers as it elides the political, social, and ecological vulnerabilities already shaping the present in violent ways (Fröhlich et al., 2017; Mason, 2013).

Recent contributions in geography further explore the discursive politics of climate change (Boykoff & Osnes, 2018; Mikulewicz, 2020; Paprocki, 2019), understanding 'official' reports as the material effects of circumstance and also as productive of material effects. This article builds especially on the salient analyses of Messerschmid (2012), Mason (2013), Jarrar (2015), and Stamatopoulou-Robbins (2018). These scholars have illuminated how state and geopolitical drivers inflect the domain of climate planning in Israel/Palestine, offering methodological avenues that situate climate reports within the colonial past and present.

I additionally draw on two bodies of literature to inform my analysis. Linking these literatures together are a focus on the geographical distribution of power and knowledge and the temporalities of the systematic production of climate vulnerability. The first, geopolitical ecologies of the 'Middle East,' emerges from recent attempts to link political ecology with political geography (Bigger & Neimark, 2017; Hoffmann, 2018). Robbins (2008, pp. 205–218) and Harris (2017) initially posed the framework of 'political ecologies of the state' to emphasize the co-constitutive roles of state and nature in fashioning the management of territory. Through this formulation, the 'state' is understood as being in an always relational condition of becoming through "iterative politics, exclusions, and contestations" (Harris, 2017, pp. 91–92). Bigger and Neimark (2017) expand the scale beyond the territorial-bounded-state. Their 'geopolitical ecologies' framework emphasizes the role of historical agents such as the US military in the violent production of ecological change and global natures. This analytic enables me to examine the political ecology of Israel/Palestine in relation to geopolitical agents of change such as the US military or UNFCCC. I thereby seek to transcend the methodological nationalism or territorial trap (Agnew, 1994) of climate planning by situating accelerating climate change and localized vulnerabilities, temporally and spatially, within historical flows of power enacted by particular agents, state and non-state.

The second analytical framework informing this analysis, settler colonialism, deexceptionalizes the underlying power relationship in Israel/Palestine (Sabbagh-Khoury, 2021; Wolfe, 2006; see also; Sayegh, 1985, Shafir, 1989). Zionism, as the overriding political imaginary in Israel, is not a "return" or anti-colonial movement against British

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[2] Questions abound regarding Foucault's account of power as neglecting its racializing properties, especially in settler colonial contexts (see Spivak, 1985; Weheliye, 2014). While this theoretical debate is beyond the scope of this paper, this does not necessarily render Foucauldian ideas or methods redundant.

imperialism, but is itself constitutive of settler colonial relations premised on Palestinian dispossession. Zionist settler colonialism, like other cases, is prefigured by the following material and symbolic processes: appropriation of land and resources; social stratification (race, ethnicity, religion, citizenship, and class); spatial fragmentation and confinement; and, necessarily, practices of Indigenous resistance.

The settler colonial analytic is gaining momentum in political geography (Gordon & Ram, 2016; Hughes, 2020; Joudah, 2020; Veledntisky et al., 2020), attending to the undergirding logics and structures encapsulated by Wolfe's (2006) seminal thesis that settler colonial invasion is a structure, not an event, of demographic replacement and land grabbing. This analytic allows me to contest the exceptionalist logics that have long framed Israeli domination and uneven climate vulnerabilities beyond the machinations of settler colonialism. Through this paradigm shift, I come to recognize the eliminatory logics embedded in Israeli climate planning and understand that the entire Israeli state apparatus, rather than solely its post-1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, maintains these violent dynamics, logics, and structures (Cohen & Gordon, 2018). The crisis in Israel/Palestine is not an ethnic or national conflict between equal players, but rather encapsulates relations between settler colonizers and Indigenous colonized (Sabbagh-Khoury, 2021). A settler colonial framework is perhaps most productive in its prescription for decolonization. This includes the restitution of territory, repatriation of Palestinian refugees, and the dismantling of the structure of exclusively Jewish territorial sovereignty and demographic advantage. For climate justice to be achieved in a settler geography, decolonization must be foregrounded.

The literatures outlined above raise three questions: First, what are the discursive inclusions and exclusions of climate planning in Israel/Palestine? Second, how does the discursive become materially consequential? Third, how does the planetary scale of UNFCCC climate planning hinder or enhance the struggle for decolonial climate justice? While climatic changes transcend political boundaries, polities are respectively mobilizing discourses of planning to effectuate competing projects of territorial futurity. These literatures ultimately move us toward the need to critically scrutinize the coherency of state climate planning.

In the sections that follow, I first complicate the politics of representation employed in UNFCCC climate panning. I then contextualize Palestinian and Israeli plans before offering an overview and analysis of each report. Finally, I draw on the above theoretical frameworks to build a comparative analysis.

3. Politics of representation: Israel/Palestine and the UNFCCC

UNFCCC climate planning prescribes a particular technical-managerial menu for all member states in order to coordinate different stakeholders, practice uniformity and standardization, and develop scalable institutional protocols. The goal of the National Communication is to create a "consistent, transparent, and comparable" format for an assemblage of global contributions to greenhouse gas emissions (UNFCCC, 2002, p. 4). To understand the space of discretion available in these reports, this section first examines who and what a National Communication purports to represent. I turn to UNFCCC technical-managerial guidelines (UNFCCC, 1992, 2002), training modules (UNFCCC, 2008, 2009), and resource guides (UNFCCC, 2006) for state planners to examine the normative principles that subtend climate planning. The case of Israel/Palestine then illuminates how these principles undermine a non-sovereign and/or state in conflict, as well as the situated realities on the ground. Finally, I raise concern over the politics of representation (Hall, 1992, pp. 275–331) within global climate planning, calling into question the UNFCCC (1992) as a bureaucratic institution enacting violence through technocratic strategies such as the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" (p. 2).

3.1. UNFCCC National Communications: the technical-managerial scope of climate planning

National Communication reports to the UNFCCC serve as national narratives. They reflect discourses about a state's inhabitants and the ways in which the government plans to forge new realities under ecological change. While climate reports purport to represent a state entity, admittedly states are not coherent or unitary actors "but instead sprawling, complex concatenations of agents and agencies enacting the work of governing" (McDonnell, 2020, p. 15). There is a common tendency in climate politics to fall back on the state as a self-evident and non-problematic category of analysis. Yet the enduring conceptual hegemony that posits the territorial-state as the sole legitimate expression of political authority and climate futures may elide more complex mechanisms and technologies at play (Mitchell, 1991; Painter, 2010). Indeed "the state does not think and do. People in various configurations of power (including from below) enliven states to think and do" (Gilmore, 2018). The analysis of climate reports should not fall into the trap of methodological nationalism lest the analysis itself promote the reification of the territorial-state and the elimination of debordered imaginations (Sassen, 2013). A theoretical framework of co-production—"the simultaneous making of the natural and social worlds"—thereby situates state climate planning among the multiple agencies, representations, and geopolitical actors that give them shape and substance (Jasanoff, 2010, p. 236).

