Introduction

Public transportation in the Palestinian West Bank, as elsewhere, is among the most mundane of daily affairs. People from diverse backgrounds with different itineraries come together in transit vehicles to move within and between cities. Yet like all aspects of Palestinian life, public transportation is severely affected by the policies and practices of Israeli settler colonialism, marked by the stops and starts of a capricious system of rule. The cumulative effect of Israeli interference in Palestinian movement is the annexation of Palestinian territory and the frustration of Palestinian life that, in turn, advances ongoing Israeli settler colonialism. But this advancement is continuously contested, and the vehicles of collective Palestinian mobility have become one site at which Palestinian self-determination is (re)claimed and practiced in mundane, spectacular, and creative ways.

This book offers the first study of collective Palestinian mobility and the decolonial power it represents. Through a focus on public transportation in the Palestinian West Bank as a site of social struggle, this study illuminates practices of Palestinian decolonization against and beyond Israeli settler colonialism. Employing a "viapolitical" approach (Walters, 2015), I take seriously vehicles, routes, and journeys and human interactions with them to bring into view the highly contested power dynamics of this particular settler colonial context and the role that mobility plays in constituting them. I present the specific logics and techniques of Israel's program to deny collective self-determined mobility to Palestinians, contributing insights about the ways that control of collective movement functions to enable Israeli set-

tler colonialism. I also highlight the contested nature of this mobility control project, revealing that repeated practices of Palestinian self-determined mobility occur through people's interactions with public transit,[1] whether through everyday use, spectacles of protest, or artistic renderings. In arguing that Palestinian engagements with something as routine as transit contribute to decolonization, I bring together Palestine studies, Indigenous studies, resistance studies, and mobility studies. I consider some distinct but related modes of transit use that contribute to the process of decolonization, the significance of understanding these activities as decolonization rather than resistance, and the ways that the means of mobility condition the possibilities of these decolonial articulations.

An examination of public transit as a site of collective mobility, including its components and the actors that engage it—the system, the vehicles, the routes, the riders and drivers, the organizers, and so on—reveals a collective refusal of immobilization, fragmentation, alienation, and colonization at multiple registers and the collective practices of living alternatives to the settler colonial status quo. First, the quotidian operation and use of Palestinian public transportation enables movement and connection that constitute a rejection of the various institutions, physical structures, rules, and knowledges that were developed to control Palestinian mobility. In the process of enabling and enacting this quotidian mobility via public transportation, West Bank Palestinians dare to create a reality that asserts a kind of Indigenous self-determination over mobility that Israeli settler colonialism seeks to undermine and subvert. Second, Palestinian activists have featured public transportation, in physical and symbolic forms, in their actions because it enables them to reach and educate various international and domestic audiences, despite restrictions on the movement of their bodies and messages. And third, representations of public transportation vehicles appear in Palestine-based artwork as a way to envision self-determined movement across space and time in contravention of settler colonial logics.

A Brief Introduction to Public Transportation in the Palestinian West Bank

Public transportation in the Palestinian West Bank takes many forms. The Palestinian transit system in the West Bank involves a variety of vehicles, such as buses, shared vans, shared taxis, and private taxis, and is coordinated by the Palestinian Authority (PA) in a configuration it calls a "public-private partnership." While companies and individuals own and operate the vehicles and the stations, the PA determines the operating and licensing

rules, the routes, and the fares of the system. According to common trade definitions, "public transportation" is a system of vehicles of collective movement that provides service to the public, whether by public or private agencies (or a combination).[2] In other words, the collaboration between the PA and private owners does not negate the "public" nature of Palestinian public transit; it is public because the vehicles operate in a way that provides service to the general public. I only partially include the use of private taxis or taxis for hire in this study. Trade practitioners and scholars differ on whether taxis for hire should be considered a component of public transportation because, while they are available to the general public, their hire tends to happen in an exclusive contractual relationship, such that the rider's engagement of the taxi necessarily excludes its hire by other would-be passengers. Private taxis do come into my analysis, however, in Chapter 3 when I discuss their collective engagement during the Palestinian uprising known as the second Intifada, in which small groups of passengers would contract with taxi drivers to make illicit trips to travel despite Israeli curfews and other mobility restrictions.

In addition to the public-private transit partnership that the PA administers in the West Bank, the book addresses, to different degrees, the Israeli-organized bus system that services Israeli settlements in the West Bank; the bus lines that run between the West Bank and Jerusalem that involve coordination among the PA, Israel, and the bus company; and the train system that has operated under Ottoman, British, and Israeli rule across Palestinian territory. Where these systems appear in the book, the discussions are limited to the ways that Palestinians have engaged them for mundane travel, spectacular political actions, or speculative artistic interventions.

Public transportation is a popular mode of travel in the West Bank, owing in part to the low rate of private vehicle ownership. For example, in 2013 there were 106,913 private vehicles registered in the Palestinian West Bank for a population of 2.643 million (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013, 2020). Since 2013, the number of registered private vehicles for the West Bank Palestinian population has more than doubled, to 226,301 (in 2019) for a population of 2.987 million (Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 2019, 2020).[3] This may be related to the increase of personal debt in the territory, a point to which I return in the Conclusion. In the same period, the number of registered public transit vehicles also increased, but at a lower rate. Registered taxis increased by 9.6 percent, and public buses increased by 60.8 percent. While at first it might appear that the disproportionate increase in private vehicles suggests that public transportation is waning in importance, the number of vehicles per one hundred people in the Palestinian West Bank is still relatively low, at 7.5. Moreover, if the role

of public transportation is indeed waning, it is important to trace precisely what may be lost with it. As the terrain of Palestinian movement in the West Bank continues to change in many ways, this book identifies some of the stakes of these shifts.