Pronouncements by Palestinian and Israeli representatives ultimately take place alongside myriad political dynamics that are absent from so-called National Communications (Mason, 2013). This article is therefore careful so as not to make a leap from the environmental ministries responsible for climate planning to the states themselves. In examining how these institutions are given a mandate to represent the state, I complicate the intended politics of representation enduring in climate planning. Multiple contestations behind closed doors ultimately enliven and complicate what are presupposed as unitary climate plans representing the nation-state. Discursive representations of climate hinge on the storyteller of ecological change. As Cronon (1992, pp. 1349–1350) notes, discourse "succeeds to the extent that it hides the discontinuities, ellipses, and contradictory experiences that would undermine the intended meaning of its story." Israeli and Palestinian climate discourses are marked by inherent exclusions forged in their projects of territory-making, particularly around the imagination of the national ethnos and its borders.

National Communication reports are also predicated upon a detailed technical reporting format and managerial adaptation scheme. UNFCCC principles (1992, 2002), training modules (2008, 2009), and resource guides (2006) for non-Annex I[3] state planners detail the scope of discretion available. Broadly, each report must include:

> A national inventory of anthropogenic emissions sources and removal by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol […] A general description of steps taken or envisaged by the non-Annex I Party to implement the Convention […] Any other information that the non-Annex I Party considers relevant to the achievement of the objective of the Convention (UNFCCC, 2002, p. 4).

For non-Annex I parties, like Israel and Palestine, National Communications offer an important opportunity to air grievances following

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[3] The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development divided the world order of climate governance into three categories: Annex I parties consist of industrialized or "developed" nations. Annex II parties are a designated subsection of the first group that consist only of OECD members of 1992, and are assigned greater responsibilities to transfer financial and technological support to all other nations. Finally, non-Annex I parties encompass every other nation.

the UNFCCC principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities," enshrined in the Convention's founding treaty (1992, p. 2). This principle is endowed through the allowance of a "National Circumstances" section:

> Non-Annex I Parties should provide a description of their national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, on the basis of which they will address climate change and its adverse impacts. This description may include information on features of their geography, climate and economy which may affect their ability to deal with mitigating and adapting to climate change, as well as information regarding their specific needs and concerns arising from the adverse effects of climate change and/or the impact of the implementation of response measures (UNFCCC, 2002, p. 4).

While a "National Circumstances" section provides space for grievance, the technical-managerial framing through which adaptation measures must be formed can trap polities within a financial structure that distributes assistance on the basis of technical and ostensibly apolitical measures:

> Non-Annex I Parties should, in accordance with national circumstances and development priorities, describe any constraints and gaps, and related financial, technical and capacity needs, as well as proposed and/or implemented activities for overcoming the gaps and constraints, associated with the implementation of activities, measures and programmes envisaged under the Convention, and with the preparation and improvement of national communications on a continuous basis (UNFCCC, 2002, p. 10).

Indeed there does exist space for states to articulate constraints, and as in the case of Palestine such space becomes important to outline the political context. Yet these guidelines render all challenges and vulnerabilities technical, eliding asymmetric power relations that may be responsible for said challenges. Constraints must be met by technical interventions within the arsenal of climate adaptation or mitigation measures (Messerschmid, 2012, p. 441), not by means of international sanction, lawfare, or decolonization. Yet for many states, constraints of climate planning cannot be resolved by a simple donor-funded technical fix. For a quasi-state like Palestine, Israeli settler colonial occupation itself represents a key vulnerability to climate change. States that do not control their borders, resources, economies, or territories, especially those in armed conflict or occupation, cannot adapt to climate change until those conditions are addressed. The limited space of discretion available in these reports makes clear the assumptions of sovereign statehood that may undermine a quasi-state or a state in conflict.

Finally, climate change is represented here as a universal, exogenous, and geophysical force. Localized political conditions, possibly constitutive themselves of climate vulnerability, are peripheralized. As Mason (2014a) argues, "use of a natural disasters framing can stress extreme events and climate features over root causes of vulnerability," such as occupation (p. 820). Assuming amorphous planetary climate change as the root cause of vulnerability shifts attention from more prevalent roots of vulnerability in conflict geographies, such as organized violence and abandonment. The UNFCCC standardized framing may ultimately depoliticize and shift responsibility from actors producing vulnerability to ahistorical (and ultimately ineffective) fixes. I thereby analyze climate planning with the UNFCCC's technical-managerial framing in mind.

3.2. Normative principles of global climate planning: The territorial-bounded sovereign state

At the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, parties formed the UNFCCC, opening the Convention for signature. As one of the most ratified global agreements in history, the UNFCCC is predicated on a territorial-bounded-state paradigm, assuming:

> States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction (p. 2).

Yet it should be noted that signatory members, including Palestine, do not all possess sovereign rights over territory or natural resources, just as foreign polities indeed do cause damage to the environment of other states. The Convention reaffirms

> The principle of sovereignty of States in international cooperation to address climate change, recognizing that States should enact effective environmental legislation, that environmental standards, management objectives and priorities should reflect the environmental and developmental context to which they apply, and that standards applied by some countries may be inappropriate and of unwarranted economic and social cost to other countries, in particular developing countries (p. 2).

Enshrined by this Convention, the politics of climate change have become organized, almost exclusively, in relation to states and conceptions of absolute territorial sovereignty. "States are thus understood as unitary actors," as the privileged, near-exclusive subjects of world politics, "with each state trying to maximize status relative to others. No entities other than states are involved, by definition, in international relations. World politics is entirely about international (i.e., inter-state) relations" (Agnew, 2018, p. 34). Even as the UN seeks to transcend bounded territories, the territorial state-based ontology of the UNFCCC is trapped within a putative regime of Westphalian territorial sovereignty, fixing states as containers of sovereign space, despite a more complex world order of flows and networks that transcend absolute political territoriality (Agnew, 2005). The case of Palestine, a non-sovereign, non-politically autonomous "phantom state" (Stamatopoulou-Robbins, 2020), unsettles the territorial-bounded-state paradigm through which the crisis of climate change confounds already existent asymmetries.

3.3. Geopolitical Ecologies of the UNFCCC: Israel/Palestine and the United States

The UNFCCC is not immune from wider geopolitical maneuvers, especially given the inordinate influence carried by the United States. Israeli and Palestinian state participation in the UNFCCC reveal a profound entanglement of US interventions. Much research has already catalogued the legal history of Israel/Palestine within the United Nations (e.g., Erakat, 2019). The case of climate change strays not far from this precedent of anti-Palestinian self-government.

Following Palestine's 1974 acquisition of non-state observer status through UN Resolution 3236 and the attempted accession of Palestine to the World Health Organization and other UN institutions in 1989, US and Israeli administrations threatened to withdraw all funding to such organizations if member states were to recognize Palestine (Lewis, 1989; Quigley, 2011). The US Congress further codified this position into law in the 1994 Foreign Relations Authorization Act, preventing US funding "to any affiliated organization of the UN which grants full membership as a state to any organization or group that does not have the internationally recognized attributes of statehood" (Hamilton, 1994). From this precedent emerged a series of threats by successive US administrations, such as the 2017 withdrawal from UNESCO following full Palestinian accession, citing "anti-Israel bias" in the formal termination announcement (Nauert, 2017).

In response to Palestine's accession as a full member to the UNFCCC in 2016, twenty-eight US Senators submitted a letter to then Secretary of State John Kerry calling for an end to US funding to the UNFCCC on the

basis of Palestinian membership (Barrasso, 2016). The Republican Party even codified this position in its 2016 Platform, using Palestine to form its anti-climate change agenda (RNC, 2016, p. 22). However, the frought politics of climate change in the US prevented these Republican senators from succeeding. The Obama Administration argued that the 1994 provisions do not apply to the UNFCCC since it is a treaty, not a UN agency (Cama, 2016). And despite the electoral success of the Republican Party in 2016, the United States has not withdrawn from the UNFCCC. Such a decision would require congressional approval as a ratified treaty. However, the Trump Administration's brief withdrawal from the institution's hallmark Paris Climate Agreement in 2020 may have satisfied the Republican Party at that moment (Pompeo, 2019).

The profound efforts of US and Israeli governments to suppress Palestinian statehood, at the expense of collective climate change efforts, begins to illuminate the insufficiencies of a hostile governing structure predicated upon absolute territorial sovereignty and the veto power of a few. Through a settler colonial lens, we begin to recognize a wider process of subordination through repeated anti-Palestinian vetoes and geopolitical ecological framings of Palestine, as well as other nations deemed "Middle Eastern," as lacking governing capacity (Bigger & Neimark, 2017; Lloyd, 2012). The UNFCCC is clearly inseparable from wider movements of imperial flows of power. It may indeed be understood as an appendage of the will and desires of US imperialism and Israeli colonialism, long undermining Palestinian governance as well as historically determined responsibilities in the form of climate debt.

Questions around the politics of representation ultimately raises concerns over the apparatus of the UNFCCC. The technical-managerial framework of National Communications, the territorial-bounded-state preference of the UNFCCC, and the precedent of anti-Palestinian positions within the UN have in effect congealed to form normative principles of climate planning that undermine quasi-states like Palestine. Embedded in wider flows of power and capital, these principles flatten and peripheralize geopolitical-economic factors towards the naturalization of systemic climate vulnerability. Asymmetric settler colonial relations cannot be divorced from the formation of these normative principles.

With these contingencies in mind, the following two sections will examine the political landscape of climate planning in Palestinian and Israeli national polities respectively, followed by an analysis of each state's National Communication as the principle national climate discourse. As the context above demonstrates, climate reports are not static or dead: they are produced within specific historical moments by particular institutions and political actors who, although ostensibly representing the state, hold differences of opinions, desires for futurity, and contestations of the past. These reports emerge within already existing institutional dynamics and are informed nonetheless by geopolitical maneuverings, as illustrated above, and grassroots struggles, as will be demonstrated below. A discourse analysis informed by Foucault's (1978) focus on power/knowledge directs me to attend to the rhetorical, aesthetic, and cartographic patterns that structure each climate report. Presence and absence of spatial patterns such as syntactical arrangements, and temporal patterns such as frequency of words, serve as key indicators of meaning and metanarrative. Discursive mechanisms entangle empirical data, cultural knowledge, and national legitimacy through technical rhetoric to construct a unified experience of climate change, despite more complex realities on the ground.

4. Territoriality, statecraft, and sovereignty: climate planning in Palestine

With our accession, we will continue to shoulder our responsibility as part of humanity and as a responsible state in the global fight to tackle climate change. The State of Palestine is strengthening its pillars in the international arena and we will continue to act as we move forward in our struggle to put an end to the Israeli occupation

of our land composed of the West Bank including East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip and we will continue to seek the full independence of our state.

- State of Palestine Environment Quality Authority, 2016, p. vi

Committed to fulfilling its duties of Convention membership, the Palestinian government submitted its initial National Communication to the UNFCCC in 2016. As Adalah Atirah, Chairwoman of Palestine's Environment Quality Authority, expresses in the report's "Forward" above, the state's accession counters the dehumanizing erasure of Palestinians through an assertion of rationality and responsibility as a member of global humanity. The report renews the Palestinian National Authority's state building efforts following the failure of the Oslo Accords as a performance of presence in the international arena. Indeed, Palestine formally acceded as a member of the UNFCCC in 2016. As a non-Annex I entity in the Convention, the government can access financial assistance from developed countries through the UNFCCC Green Climate Fund. Yet joining the UNFCCC, as illustrated above, was a complicated process entangled with US and Israeli geopolitical maneuverings.

The following section outlines the wider landscape of climate planning in Palestinian political society. I first situate the multiple actors, representations, and contestations, each proffering alternative visions of the future. I then analyze the National Communication, turning to discursive dimensions of the report such as its rhetorical entrapment within Israeli occupation. I close be examining the inclusions and exclusions embedded in the project of Palestinian state climate planning, considering the territorial stakes of this production.

4.1. Political dynamics of climate planning in Palestine

The state climate change agenda, formally the responsibility of the Environment Quality Authority (EQA), is directly shaped by Israeli occupation, donor intervention, and global institutional norms. The EQA, formerly known as the Ministry of Environmental Affairs, was formed in the late 1990s during the Oslo state building process.[4] Through a Presidential decree, the EQA became the governmental agency responsible for managing the environment and natural resources of the West Bank (Area A) and Gaza until Final Status Negotiations would ostensibly expand the government's territory to the entire West Bank (Karlstedt et al., 2014). President of the Palestinian National Authority Yasser Arafat appointed the first Minister for Environment in 1998. The following year, Palestine's Environmental Law No. 7 (PNA/EQA, 1999) enshrined the foundation of state environmental efforts, based in Article 33 of Palestinian Basic Law (Amra, 1998).

The breakdown of the Oslo process, eruption of the second Intifada, and fragmentation of Palestinian governance in 2007, within the boarder context of Israeli settler colonialism, have since forestalled the EQA's capacities. The limited-funded authority is now confined to Area A of the West Bank as the regional office in Gaza remains non-functional (Karlstedt et al., 2014). The EQA chairperson, despite the current legal status of the agency as an independent authority, rather than ministry, is now a member of the Council of Ministers, reporting directly to the Prime Minister's Office. The agency also participates in the National Legislative Planning Committee through which by-laws and Cabinet decisions are negotiated (Karlstedt et al., 2014). Nonetheless, the case of climate change, like other environmental agendas, remains rather splintered from this political process.

It was the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), not

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[4] Article VII of the 1993 Oslo Declaration of Principles and Article XII of the 1995 Oslo II Interim Agreement called for the creation of a Palestinian Environmental Authority to improve the status of the environment in line with international normative principles.

representatives of the quasi-state, that initiated and funded climate planning efforts, beginning in 2008 (PNA/EQA, 2010). At the time, the UNDP was instituting climate planning in over seventy "least developed countries," fulfilling an agenda closely aligned with the UNFCCC (Mason, 2019). From this intervention emerged a key report, the EQA/UNDP's (Environment Quality Authority/United Nations Development Program EQA/UNDP, 2010) *Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Programme of Action for the Palestinian Authority,* examined below. In response to this report, the Palestinian Authority established the National Committee for Climate Change, which held its first meeting in August 2010, to integrate climate change into the broader political agenda (Jarrar, 2015; Mason, 2014b). Led by the EQA and composed of twenty-one governmental, scholarly, and civil society members, the group no longer remains active (Jarrar, 2015, p. 21).