Settler Colonialism and the Im/mobilization Regime

Palestinian public transportation in the West Bank operates within the context of Israeli settler colonialism and thus becomes one among many sites where the Indigenous struggle against and beyond this project plays out. The goal of Israeli settler colonialism has been to annex the maximum amount of Palestinian land with the minimum number of Palestinian people while simultaneously undermining and invalidating their claim to the land. Over the course of the last century, the Zionist project took root in historical Palestine to establish a Jewish state on that land (Dana & Jarbawi, 2017; Sayegh, 1965). A settler colonial project forged in the crucible of nineteenth-century Europe, it was influenced by a mixture of Western European imperialism and the nationalisms of Eastern and Southern Europe at the time (Lockman, 1996, pp. 21, 23, 26–27). Israeli settler colonialism, like other versions, "is a set of hierarchical social relations that . . . facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority" (Coulthard, 2014, p. 7, emphasis removed). In the context of historical Palestine, Israeli settler colonialism has pursued the intertwined dual objectives of deterritorializing and denationalizing Palestinians from Palestine (see, e.g., Abu-Zahra & Kay, 2013; Barakat, 2018; Bhandar & Ziadah, 2016; Jabary Salamanca et al., 2012; Tabar & Desai, 2017). In this book, I examine how the Israeli colonial endeavor targets collective Palestinian movement and vehicles of collective Palestinian movement host rejections, obfuscations, and transcendence of settler colonial ambitions and logics.

While I use the term "settler colonialism" to describe the Zionist project in historical Palestine, I take up Rana Barakat's (2018) renewed call, alongside the critical interventions of Jodi Byrd (2011), Glenn Sean Coulthard (2014), J. Kēhaulani Kauanui (2016), and others, to apply the term in the context of Palestine through the framework of indigeneity. Centering indigeneity and Indigenous perspectives emerges as an imperative from the authority of Palestinians to narrate their history, present, and future (Barakat, 2018; Batarseh, 2019; Bhandar & Ziadah, 2016; Khalidi, 1997; Salaita, 2006). I recognize settler colonialism as a useful analytic to describe the Zionist project in Palestine, while I also underscore the "permanent incompleteness" (Barakat, 2018) of the structural attempt to disappear Palestine and Palestinians (Barakat, 2018, reading Wolfe, 2013). Approaching settler colonialism through the framework of indigeneity requires a careful and con-

frontational analysis of settler colonialism alongside a nuanced and alert recognition of Indigenous modes of living that exceed it.

Israel's direct occupation of the Palestinian West Bank began with the 1967 invasion sometimes called the Arab-Israeli War or Six-Day War. The invasion quickly turned into a long-term occupation with the creation and installation of physical and legal structures for permanent colonization. But the attempted annexation of the West Bank must be understood as an extension of the broader Israeli settler colonial project across the territory of historical Palestine. The original Zionist colonization of historical Palestine resulted in the displacement of approximately 75 percent of the Palestinian population, who then became refugees. Many of these refugees moved to locations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (WBGS), and in this way, the effects of Israeli settler colonialism reverberated across the WBGS long before they were officially invaded. Moreover, the drive to accomplish permanent annexation of the West Bank stems from the same settler colonial project that established the Israeli state on Palestinian land; they are different frontiers of the same expansionist endeavor. Thus, while the fragmenting effects of Israeli strategies vis-à-vis different segments of the Palestinian population have generated divergent experiences and subjectivities, they must be understood as echoes of the same sound—rhythmic repetitions of colonial violence in slightly distinct but resonant forms (see, e.g., Shihade, 2014). Even as Israel develops specific technologies for controlling Palestinian life in the West Bank, those technologies must be understood as part of this broader history of deterritorialization and denationalization.

One of the main approaches through which Israeli rule has advanced its settler colonial ambitions can be generatively described as "enclosures." Like other historical examples of dispossession regimes, the Israeli enclosures have involved the imposition of a mobility regime (what I call "im/mobilization" and discuss later in this introduction), a programmatic denial of autonomous movement, through the deployment of various physical impediments and legal tactics, such as the outlawing or permitting of forms of movement. The Israeli enclosures involve a mobility regime and accomplished the annexation of Indigenous land and the extraction of invented forms of value from it, economic reorganization and subjugation, political repression, and social alienation. This is reminiscent of the multiple dimensions of other historical examples of the enclosures (Bhandar, 2018; De Angelis, 2019; Federici, 2004; Fields, 2017; A. Gordon, 2018; Linebaugh, 2010; Midnight Notes Collective, 1990; Woods, 2009). These interrelated endeavors are well suited to advancing settler colonialism because they attempt to eliminate Indigenous commons, which, in their forms as accessible resources, gathering space, and knowledge exchange, provide a crucial foundation for collective Indigenous self-determination.