Stamatopoulou-Robbins (2018) and Jarrar (2015) have provided thorough ethnographic analyses of this report's development. They respectively reveal the competing agencies, contestations, and ambivalences behind the public facing discourse. Significantly informing the National Communication and the foundation of Palestinian climate planning, this report is worth considering in brief. The project team was led by Drs. Michael Mason of the London School of Economics, Mark Zeitoun of the University of East Anglia, and Ziad Mimi of Birzeit University. Key to this initial report is a section on Palestinian "stakeholders" from the Ministries of Agriculture, Transport, Planning, Energy, Water, and other governmental sectors. In this section, representatives of political society consistently question the paradox of climate planning in Palestine. Stressing the political, as opposed to natural, determinants of climate vulnerability, they call for a conflict-structured inflection of climate vulnerability rather than the UNDP/UNFCCC's apolitical technical-managerial framing (Mason, 2014a, p. 817). Representatives (Environment Quality Authority/United Nations Development Program EQA/UNDP, 2010) articulate, for instance, that "climate change is a political and global process […] The water crisis in Palestine is not a result of climate change; it is above all a result of Israeli control over Palestinian water resources […] If there is no Palestinian control over the resources, the adaptation strategy or program will not succeed" (pp. 22–25). Yet, the next section on "Donors Focus Group" notes that "donors are reluctant to challenge Israel over the occupation (constrained by diplomatic positions) even though the occupation reduces the effectiveness of their programmes" (p. 30). A PLO Representative (2020) I interviewed still upholds these positions, noting that "new technologies like desalination cannot replace the right of Palestinians to shared resources," such as politically withheld water rights.

The initial report is ultimately marked by wavering positions, at times making a clear effort to politicize climate vulnerability. Yet ultimately UNDP framings shift the report's political focus to technical adaptation fixes as opposed to political interventions. The report identifies "no-regret" and "low-regret" adaptation measures—"measures which are judged to have the highest levels of adaptive capacity and technical feasibility"—such as more efficient irrigation techniques or increased use of water harvesting (pp. xi–xii). Despite an acknowledgment that "the chief non-environmental source of vulnerability throughout the oPt was generally agreed by stakeholders to be the Israeli occupation, in particular its access and mobility restrictions" (p. 18), the report concludes by suggesting that the "shared challenge of climate change could at least lead to Palestinian technical cooperation with Israel" (p. 70). Donor interference, lack of Palestinian representation, and the UNDP's desire for Palestine to undergo climate planning in the first place is faulted by these officials for the ambivalent and paradoxical nature of Palestinian climate planning (Jarrar, 2015, pp. 10–13). Understanding the competing discourses in this report reveals the entrapment of climate planning between Palestinian political leaders contesting normative principles and donors seeking only to fund technical projects.

Even the contracted authors of the EQA/UNDP report share this perspective. Articulated in numerous published autocritiques (Mason et al., 2011, 2012; Mason, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2019, 2014a, 2019), these planners were the first to acknowledge the struggles of balancing the technical-managerial scope of UNDP, donor, and UNFCCC climate planning with the inherently political vulnerabilities—represented by Israeli occupation—that render adaptation to climate change in a conflict geography impossible. For instance, Mason (2019) explains, "my consultant colleagues and I struggled to reconcile the UNDP adaptation policy guidance on mapping climate vulnerabilities with the immediate conflict-laden harm […] climate change was irrelevant in this flattened landscape" (p. 626). He was referring to a focus group on climate change that his team conducted for the UNDP in Gaza at the end of the 2008–9 Operation Cast Lead/Gaza Massacre. Climate change impacts seemed misguided in this political geography considering the immediate devastation. The polemical development of the Environment Quality Authority/United Nations Development Program EQA/UNDP, 2010 report ultimately illuminates multiple contestations in reconciling global climate governance with the particular conditions of non-sovereign quasi-statehood. Only through understanding this history do similar dynamics become visible in Palestine's more recent National Communication to the UNFCCC, the government's first representation on the global climate change stage (2016).

4.2. Palestine's National Communication to the UNFCCC

Based on the previous UNDP report, the Communication (2016) was produced by a consortium of organizations including the EQA, UNDP, the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, and the British environmental consultancy group Ricardo Energy & Environment. The nearly two-hundred page report was funded by the Belgian government (p. vii). Questions immediately arise about the report's representation. While the EQA and Palestinian National Authority purport to represent a unified national agenda within the UNFCCC, this agenda has long remained contested among the geographically and ideologically fragmented Palestinian body politic. Led by the Fatah political party since its establishment, the EQA aims to fulfill the vision of one particular movement within Palestinian society that views territorial sovereignty in the West Bank and Gaza via UN recognition as the most pragmatic instantiation of liberation achievable. Yet a robust history of Palestinian resistance denies this agenda and articulates alternative visions of liberation predicated on decolonization beyond the "sovereignty trap" or two-state "solution" (Erekat, 2019).

The conditions imposed through a "network of aid governance" also speak to questions of representation (Bhungalia, 2015, p. 2310). Spivak (1985) and Said (1984) long ago raised concerns over the historical abilities of those rendered subaltern, here Palestinians, to represent themselves within structures of hegemony that have systemically undermined their knowledge and humanity. The heterogeneity of the Palestinian polity renders the EQA's climate efforts non-representative for those who do not seek a two-state solution and see donor dependence as entrenching the status quo (Bhungalia, 2015). On the other hand, for those in support of Palestinian statehood through the PA, self-representation within the UNFCCC via donor supported performances of statehood may be a significant feat. After all, the UNFCCC "privileges the institutions of the nation-state, sovereignty, and territorial integrity," potentially opening new possibilities for the quasi-state to advance its efforts (Alatout, 2006, p. 616). This intricate web of contestation ultimately sets the stage for an unstable discursive politics, much like the EQA/UNDP report.

To counter the recursive experience of structural dispossession, the report actively politicizes its systemic vulnerability. Rhetorical devices stress lack of territorial sovereignty as the primary inhibitor of climate planning:

The situation in the State of Palestine is unique in the sense that the Palestinian Government has only limited control over its own territory and natural resources. Consequently, the Israeli occupation

negatively influences implementation of internal policies, including environmental policies, and also limits the Palestinian Government's scope for action (SP EQA, 2016, p. 35).

The Communication, as a testament to the political geography it represents, is discursively enmeshed within the strictures of Israeli occupation. Numerous semiotic markers reinforce such entrapment. For instance, the words "Israel/i" appear in the text a total of 455 times, and "occupation" 112 times. Numerous elements specific to the settler colonial conditions of Israeli occupation also feature prominently in sections, for example: "Specific issues arising from the relationship with Israel" (SP EQA, 2016, p. 36), "Environment in the peace process" (p. 35), and "Emissions from the Illegal Israeli Settlement Regime" (p. 58), among others. In perpetuating the political message of the report's "Forward" (p. vi) and "Executive Summary" (p. 16), these sections invoke the uneven spatial distribution of climate vulnerability ascribed to Israeli occupation. Throughout the Communication, profound attention to the "Annexation and Expansion Wall" further instantiates the territorial constraints of climate planning (pp. 30, 36, 44, 111, 112, 126, 130, 168). By foregrounding this politicized spatiality of power, the report links climate vulnerability to occupation and non-sovereignty.