In their invitation to "rethink enclosures," Alex Jeffrey, Colin McFarlane, and Alex Vasudevan (2012) identify the commons and practices of commoning as "enclosure's 'other'" (p. 1248), and Peter Linebaugh (2010) refers to the commons as "enclosure's antonym" (p. 11). Across different contexts, examples of commoning have appeared both as targets of the enclosures and as responsive practices for resisting, undermining, or overcoming enclosures.[4] Similarly, the commons feature in this book in two ways. First, I note that the imposition of the Israeli enclosures has attempted to destroy Palestinian commons, resulting in not only the direct annexation of territory but also the destruction or confiscation of the bases for social, political, and economic autonomy, including knowledge of and access to Palestinian land. Second, the system of Palestinian public transit in the West Bank functions through practices that amount to "mobile commons" in opposition to and in excess of the Israeli enclosures (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2013; Sheller, 2018). In their study of cross-Mediterranean migration, Dimitris Papadopoulos and Vassilis Tsianos (2013) explain that the *mobile commons* are composed of living networks of shared knowledge about transnational movement, knowledge that passes informally and through social networks while it conveys dynamic information that can affect survival and quality of life.[5] Palestinian public transit in the West Bank also involves *mobile commoning* because it incorporates social interactions in its routine functioning to transport people to accomplish necessary elements of social reproduction.[6] I discuss West Bank public transit and mobile commoning in Chapter 3 but mention it here to signal that the Israeli enclosures are a reactionary response to the power of Palestinian commons, which, in turn, continue to evolve into forms appropriate for transcending the latest techniques of the enclosures.

I bring the idea of enclosures together with the framework of settler colonialism to assert that the Israeli enclosures impose controls over Palestinian mobility that have spatial, social, economic, and political consequences and that, in turn, facilitate the annexation of Palestinian land and the dispossession of the Palestinian people. Following the work of Coulthard (2014), I examine the enclosures as a mode of entrenching a *colonial* relation rather than a capital relation (although the concept of the enclosures has been particularly generative in understanding the emergence of capitalism, as many scholars have shown). Such an analytical shift centers the subject position of people subjected to colonization (pp. 10–11). For Coulthard, this shift reveals that, in the case of First Nations people and the Canadian state, it is "the history and experience of *dispossession*, not proletarianization, [that] has been the dominant background structure in shaping the character of the historical relationship between Indigenous people and the Canadian state" (p. 13). Similarly, I argue that dispossession has been, and continues to be, the dominant background structure shaping the relationship between

Israel and Palestinians and that dispossession has been partially accomplished through the enclosures strategy. The mobility regime imposed as part of the Israeli enclosures has enabled the confiscation of movement as a basis for indigeneity. In other words, as Israel denies Palestinian self-determined movement and monopolizes control over the means and terms of mobility, it attempts to eliminate Palestinian access to and familiarity with land as evidence of Palestinian indigeneity and to assert the entrenchment of freely mobile Israeli life on the same land as a permanent fact.

Scholars have traced the Zionist version of the enclosures strategy back through the British Mandate period and the early seeding of settler colonialism in Palestine, before (and often in service of) the formal establishment of the Israeli state (Bhandar, 2018; Fields, 2017). In this book, I focus on a particular chapter of the Israeli enclosures story that has unfolded in the West Bank since the 1967 invasion. As anti-Indigenous repression, the Israeli enclosures strategy was developed in tandem with emerging global technologies of border diffusion. The concept of diffused bordering processes accurately describes the physical impediments and legal tactics that Israel has used to impose its enclosures. Israel has developed a system of controlling Palestinian mobility by diffusing border processes across the territory of the West Bank (Tawil-Souri, 2012; Weizman, 2007). A number of factors contribute to the elasticity of those processes, including the construction or removal of physical impediments, such as roadblocks; the actual movement of their physical location, whether in the case of settlements whose edges continue to expand or that of "flying" checkpoints that pop up in different places along Palestinian routes; and the changing rules that govern engagement with these installations, such as different rules for who can cross certain checkpoints for what reason and when (see, e.g., N. Gordon, 2008a; Makdisi, 2008; Weizman, 2007). These processes have created a borderscape that is partially composed of actual encounters with Israeli military and civilian personnel, rules, and structures, as well as of the varying *possibility* of those encounters. But the borderscape is also shaped by the mobility strategies Palestinians develop in relation to and in the shadow of the possibility of getting ensnared in this net. I focus in the first part of the book on the development of the Israeli *border-enclosures* to describe the shape and function of Israel's mobility regime. The border-enclosures advance the annexation of land (and the extraction of settler colonial value from it) and the social, political, and economic degradation of Palestinian communities by using physical and legal forms connected to contemporary global trends of diffusing border technologies across a given territory rather than only around its edges.

The Israeli border-enclosures strategy manifests in *im/mobilization*. The reader may note throughout the book that I use "im/mobilization" to de-

scribe both the mobility regime to which Israel subjects West Bank Palestinians and the modality through which Palestinians experience settler colonialism. Julie Peteet (2017), Yara Sharif (2017), and others discuss Palestinian "immobilization" as constrained mobility and containment and their many consequences (Peteet, 2017, pp. 61–64; Y. Sharif, 2017, pp. 28–30, 47), and Helga Tawil-Souri (2012) advances the idea of "uneven im/mobilities" to describe how Israel's permits, alongside checkpoints, road systems, and other diffused bordering processes, enable Israeli mobility through the limitation of Palestinian movement. Hagar Kotef (2015) explains that this Israeli "'regime of movement' . . . subjects to Israeli control the circulation of people, goods, and services—and with them the economy, society, and polity—in the West Bank" (p. 27). Drawing from this robust scholarship, I use the term "im/mobilization" to capture the variety of ways that Israel denies Palestinian self-determined movement, whether to force, forbid, or otherwise create "uneven" experiences, means, and features of movement (Sheller, 2016; Tawil-Souri, 2012). While *limiting* Palestinian movement is a large part of the story, immobilization is also connected to other modes of controlling mobility, such as forcing people to move from their homes and their land or making travel so tedious or dangerous that it becomes a punishment unto itself. About Israel's siege of Nablus during the second Palestinian Intifada (2000–2005), Beshara Doumani (2004) writes, "The real story . . . is the slow and cruelly systematic asphyxiation of an entire social formation. The aim is to make the small routines of everyday life—such as working, going to school, visiting friends and relatives—so difficult as to precipitate major demographic shifts that, in turn, would break the Palestinian will to resist and make the colonization of their lands inevitable and irreversible" (pp. 48–49). Doumani's observation of the specific logic at play in that moment has also been the generalized logic animating Israel's im/mobilization program for the entire Palestinian West Bank, extending well beyond the end of the second Intifada. While the end of that Intifada brought about a loosening of outright closure, the infrastructural and strategic elements of Israeli control, as well as the ease and constant threat of their activation (Handel, 2015), continue to condition the possibilities of West Bank Palestinian movement until today.

The analysis in this book focuses on Israel's im/mobilization program in the West Bank as it emerged in response to the successes of the first Palestinian Intifada (1987–1993) and was subsequently refined and intensified through the Oslo years, the second Intifada, and to the present day. Kotef (2015) locates the "consolidation" of this mobility regime "sometime between the Oslo Accords (1993—the formal beginning of the ongoing 'peace process') and the years following the El Aqsa Intifada (2000)" (p. 28), while Tawil-Souri (2012) notes that the modern-day regime has historical roots in attempts to control Palestinian mobility throughout colonial history. Al-

though I limit my discussion to the im/mobilization program that emerged after Israel's invasion of the West Bank in 1967, and especially the period of its refinement from 1990 to the present (slightly earlier than Kotef), I emphasize the function of im/mobilization to advance the broader project of Israeli settler colonialism, and I do so to connect this most recent modality of rule to previous iterations.

The im/mobilization program is composed of concrete Israeli practices that extend control over Palestinian movement in the service of its enclosure strategy, and, as suggested earlier, those practices can be understood as nodes in a diffuse border network. The border nodes in operation in the West Bank during the time of my fieldwork (2012–2016) involved shifting and static elements, physical structures and bureaucracies, immovable physical barriers, and unpredictably varying policies and practices. Some examples include a massive obstruction ("the Apartheid Wall"); hundreds of physical impediments; a regime of movement permits; static checkpoints and a program of "flying," or ad hoc, checkpoints; segregated roads and license plates; segregated settlements; segregated public transportation; and various military installations.

These im/mobilizing components work together to impose a racially inflected zero-sum logic on movement in the West Bank, generating a relational condition in which the ease, convenience, speed, and security of Israeli movement is conditioned on making Palestinian movement burdensome, unpredictable, slow, and dangerous (see, e.g., Tawil-Souri, 2012).[7] Through these dynamics, im/mobilization generates a "racial regime of mobility" in which Israel attempts to define a Palestinian subjectivity marked by its lack of self-determined mobility. As Cedric Robinson (2007) and Brenna Bhandar (2018) have demonstrated, racial regimes are created through cultural, economic, geographic, and political maneuvers that manufacture alibis for dispossession, justifying or even hiding it. Racial regimes are quite useful to settler colonial projects, which often involve appropriating indigeneity itself to naturalize the dispossession of Indigenous people (see, e.g., Freeman, 2010; Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 10–13; Wolfe, 2006). Lila Sharif (2016) reading Raja Shehadeh (2007), for example, identifies the Palestinian landscape as a site where Palestinian relationships to the land are confiscated and then claimed as the basis for Israeli indigeneity (see also Fields, 2010, 2017). Similarly, Israel's border-enclosures have sought to strictly control the *knowability* of Palestinian land, including who may know it and how. By attempting to impose this monopoly—one that, as I demonstrate in Chapter 3, is pointedly contested through the mundane operations of Palestinian public transit—Israel's racial regime of mobility frustrates spatial knowledge as one element in its contrived denial of Palestinian self-determined movement.

The racial regime of im/mobilization has generated a distinct social and territorial reality for West Bank Palestinians characterized by the shattering or fragmentation of territory and society. Fragmentation has occurred in many ways across the historical territory of Palestine, separating Palestinians from Israelis and Palestinians from one another within and among the areas in which they live (Gregory, 2004; Parsons & Salter, 2008; Tawil-Souri, 2012). As I discuss in Chapters 1 and 2, the territorial map imposed through the Oslo Accords and Israel's related diffusion of networked border nodes across the Palestinian West Bank have implemented a programmatic frustration of social, political, and economic connections across Palestinian enclaves, resulting in separation and alienation. But the *bantustanization* of the Palestinian West Bank is linked to a broader fragmentation across historical Palestine.[8] As the Israeli settler colonial project has expanded and contracted, it has taken on different social and physical textures in different segments of historical Palestine. In particular, these differences manifest in distinct but linked deployments of bordering as a way of separating and ordering Palestinian life. Israel's current ruling strategy vis-à-vis Palestinians appears to harness the global phenomenon of the multiplicity of the border as a set of practices that create difference (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013). This has meant that the features of Palestinians' relationships to the Israeli state vary across space and time even as the overall orientation of the Israeli settler colonial project toward Palestinian denationalization (Abu-Zahra & Kay, 2013) and deterritorialization remains constant.