The recursive centrality of Israel's territorial occupation in a report on climate planning underscores the structure of settler colonialism that delimits Palestinian adaptive capacities. Development, mitigation, and adaptation are severely impeded. The narrow focus on occupation as the locus of environmental problems and impediment to solutions reflects a territorial concentration whereby "it is the perception of a continuous threat to a state's territoriality that defines the reason of state, the justification for its existence" (Alatout, 2006, p. 607).

What marks Palestine's Communication as unique among other UNFCCC member reports is its coupling of emissions scenarios with political uncertainty. Under normative temporal frameworks established by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, UNFCCC Communication reports typically project futurity through a series of Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs), or greenhouse gas emission trajectories, over the span of the next century. While Palestine's climate impact assessment draws on two of these pathways—RCP2.6 and RCP6.0[5]—a second layer of uncertainty represented by "status quo" and "independence" pathways is integrated into the assessment (SP EQA, 2016, pp. 20–21). These two scenarios represent political uncertainty of the duration of Israeli settler colonial occupation. Under "status quo" conditions, Palestine's emissions are severely limited by a lack of energy independence, Israel's control of trade, continued blockade of Gaza, and restrictions on development of critical infrastructure beyond Area A of the West Bank. Under the "independence" pathway, which assumes implementation of the 1967 borders of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinians in exile, and access to shared water resources, Palestine's emissions nearly double as population, economy, development, and electricity use increase (pp. 21, 86). Coupled with the two pathways representing global emissions pathways, these political tracks create a matrix of potential outcomes.

Given the normative temporalities of climate planning in the UNFCCC, Palestine's uncertain political futures produce significant uncertainties that do not align with global RCP pathways. The universalizing framework assumes territorial-bounded-states to hold post-conflict and sovereign status and be capable of maintaining stable trajectories. While a majority of nations within the Convention take the relative stability of their political futures for granted, Palestininian climate

planners have produced two vastly different scenarios. As one of planners of the initial EQA/UNDP report, which informs these scenarios, reflects: "We tried to reconcile, in other words, projected bio-physical stresses with the social-political materiality of a protracted occupation and military blockade" (Mason, 2019, p. 626).

The historical and geographical contingencies analyzed here ultimately reveal the regional and geopolitical contexts under which Palestinian climate planning has been forged. The multiple institutional actors, including the Fatah-led Environment Quality Authority, PA, and international donors, as well as the conditions of UNFCCC framings informing the report, construct a discourse both representative of Palestine's elite governing body and detached from a larger body politic seeking nothing less than decolonial justice. The following section will similarly evaluate the Israeli National Communication.

5. Disavowal and discontent: Israeli climate planning

The following section outlines the wider landscape of climate planning in Israeli political society. First, I situate these plans among the multiple contestations emerging behind the public discourse by state actors and social movements. I present how state climate planning is received to determine whether it has any purchase in environmental imaginaries. Following a brief history of Israel's climate turn, I discursively analyze the state's National Communication to the UNFCCC, turning to rhetorical and cartographic dimensions of the report. I close by attending to the inclusions and exclusions embedded in the project of Israeli state climate planning and the territorial stakes of its production.

5.1. Political dynamics of climate planning in Israel

The Israeli climate change political agenda has long remained limited to the executive branch through Cabinet resolutions. The Israeli Cabinet formally ratified the UNFCCC in June 1996, following signature on the Convention's treaty in 1992 (SI MEP, 2018b). While the consensus around climate change by Israeli political leaders has remained largely uncontested since the emergence of the UNFCCC in the 1990s, the climate agenda has not garnered significant support through Knesset (parliamentary) legislation (Tal, 2020). Following ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in 2004, major climate action by the Israeli government began in anticipation of the 2009 UNFCCC Conference in Copenhagen. Numerous cabinet resolutions have since come to compose the majority of government decisions on climate planning, forming the key mitigation efforts detailed in the National Communication: a 17% reduction in electricity consumption, a commitment to 17% renewable energy, and a 20% reduction in kilometers travelled by private vehicles, all by 2030 (SI MoEP, 2018). Beginning with Resolution No. 250 in May 2009 (Government of Israel, 2009a), the cabinet voted to establish an interministerial Director General's Committee to examine the implications of climate change and the state's ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Soon after, Resolution No. 474 in June 2009 (Government of Israel, 2009b) called for the creation of a national climate change adaptation program.

To fulfill these mandates, the Minister of Environmental Protection, appointed by the Prime Minister, hired McKinsey and Company (2009) to produce a report quantifying greenhouse gas abatement potential. The report found that Israel would double its emissions by 2030 under business-as-usual conditions due to demographic growth, recommending emissions reduction measures and behavioral changes. In response, cabinet Resolution No. 2508 in 2010 (Government of Israel, 2010b) called for the formulation of a national plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, after which the Israeli government committed to a 26% reduction based on 2005 per capita emissions by 2030 at the Paris Climate Agreement.

Finally, a National Program for Adaptation to Climate Change was approved through Resolution No. 4079 in July 2018 (Government of Israel, 2018), forming an Interministerial Climate Change Preparedness

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[5] RCP2.6 represents a "best case" pathway of global greenhouse gas emissions, where emissions peak by 2020 and decline to net-zero by 2080. Current trends have since eliminated this pathway. In RCP6.0, representing a "business as usual" pathway, emissions double by 2060 until falling dramatically by 2100, though at levels still above current emissions.

Administration, led by the Ministry of Environmental Protection. This group includes 33 members representing select government leaders, local authorities, and para-statal organizations such as the Jewish National Fund (MoEP, 2018). This body formally assigns the Ministry of Environmental Protection the responsibility to form the climate change agenda. It is important to note, however, that the Israeli government and cabinet have been led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Likud party since 2009. While alternatives to climate governance exist, other parties have not yet had the opportunity to direct the state's agenda. In effect, Israel's National Communication reflects not the Israeli state but the outcome of particular political actors eligible to enliven the state.

Beyond state actors, social movements like Green Course, Extinction Rebellion, and others continue to organize against state climate planning, calling out broken promises and inadequate measures. Significant mobilizations in 2020 have assembled against the investment companies funding fossil fuel extraction off the Mediterranean coast and the construction of seventeen natural gas plants as part of the administration's shift from coal (Nardi, 2019; Surkes, 2020, p. 2020). Hundreds of scientists in Israeli academic institutions have also signed a letter in November 2019 demanding stronger state commitments, a transition to renewables as opposed to natural gas, and greater mitigation efforts (Israeli Society for Ecology and Environmental Sciences, 2019; Doehler, 2019). Yet ultimately, public discontent with Israeli state climate planning is contingent on Israel's historical environmental movement. Nearly every climate NGO is a member of *Chaim v'Sviva* (Life and Environment, 2020), the umbrella "infrastructure organization for the Israeli environmental movement" that has historically set the environmental agenda, long excluding Palestinian justice within its mission. Mirroring the extent of official state narratives, nearly every Israeli climate movement lacks an expansive concept of climate justice that moves beyond the 1967 territorial paradigm, to include non-citizen Palestinians and the Israeli state's destruction of Palestinian land within its agenda. Emerging movements like Strike4future (2020), Green New Deal for Israel (2020), and the One Climate group (Epic Tomorrows, 2020) are slowly breaking free from the environmental movement's grasp, with some calling for a solution to Palestinian subjugation as a tenant of climate justice. These emerging groups remain marginalized, nonetheless, by the broader tradition of Israeli disavowal.

5.2. Israel's National Communication to the UNFCCC

The wider landscape of climate planning complicates the state's seemingly unified agenda within the international arena SI MoEP, 2010, 2016. Produced by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Israel's third National Communication promotes a teleologically progressive, eco-modernization narrative of an industrialized high-tech "start-up" nation (SI MEP, 2018a, p. 76; see also Getzoff, 2020). The nearly one-hundred-page report centers on the "exceptional" demographic and economic achievements of the young state as it pertains to water security and renewable energy. Highlighting the "efficient" annual economic growth, the report frames its policy measures through technocratic fixes such as investments in new technologies (SI MEP, 2018a, pp. 8, 26, 32). The state is positioned as a global leader in climate adaptation with an uncapped capacity allowing it to develop "innovative Israeli technologies" for export to the global community (p. 57). The report projects an image of a modern liberal democratic nation, backed by the full cooperation of its government despite existent political dynamics. The Israeli government is positioned as fully capable of addressing climate changes issues with few limitations on innovation, capital, and adaptive capacity. However, the politics of climate planning and local discontent, as described above, tell a more intricate story about a state that does not live up to its commitments.

The Communication is strategically employed—aesthetically and rhetorically—to promote a teleological vision of the past, present, and future:

Israel is currently the world leader of efficient water usage, reclaiming 85% of its wastewater for agricultural uses; no other country reclaims more than 19%. Its arid climate has spawned innovation and a revolutionary range of techniques to grow food with treated effluents, ensure potable drinking water, and conduct large-scale seawater desalination (SI MEP, 2018a, p. 66).

When read through a settler colonial analytic, this narrative becomes a reinforcement of territorial claims that ultimately advance settler imperatives such as land expansion. Palestine and Palestinians are thereby noticeable by their near complete absence. The Communication does not employ the words "occupation," "peace," "Palestine," or "Palestinian," aside from one instance of the word Palestinian tucked away in a copy-pasted description of a higher education institute in the report's "Education, Training, and Public Awareness" chapter (p. 92). The elision of Palestine or any reference to settler colonial occupation in a report outlining the future of the territory confirms the failures of the asymmetric Oslo Accords and Israel's ongoing negation of a history of and future for Palestine and Palestinians. This elision remains consistent with the post-Oslo principle of maximal separation whereby the Israeli government increasingly disavows responsibility towards Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, under the farce of disengagement in the latter, despite its occupying power responsibilities assigned by Article 64 of the Fourth Geneva Convention (ICRC, 1949; though many Israeli and Zionist figures reject this designation). The Israeli government's unilateral extension of civil law and state infrastructures to Jewish settlements in the West Bank, and continued military violence aimed at Palestinians across the land, further illustrate the discriminatory extent of its climate planning. The Communication services only national citizens and prioritizes Jewish citizens and the geographies occupied by them.

Aside from the rhetorical absence of Palestinian existence, the Communication's aesthetic production serves to reproduce a settler imperative that disavows the inherent violence upon which the State continues to benefit (Veledntisky et al., 2020, p. 2). Only one map appears in the Communication, featured in the report's first section on "National Circumstances" and the region's climate profile (SI MEP, 2018a, p. 21). Though comprising just one-fourth of a page and focusing on rates of precipitation, the report's single map reveals the state's territorial aspirations. The map subsumes the West Bank and encloses the Golan Heights by erasing the internationally recognized Green Line. While the erasure of the Green Line may ironically promote a valid image of climate as politically unbound, the visible exclusion of Gaza from the map signals the inherently political nature of this cartographic representation. The West Bank is consciously included while Gaza is conspicuously rejected, delineating the unbounded territorial objectives of the Israeli government (Hughes, 2020). This cartographic production consequently denies Palestinians the right to history and geography, iteratively negating their existence and reproducing the myth of non-existent Palestine.

While facets of this report renew territorial claims, specifically annexation of the West Bank, the agenda remains overtly concerned not with borders but with managing the population and its quality of life. As Alatout (2006) writes, Israeli "environmental narratives take the territoriality of the state for granted; they depoliticize or deterritorialize environmental discourse" (p. 604). The Communication operates under the presumption that the state's territory is stable and legitimate. As the report's geographic profile indicates:

The country lies at a latitude between 29° and 33° north of the Equator, with a total area of 22,072 km² (Israel includes East Jerusalem (1967) and the Golan Heights (1982) in its territory), 97.6% of which is land and 2.4% of which is marine (Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea) (SI MEP, 2018a, p. 18).

Premising the report on naturalized territorial claims, expounded in parentheses to further clarify the government's position, disavows the

settler expropriation that renders these territories internationally illegal, thereby rationalizing the settler order. A settler colonial analytic takes this contestation a step further to question the inherent logics of the entire polity. That the Jewish population occupying the West Bank is calculated within the Israeli population and granted citizenship, civil rights, and infrastructure, while Palestinians in the West Bank remain disenfranchised from the structural regime that inherently governs their territory, signals the ethnocratic or apartheid regime that unevenly governs the land (Yiftachel, 1999, p. 369). Entitlement to East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights in the report's calculation of area, as well as its 1948 borders, normalizes the Israeli government's unbounded territoriality, or its ever-shifting boundaries as a practice of permanent territorial control (Hughes, 2020).

Like all UNFCCC National Communication reports, the Israeli discourse is submitted to the Conference of the Parties which provisions financial resources. The Communication thereby emphasizes the exceptionality of the settler state, presenting Israeli technologies as fixtures of a global climate change solution (Getzoff, 2020; Lloyd, 2012). Statements like "Israel is currently the world leader of efficient water usage" (p. 66), "Israel is one of the first countries to prepare for climate change impacts on water resources" (p. 67), and "Known as the one of the world's start-up capitals, Israel has a strong focus on research and development as well as innovation" (p. 76) emphasize the government's discourse of scientific and economic exceptionalism. Yet resorting to technological innovation to naturalize contested territorial politics has deep reaching historical precedents tied to settler rationalities (Lloyd, 2012).

Ultimately, the Israeli Communication tells a story about a prosperous nation prepared to adapt to climate change. Discursive and political analysis, however, begins to unfurl the contestations and contingencies through which particular Israelis are staking a territorial claim in the future on behalf of the exclusive ethno-nation. Predicated on colonial environmental imaginaries, the narrative triumphs to the extent that it reproduces the state's dominant historical elisions. The refusal to acknowledge Palestine/Palestinians in a report oriented towards the future renders the discourse affirmative of the settler colonial agenda. As Messerschmid (2012) writes, the Israeli discourse "naturalizes and continues to depoliticize climate change from a comfortable position of privileged use, control, and extreme but not openly acknowledged power asymmetry. It is ahistorical in that it aims to preserve the status quo" (p. 439). The report is ultimately indicative of the government's performance of sovereign violence through which ongoing settler colonialism becomes increasingly depoliticized.