As Palestinians mounted anticolonial challenges, Israel physically fragmented the land of Palestine through technologies of mobility control, thereby separating Palestinians from Israelis but also separating Palestinians from one another (N. Gordon, 2008b). Furthermore, Israel has since developed increasingly distinct programs to deal with the Palestinian populations in each fragment. As a result, different categories of Palestinian subjects have been produced, formalized through identity documents, and defined in part by varying degrees of access to space and mobility (Abu-Zahra & Kay, 2013). For example, Palestinian citizens of Israel can move about with relative ease inside Israel but deal with direct discrimination in almost every aspect of their lives, including housing and education (Tawil-Souri, 2012, pp. 8–10, 12). Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem can move through some checkpoints denied to WBGS Palestinians but also, for example, experience discrimination and constant efforts to displace them from their homes. West Bank Palestinians deal with social institutions (at least nominally) run by fellow Palestinians but confront denials of self-determined movement virtually everywhere outside of their town of residence. One of the many consequences of this fragmentation is that there is no singular Palestinian experience of Israeli settler colonialism and there-

fore no singular Palestinian experience of mobility, as Israel has diversified its approaches to the fragmented Palestinian populations its practices have generated. For this reason, *Vehicles of Decolonization* focuses on mobility and public transportation in the West Bank in particular. Beyond illuminating the reasons for a methodological choice, this point about the fragmentation that results from enclosures illuminates one of the ways that collective Palestinian mobility via public transportation in the West Bank subverts settler colonial enclosures—by establishing, through mundane, spectacular, and artistic engagements, mobile connections across a fractured landscape.

Together, the racialized differentiation of im/mobilization and its fragmenting effects reveal the collective nature of im/mobilization. Certainly Israel's attempts to control Palestinian mobility frustrate both individual and collective movement. But im/mobilization is properly considered a collective issue. Im/mobilization is imposed on West Bank Palestinians as a group and, in turn, functions to produce that group as categorically ineligible for self-determined mobility. In addition, as explained earlier, the fragmenting effects of im/mobilization undermine Palestinian collectivity. Where im/mobilization is one modality through which West Bank Palestinians collectively experience Israeli settler colonialism, it is unsurprising to find that collective Palestinian mobility is also a site where Palestinian power is cultivated in opposition to and in excess of settler colonialism. In this context, the collective Palestinian exercise of self-determination over mobility can be understood as both the target of Israeli im/mobilization and a vehicle of decolonization.

Decolonization and Self-Determined Mobility

Despite Israel's imposition of im/mobilization through border-enclosures, West Bank Palestinians persist in moving around the territory. Certainly, travel for Palestinians, especially among Palestinian cities, towns, and villages, has become more cumbersome and dangerous over the past twenty-five years as a result of the border-enclosures. Yet Palestinian movement has not ceased entirely in the West Bank. Instead, it has become a viable means of challenging settler colonialism by moving around, against, and through it. In offering an account of engagements with public transportation as decolonization, I do not mean to trivialize the ongoing effectiveness of these enclosures; rather, I mean to identify the ways that transit as a mobile site and a site of mobility hosts the active cultivation of alternative relations of power that exceed and will outlast settler colonial domination and dispossession.

The cause of Palestinian liberation parallels other Indigenous struggles that focus on recovering land and the social relationships rooted in it (Coulthard, 2014, p. 13; Tabar & Desai, 2017, p. xi) to generate a decolonized

future that transcends the networked domination of colonization. This book primarily analyzes the organized mobility of West Bank Palestinians, attending to the terms on which they can move about, access, and relate to and on their land, as a way of revealing assertions of Indigenous self-determination. I understand self-determination as the collective exercise of autonomy to shape the living present and future rather than only the rejection of alien rule.[9] This is particularly relevant in the context of the Palestinian West Bank. Through the Oslo Accords, Israel has abdicated direct responsibility for the welfare of Palestinians as the population of the West Bank that it has occupied in different configurations since 1967. Nonetheless, Israel has expanded its control across the territory, generating the material conditions of Israeli domination and the denial of collective Palestinian self-determination. This systematic denial appears in a number of social arenas, and in this book I focus on collective mobility as a terrain of struggle against and beyond this denial.

Self-determination requires the material conditions that enable Indigenous collective autonomy for multiple generations. Jeff Corntassel (2008) crafted the phrase "sustainable self-determination" to signify the process of sustaining meaningful Indigenous life, including its relational components, with and on Indigenous land (pp. 107–108, 116–121). In describing the first Intifada as itself an expression of Palestinian self-determination, Edward Said (1995) explained that the uprising "creat[ed] a model for communal life that is not based upon the exclusive authority of one party, one sultan, one representative state apparatus" (pp. 159–160). These illuminations of meaningful Indigenous self-determination point to the collective practices of autonomous world-making at its heart.

As such, meaningful self-determination and decolonization are thoroughly imbricated. Noura Erakat (2019) explains that

> the call for self-determination among Palestinians has increasingly ceased to refer to the desired national state alone, and has come to encompass a more abstract demand for freedom. It is a call that implicates an attachment to the land as a means of memory, existence, and dignity. . . . Palestinian self-determination has come to signify an ability to pursue a future, collectively and individually, as a natural condition of possibility and not as a form of resistance to the condition of social death. (p. 20)

Decolonization might be thought of as the ongoing process of asserting and exercising self-determination, and in settler colonial contexts this process necessarily centers the restoration of land and Indigenous relationships to and on it (Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 5–7). Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (2012)

emphasize that "decolonization in the settler colonial context must involve the repatriation of land simultaneous to the recognition of how land and relations to land have always already been differently understood and enacted; that is, *all* of the land, and not just symbolically" (p. 7).[10] The repatriation of land and Indigenous relationships to it requires the restoration of self-determined movement on the land. So the autonomous exercise of collective Palestinian mobility in contravention of settler colonial logics of domination makes up one significant dimension of decolonization.

The decolonization I illuminate in this book is a *process*; I do not claim that engagements with public transit have completed the work, but it is a process that has immediate significance rather than only gesturing toward some future condition. I consider three modes of engaging with public transit that contribute to this immediacy and material significance: routine participation, spectacular political organizing, and artistic interventions. The mundane participation of riders and drivers together in the Palestinian transit system generates a "mobile commons" (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2013) where a living network of collective knowledge about movement across territory operates and cultivates opportunities for communality. Activists' use of public transit vehicles and symbols transcend the fragmenting effects of the enclosures to forge meaningful political alliances. And artists creatively represent public transit vehicles as a way to practice and assert self-determined mobility through space and time. Each of these modes of engagement with public transit fosters collective Indigenous relationships mediated by land. Together, these three modes of engagement form a constellation of decolonial mobility. Tim Cresswell (2010) defines "constellations of mobility" as "particular patterns of movement, representations of movement, and ways of practising movement that make sense together" (p. 18). In the case of Palestinian public transit engagements, the three modes I examine work together to *make sense*—in other words, to generate alternative, decolonial mobility logics and relations.

Self-determined mobility might be generatively considered as one among many elements of "mobility justice." Mimi Sheller (2018) demonstrates the ways that mobility and justice coconstitute each other and offers an inclusive outline of the multiple and necessary components of a mobility justice agenda. She underscores that such agendas must emerge from the actual, situated practices of those already pursuing the cause of mobility justice (p. xv). In conversation with this work, I argue that examining multiple modes of engagement with Palestinian public transit through the lens of decolonization highlights the importance of self-determined mobility to the pursuit of mobility justice in settler colonial contexts. Proposing this connection is not without its complications; as Tuck and Yang (2012) have warned, social justice efforts and decolonization are often "incommensurable" in the sense

that certain formulations of social justice may perform "settler moves to in-nocence" that retrieve or excuse the beneficiaries and institutions of settler colonialism from actively undoing its ongoing violence. I do not resolve this incommensurability between Indigenous self-determined mobility and the broader concept of mobility justice. Rather, by situating Palestinian self-determination in relationship to mobility justice, I invite the proponents of mobility justice to consider this incommensurability. For example, rather than celebrating Jerusalem's light rail as a mobility justice success because of its environmental effects, we might instead take cues from Palestinian civil society to understand it in terms of the annexation of Palestinian land it enables as it supports the circulation of Israeli settlers who live in the West Bank and work or shop in Jerusalem (Barghouti, 2009).

In proposing a relationship between Palestinian mobility practices and decolonization, the rich literature addressing Palestinian resistance is generative. This set of political and scholarly works consider armed resistance, nonviolent resistance, cultural resistance, transnational solidarity resistance, and other practices of various groups responding to many and changing modes of domination (see, e.g., Baylouny, 2009; Maira, 2013; Peteet, 2005; Qumsiyeh, 2011; Qutami, 2014; Tawil-Souri & Aouragh, 2014). Within this body of work, the Palestinian concept of *sumud* remains fertile if contested. The Arabic word *sumud* (steadfastness) is strongly identified with the Palestinian struggle, and it primarily represents a committed disposition to remaining on the land despite colonial efforts at displacement, but it also includes a wide repertoire of practices that enable staying and that symbolize survival.[11] The term has sometimes been associated with "passive resistance," "passive nonresistance," and even "aggressive nonresistance" (Tamari, 1991, p. 61), which reflects attempts to mark the political significance of seemingly nonpolitical action or inaction. Salim Tamari (1991) traces the history of the concept of *sumud* up to and through the first Intifada and, in so doing, connects previously passive expressions of steadfastness to the active organizing of popular committees. Rema Hammami (2005) asserts that, during the second Intifada, *sumud* took on a more "active connotation" and manifested in "continuing with daily life and movement" (p. 18). Similarly, in her ethnographic research among Palestinian activists in 1948 Palestine,[12] Nijmeh Ali (2019) challenges the association of *sumud* with passivity by identifying multiple "patterns" of *sumud* ("practical," "personal," "moral," and "cultural") and gathering them under the term "active *sumud*," which in Ali's formulation "means taking responsibility, constructing future initiatives, and moving from the traditional understanding of cultural *Sumud* . . . toward a transformative *Sumud*" (p. 100).[13]

The work to analyze multiple meanings and expressions of *sumud* describes a repertoire that is still ultimately tied to remaining on the land,

including the cultivation of meaningful social and spatial relationships that give substance to that remaining. These collective practices are animated by what Sarah Ihmoud (2019) theorizes as *murabata*, "a politics of staying in place," a cultivation of meaningful *ties* to place through routine and repeated practices of being in and using it (pp. 519, 523). The linking of *sumud* with the practices of staying on one's land and "staying in place" illustrates the interrelatedness between this renowned Palestinian steadfastness and the concept of self-determined mobility, which must include autonomous decisions about *not* moving (in other words, *staying*). I put *sumud* and mobility into conversation and argue that collective exercises of freedom to move *and* to remain constitute a powerful force of decolonization that undermines settler colonial logics and dispossessions while also giving fuller meaning to the notion of *staying on* (and *returning to*) one's land. Connecting *sumud* and mobility contributes important nuances to our understanding of the concept and practices of *sumud* and locates the political significance of multifarious engagements with public transit in the context of settler colonialism.