6. Sovereign violence and territorial indeterminancy: A comparative analysis of climate planning

Read together, the Palestinian and Israeli governments' respective National Communication reports to the UNFCCC reveal how discursive practices become political-material tools in the context of state-building. Heeding the call of Mason (2013) to apply a critical scrutiny "that considers the distribution of corporeal and social vulnerabilities according to the distinctive political ecology of violence produced by a belligerent occupation," I adopt a geopolitical ecological and settler colonial lens to foreground the asymmetric power relations (p. 305). To comparatively analyze these reports, I draw on two analytical dimensions through which settler colonialism, as the underlying condition of Israeli statehood and Palestinian dispossession, is reproduced and contested. These dimensions—territoriality/cartography and narrative form—offer a generative framework through which I analyze the discursive, aesthetic, and ideological differences of the reports.

6.1. Territoriality and cartography

Territorializing the spatial boundaries of each polity, the aesthetic and discursive productions in these climate reports are paradigmatic of

the Israeli government's performance of sovereign violence and the Palestinian government's performance of uncertainty. Cartographic representations in these reports reveal the territorial entitlements claimed by each state. As noted, the only map in the Israeli report subsumes the West Bank and notably blocks out Gaza (SI MEP, 2018a, p. 21). Erasure of the Green Line once separating the West Bank from Israel, yet an inclusion of borders around Gaza, signals the overt aspiration of the Israeli government in its preparation for climate change: complete annexation of the West Bank. Meanwhile, the two maps in the Palestinian report ambiguously highlight the occupation and stress the fragmentation Israel has produced (SP EQA, 2016, pp. 31–32). The report's first map, titled the "Occupied State of Palestine," recognizes the land's pre-1967 borders, claiming the West Bank (Areas A-C) and Gaza as its territorial-bounded-state, despite the encroachment of Israeli settlements and infrastructure in Area C (p. 31). The second map, titled "Israel's Wall and Settlements (Colonies) (August 2016)," represents the "West Bank archipelago," stressing the territorial fragmentation engendered through the Oslo process as a tactic of domination and expansion (Cohen & Gordon, 2018, p. 213; Weizman, 2007).

The "geography of enclaves" that severs Palestinian territorial continuity renders adaptive capacities to climate change increasingly difficult. As the Palestinian Communication explains, territorial discontinuity has even impacted the process of writing the report, let alone adaptation measures:

> The occupation has made information and network sharing on the national level very difficult. […] This undoubtedly impacts on the quality of final program and project outputs and hinders the true potential for the State of Palestine to tackle climate change effectively (SP EQA, 2016, p. 168).

Territorial discontinuity experienced by Palestinian communities may further amplify climate vulnerability. Protracted occupation through systemic dispossession of land, biospatial segregation, organized military violence, economic de-development, and structural abandonment severely impede adaptive capacities among Palestinians, their lands, and more-than-human relations (Cohen & Gordon, 2018, p. 200; Nixon, 2011; Roy, 1999; Whyte, 2018, p. 135). The dislocation of Palestinian communities in spatially confined and fragmented geographies can foreclose social resilience, undermine land-centered generational knowledge, and reduce capacities to changing climatic conditions, even when met by forms of "survivance" (Vizenor, 1999; Whyte, 2018, p. 133). As Whyte (2018, pp. 125–144) argues, "when examined ecologically, settler colonialism works strategically to undermine Indigenous peoples' social resilience as self-determining collectives" (p. 125). Relationships with the land that long served Palestinian collective continuance have been impaired by colonial forms of administration and 'spacio-cide' (Amir, 2017; Hanafi, 2009)—as characterized in the Palestinian report by the Annexation Wall, checkpoints, roadblocks, and other biospatial infrastructures. The slow violence of settler colonialism ultimately undermines socioecological interdependencies that had been forged over generations (Nixon, 2011). In their autocritique of Palestinian climate planning, Mason et al. (2012) confirm: "Israeli occupation is constitutive of their [Palestinian] vulnerability to climate risk" (p. 49). Simply put, settler colonial occupation is Palestine's very climatic vulnerability.

Palestine's aesthetic and rhetorical discourse consequently parallels a geography of fragmentation and discontinuity, in contrast to Israel's linearity, continuity, and expansion, vis-à-vis the attempted discursive and material erasure of Palestine. The differentiated conceptions of territory—Palestine operating within a politicized conception of territory and Israel depoliticizing or naturalizing its claimed territory—points to extant spatial conditions.

6.2. Narrative form

The narrative form embodied by these reports—a settler colonial disavowal and epistemic violence by Israel and uncertainty by Palestine—underlines the historical preconditions that inflect climate planning. The epistemological terrain upon which climate planning has been forged, largely driven by UNFCCC technical-managerial framings, drive Israel's underlying settler imperatives and Palestine's contestation of both occupation and un-sovereignty. Power and resistance here are not adequate analytical categories for capturing the complexities of settler colonial negotiations. To say Palestinian climate planning inherently serves as a narrative form of resistance is to oversimplify Foucault's contention that where there is power there is always resistance. Indeed Palestinian climate planning can both serve and disrupt the settler colonial status quo.

Israel's narrative form ultimately represents the iterative practice of justifying the inconsistencies inherent in settler colonialism. This includes the disavowal of the government's expropriative violence and Palestinian existence, which would otherwise undermine the project of expansionary Israeli futurity. Contesting the settler imperative on one hand, the Palestinian discourse ostensibly stands as a refusal to be rendered eliminated—an assertion of agency and professed resistance towards colonial forms of domination. By countering geopolitical ecological imaginaries, which present Palestine as unfit to self-govern, the Communication positions the dispossession of territory as the central impediment to climate adaptation. Nevertheless, the quasi-state's myopic territorial aspirations, and the very substance of a climate report for a non-sovereign state itself, is subject to significant contestation. Mason et al. (2012) present perhaps the greatest critique of their own efforts to initiate climate planning for Palestine:

> Contrary to technical-managerial representations, climate-change impacts in the oPt are inherently politicized, and it makes little sense to develop "postconflict" climate-impact assessments or governance institutions for the Palestinians without an end to the occupation (Mason et al., 2012, p. 49).

This argument addresses the core paradox of Palestinian statecraft and climate planning: Does a performance of statehood in effect enshrine the status quo of occupation? While the Palestinian Communication and climate planning may represent a form of resistance as a pathway towards state sovereignty (in the West Bank and Gaza) for some, for many others, "improving quality of life, in their narration, is a disguise that will end up improving Israeli lives, while concurrently strengthening Israeli control over Palestinian territory" (Alatout, 2006, p. 610).

7. Inadequacies of the UNFCCC

The existing global climate order is predicated upon the primacy of the sovereign territorial state (Agnew, 2018; Alatout, 2006). Yet the case of Palestine exposes how the universalizing institutional arrangement of the UNFCCC may inadequately serve differentiated contingencies of climate change. Designed in isolation from or in disavowal of political determinants, a universal technical-managerial framing of climate vulnerability can elide the power-laden relations that may prevent polities from effectively contributing to climate action. For Jasanoff (2010), "An impersonal, apolitical, and universal imaginary of climate change, projected and endorsed by science, takes over from the subjective, situated and normative imaginations of human actors engaging directly with nature" (p. 235). The universalizing tendency of the UNFCCC relegates Palestine's conditions of structural violence and abandonment to the periphery.

Recall the National Communication guidelines from the UNFCCC (2002) which prescribe technical-managerial measures to address vulnerability (Mason, 2014a). Following these principles, Palestinian

climate planners, evident in the Communication, call for the construction of projects including a donor-funded desalination plant, an increase in the share of imported water, and the improvement of water collection and recycling among other adaptation measures (SP EQA, 2016, p. 150). While the report identifies the allocation of "transboundary water resources equitably and reasonably between Israel and the State of Palestine" as a lower ranked adaptation measure, all other measures elide the political foundations of ecological crises like water scarcity. Financial provisions to adapt to politically-bound issues over water may surely address urgent short-term needs. But such adaptation measures may simultaneously naturalize settler colonial occupation and its political withholding of resources, reinforcing Israel's military-political domination. In other words, while water scarcity may be a serious constraint for Palestinian development, the space of discretion within planetary climate planning promotes donor-funded technical solutions and discourages juridico-political solutions. Yet water rights are inherently political in Israel/Palestine (Alatout, 2008, 2011, pp. 66–87). Constructing a desalination plant rather than addressing the uneven political rights to water, following the protraction of the asymmetric and putatively temporary Oslo agreements, may instead lead Palestine to adapt to occupation, as opposed to solely climate change. The paradox of climate planning ultimately surmounts to no clear answers under settler colonial structures and geopolitical pressures.

Nevertheless, what becomes clear is that the UNFCCC technical-managerial framing, however apolitical or neutral it appears, "turns out to be a very political approach, maintaining and even strengthening the status quo" of asymmetric power relations (Messerschmid, 2012, p. 442). Rather than confronting settler colonial conditions or the production of organized violence and abandonment, UNFCCC climate planning prescribes a framing that depoliticizes vulnerabilities that are inherently political. Even climate change itself can be instrumentalized as an agent of political-economic, historico-cultural, and geophysical transformation, especially in the case of Israeli expansion (Weizman & Sheikh, 2013; Johnson, 2010). Yet localized vulnerabilities as well as climate change become depoliticized through the UNFCCC. Such measures can indeed embolden the asymmetric status quo in Israel/Palestine and across the world. These dynamics are ultimately inseparable from wider maneuverings of colonial power historically embedded within global governing institutions.

A more effective system may indeed require a shift away from the technical and measurable towards addressing the historically and geographically contingent forms of vulnerability. To counter the elision of particularity in universalizing and ahistorical representations of climate change, political geographers are aptly suited to reassert the differentiated spatial distributions and historical preconditions that structure an experience of climate change, including across racialized, gendered, and classed formations. Such a declaration may surmount to a counter-history towards decolonial climate justice and the curtailing of preventable and premature death, or the spatially entrenched negation of lives prefigured as less-than-human (McKittrick, 2013, 2021).

8. Conclusions

I return to my guiding questions around the exclusions/inclusions of climate planning, how the discursive becomes material, and how the planetary scale of UNFCCC planning hinders the struggle for decolonial climate justice. First, this comparative analysis of Israeli and Palestinian climate planning, outlining the constraints of global governance institutions, points to the processes through which climate planning has become a venue for already existing power asymmetries, both regional and global, to converge. Second, the histories, geopolitics, and settler colonial relations informing performances of Israeli sovereign violence and Palestinian territorial uncertainty render visible the power of discourse to script climate futures. Finally, positioning these discourses together, despite the oppositional paradigm that may speciously result, aims to defy the very territorial logics by holding Israeli and Palestinian

discourses in dialectical tension. Through this dialectic a space to move beyond the institutionalized statist model can emerge towards decolonial models of justice.

This case ultimately conveys how environmental histories and new environmental futures are invented through climate discourses and the spatialities they produce. Yet these material realizations have been distributed unequally between settler colonizer and colonized. Emerging from my analysis of climate discourses is a key question: What are the specific spatialities or temporalities of climate variability and change linked to settler colonialism? There are multiple dimensions through which critical scholars are currently examining anthropogenic climatic transformations: discursive, material, affective. While this article has not dealt with emerging literature examining the political materiality of geophysical change (Clark & Gunaratnam, 2019; Latour, 2018; Yusoff, 2018), I have attended to the domain of discourse precisely because it is the site where political and social vulnerabilities are produced and distributed in a world order dominated by technical fixes. Political geographers must take written reports seriously and pay attention to the productive role of discourse in materially fashioning realty. Yet further research must turn to the role of more-than-human change in compounding existent asymmetries. The necessary caution against environmental determinist accounts in the Middle East should not prevent us from examining the political effects of more-than-human processes, which are received in socially and politically differentiated ways. These processes ultimately affect the production of territory as useable or liveable terrain. As the competing climate discourses illuminate, settler colonialism is predicated on radically disruptive temporalities and these must be better theorized.

Through the analytical frameworks that deconstruct these discourses, I come to understand that the struggle for climate justice in Israel/Palestine, as in other settler colonial geographies, must be predicated upon decolonization. Yet as it stands, visions of decolonization have not adequately addressed the permanence of the settler. Palestine's fragmentation and the vicious sedimentation of Israel's settler geography reveal the spatial impossibility of partitioning this land into two territorial states. The entire territory is deeply entangled and already governed by one power: the Israeli state apparatus. Recognizing this reality, a vision of climate justice must be predicated upon the abolition of the Zionist settler colonial model, the dismantling of the structure of exclusively Jewish sovereignty and demographic advantage, the restitution of Palestinian territory, and repatriation of Palestinian refugees. It is only through this recognition that a politics of space sharing can come to be embraced to align emerging Israeli climate justice movements with decolonial Palestinian movements toward collective futures and forms of redress. Social movements and non-state actors have the capabilities to enliven the state from below. Perhaps the most meaningful mechanism to curtail premature death rests on constructing an antagonistic contradiction to the organized abandonment and violence that have divided these communities: organized geographies of solidarity predicated on mutual, yet differentiated, vulnerability.

The case of Israel/Palestine can precisely set the stage for a new climate politics that exceeds mutually exclusive paradigms of national territorial sovereignty. Climate refugees will indeed thrust the need for radical alternatives into the world. Perhaps within the case of Palestine lies a solution for refugees around the world. I thereby turn to this vexing case to consider: What are global models of inclusion that move beyond territorial citizenship and state sovereignty? Indeed, reading these two reports together highlights the iterative and exhaustive exercises of sovereignty, self-determination, settler colonial elimination, and resistance, now confounded by climate change, that have not succeeded in solving the core of the Jewish or Palestinian "questions." Perhaps only in transcending the territorial trap (Agnew, 1994) can radically new geographical imaginations of collective climate justice emerge.

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