Furthermore, discussions about *sumud* generatively intersect with social movements and resistance scholarship, which has grappled with questions about how to understand the significance of expressions of people power in mundane settings (see, e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1990; Bayat, 2010; Jeffress, 2008; Jones, 2012; Scott, 1985, 1990, 2009, 2012; Y. Sharif, 2017; Sharp et al., 2000). In exploring the significance of Palestinian use of public transit at mundane, spectacular, and artistic registers, I propose Palestinian transit as a site where the connections can be seen between everyday "non-movement movement" (Bayat, 2010, 2017) and more direct forms of political intervention. In the Conclusion, I argue that Palestinian public transit hosts a range of manifestations of people power, which, in turn, demonstrates how mundane activities exist in relationship to more pointed forms of decolonization. It is for this reason that I have titled the book *Vehicles of Decolonization* rather than "Vehicles of Resistance."[14] I mean to signal my view that the politics of different modes of engagement with public transportation relate to and amplify one another while working together to decolonize mobile relationships among people and land.

A Brief Note on Research Methodology

Throughout this book I use the methodology of "viapolitics," a mode of inquiry coined by William Walters (2015) that attends to the routes, roads, and vehicles—the means of movement—and human interaction with them at literal and representational registers to uncover power dynamics that mediate human mobility. Walters developed his concept of viapolitics in relation

to transnational migration, but Sheller (2018) has demonstrated that transnational migration must be considered only one component, albeit integral, in a broad agenda of mobility justice. "Viapolitics" can apply to examinations of "domestic" mobility, especially in a context in which border processes are diffused across a territory such that what counts as "inside" and "outside" is a constantly changing, contested, and subjective matter. Walters (2015) proposes three theses on viapolitics in which he asserts that representations of the means of mobility, such as media coverage of the arrival of refugee boats, articulate the conditions of possibility for mobility politics; that vehicles operate as "mobile sites of power" connected to broader mobility regimes, such as the role of inspecting commercial transport vehicles in the broader struggle over migration; and that the particular features of different means of mobility give rise to certain forms of political contestation, such as the case of deportations by commercial airlines that are sometimes challenged by passengers. Contributing to the "set of inquiries" outlined by Walters, I adopt a viapolitical approach to Palestinian transit in the West Bank to identify the role that the means of collective mobility play in the contestation between Palestinian self-determination and Israeli settler colonialism.

I collected the data featured in this book over the course of six trips to Palestine, amounting to twelve months in total, from 2012 to 2018, with the bulk of the fieldwork occurring during ten months in 2013 and 2014. I conducted participant observation of Palestinian public transportation in the West Bank. Based primarily in a suburb of the Greater Bethlehem area, I used transit to travel both within Bethlehem and from Bethlehem to all of the major cities of the West Bank. Until March 2014, I was also able to visit Jerusalem, Jaffa, Tel Aviv, and Haifa.[15] All of these trips were accomplished via public transportation, both bus and shared van. In addition to participant observation, I gathered information about collective Palestinian mobility through informal conversations in Arabic with approximately sixty public transit passengers and twenty drivers, most of whom were residents of the Greater Bethlehem area. In addition to speaking with drivers, I asked them to draw maps of their routes, which figure in my analysis in Chapter 3. I also interviewed, in Arabic and English, six transportation officials from the PA's Ministry of Transportation (Wizarat an-Naql w al-Muwasalat) and from the Bethlehem Traffic Department (Da'irat as-Seir). In 2014, I worked with the Applied Research Institute–Jerusalem (ARIJ) to meet with transit officials and drivers as part of an ARIJ project to draft a preliminary public transit map for the city of Bethlehem. I collected the cultural productions and artifacts generated by political activists, supplemented when necessary with interview data, and employed other cultural studies methods, including documentary research and textual and image analysis, which feature in Chapters 4 and 5. I discuss my research methods and methodology further in the Appendix.

Chapter Overview

To understand the politics of different engagements with Palestinian public transportation in the West Bank as a site of social struggle, one must first account for the context in which it operates. In Chapter 1, I present a detailed discussion of the phased development of im/mobilization as the mobility regime that imposes the Israeli enclosures strategy on the Palestinian West Bank in furtherance of settler colonialism. In response to Palestinian protests against the Israeli invasion and occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which began in 1967, Israel developed counterinsurgency technologies to contain popular resistance. During the ensuing fifty-plus years, these tactics have increasingly come to revolve around controlling Palestinians' movement. I start with the proposition that historical repertoires of enclosures can be understood as mobility regimes that target the commons in ways that degrade social, political, and economic life to accomplish land annexation and value extraction. Then I trace the development of im/mobilization against West Bank Palestinians, which emerged in the face of an uprising against the manifestly colonial nature of a purportedly temporary occupation as a way of retrenching Israeli settler colonialism.

As the Israeli enclosures in the West Bank developed and became more concentrated in the im/mobilization regime, they drew from and contributed to global trends of diffusing border processes. In Chapter 2, I examine the current state of im/mobilization through the lens of critical border studies, which recognizes borders as a set of practices that extend far beyond the site of a geopolitical line. Israel has contributed to the creation of a borderscape in the West Bank by diffusing border processes across the entirety of the territory even while it refuses to settle on its official, external borders. In the chapter, I describe physical structures such as the Israeli Apartheid Wall, the Jewish-only settlements inside the West Bank, a slew of barriers (boulders, trenches, earth mounds, gates, etc.), and stationary checkpoints, with other kinds of im/mobilization practices, such as Israel's system of segregated roads; the imposition of "flying," or moving, ad hoc, checkpoints; the complex permit system; heightened surveillance; and Israel's economic pressures and imposition of taxes on the Palestinian West Bank. But the West Bank borderscape is also shaped by Palestinian challenges to these border processes, particularly in the form of collective mobility via public transportation. For that reason, I outline the components of Palestinian public transportation, which manages to function in the West Bank despite Israeli im/mobilizations.

Having sketched the contours of the West Bank borderscape, I move to my analysis of engagements with Palestinian public transit at three registers—the mundane, the spectacular, and the artistic—to demonstrate

that transit fosters and enables decolonial activity. In Chapter 3, I show *how* Palestinian public transportation manages to function in the West Bank despite the Israeli enclosures and discuss its significance. Even if ordinary Palestinians still suffer a great deal of hardship and inconvenience in trying to move around, this responsive system of public transit constitutes a quotidian but meaningful rejection and obfuscation of, and counterpoint to, the Israeli border-enclosures. I show here how local knowledge networks created and sustained by riders and drivers together attempt to ameliorate some of the unpredictability and disruptiveness of Israeli im/mobilizations. Where this mobility regime extends settler colonial power, irreverent Indigenous movement, enabled by this dynamic sociality, has become a kind of Palestinian mobile commoning. I trace the sociality embedded in the mundane Palestinian transit system back to the more overtly rebellious activities of off-road taxi drivers during the second Palestinian Intifada. The off-road Intifada taxis presented drivers with a way to resist the Israeli siege on the Palestinian West Bank economy and riders with a way to resist Israel's physical and social disruptions of Palestinian mobility. Through the social negotiation that fuels the transit system, Palestinian riders and drivers refuse confinement and fragmentation; reclaim spatial knowledge, the authority to create it, and the power to share it; and repeatedly practice decolonized relationships among people and land.

While routine participation in the Palestinian public transportation system involves mobile commoning against, around, and through the settler colonial enclosures, overtly political engagements with transit vehicles also contribute to decolonization. In Chapter 4, I examine the incorporation of transit vehicles into political protest actions. I analyze three political demonstrations that occurred in the decade just past and used public transportation, and specifically the bus, as both literal and symbolic vehicle. The protests on which I focus are the Palestinian Freedom Rides of 2011; the run of the annual mobile workshop known as the Freedom Bus in 2014; and the torching of a new segregated bus line in 2013. I argue that the bus uniquely enabled activists' communication of their messages both to fellow Palestinians and to international audiences. Their focus on the bus allowed the activists to move among a collection of terminological frames, invoking concepts of racial segregation, racism, and apartheid alongside occupation and colonialism. Through terminological movement, the Palestinian activists captured the many facets of Israeli settler colonialism in ways that resonate with global solidarity networks and that simultaneously educate them about the specifics of Israeli im/mobilization.

I round out my analysis of different kinds of public transit use by turning to artistic engagements. In Chapter 5, I analyze representations of public transit in Palestinian artwork as a vehicle for manifesting Palestinian

self-determined movement across space and time in contravention of the logics of the Israeli colonial enclosures. I consider three creative renderings of transit vehicles by Palestinian artists: Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency (DAAR)'s architectural provocation *Right to Movement* of 2012; Mohamed Abusal's installation and photography project *A Metro in Gaza* of 2011; and Larissa Sansour's futuristic film *Nation Estate* of 2012. As these artists reimagine Palestinian transit, they create opportunities to reclaim Indigenous relationships to space and time, in opposition to the colonization of both, to exercise and anticipate collective self-determination. In doing so, they reveal the interconnectedness of autonomous mobility and decolonization.

Finally, in the Conclusion I argue that considering these various engagements with public transit in the Palestinian West Bank illuminates the interrelationship among different forms of people power. I offer a discussion of scholarly schemas for understanding expressions of people power in terms of the intentionality that animates it or its demonstrable effects on state control. By taking a viapolitical approach to studying collective Palestinian mobility in the West Bank, I note that public transit as a site of social struggle reveals that multiple registers of people power work in concert not only to resist settler colonial logics of im/mobilization but also to practice and preserve alternative relations of mobility. Having identified this repertoire of decolonization, I turn to the current, constantly changing landscape in the Palestinian West Bank, which is threatened with an intensified program of annexation, as well as the less visible changes induced by neoliberalism. In particular, I address the increase in private automobile ownership linked to an increase in private debt and suggest that, as time reveals the consequences of these trends, we should also consider their effects on collective mobility and the decolonial power it hosts.