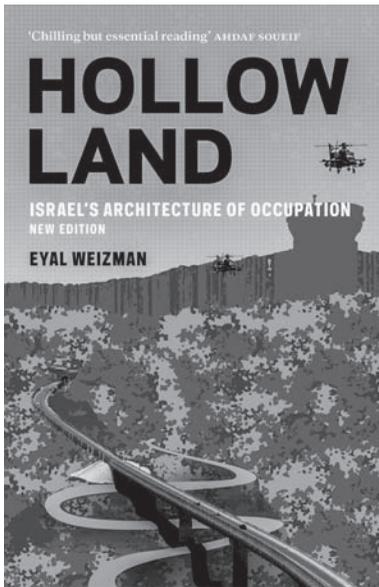


The book makes clear that it is not about studying “the Palestinians,” and that the focus on power is not meant to undermine the possibilities of resistance. And yet, one is left with a desire to see Palestinians figure—even for a moment—not only as objects of inquiry, but also as subjects. Nonetheless, this book makes significant contributions to political theory, border studies, critical studies of liberalism, and the study of Israel/Palestine.

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Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation, by Eyal Weizman. New York: Verso, 2017. 336 pages. \$34.95 cloth, \$24.95 paper, \$9.99 e-book.

REVIEWED BY ALEX SHAMS

Just ten years after Eyal Weizman's *Hollow Land* was first published, the number of Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem has nearly doubled from 400,000 to 750,000. During the same time, Israeli forces killed through bombardment almost 4,000 Palestinians in Gaza, destroyed 150,000 homes, and displaced about 500,000 people.

Weizman offers these figures in the preface to *Hollow Land's* recently released second edition to orient the reader as he shows how “Israel's system of control, which evolved in fits and starts through the occupation's first four decades, has, during its fifth decade, hardened into an exceptionally efficient and brutal form of territorial apartheid” (p. x). He

does this well, tracing the spatial dimension of Israeli control over Palestine and the Palestinian people with a focus on the post-1967 period. Weizman argues that “the built environment—and its destruction and contraction—is . . . more than just a backdrop of the conflict. Rather, it is the means by which domination takes shape” (p. xv). The author examines the construction of Israel's militarized settlement enterprise from the perspective of urban planning, positing that the displacement of Palestinians has been engineered from a spatial perspective. “Not only has architecture been weaponized in this conflict,” Weizman notes, “but the system itself can be said to have an architectural form. What is the architecture of control and how does it work?” (p. xvi).

Weizman is well positioned to carry out such an investigation. He is an Israeli architect and professor of spatial and visual cultures, and director of the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths, University of London. Weizman is also a Princeton Global Scholar. In the decade since his book came out, he established the Decolonizing Architecture Art Residency (DAAR) in Beit Sahour, Palestine.

The establishment of DAAR and its success highlight the tremendous impact Weizman's work has had since its release. *Hollow Land* builds upon increasing attentiveness to urban space and

architecture in the social sciences, and its release is to an extent responsible for tremendous growth in this field of study.

Reading *Hollow Land*, it is easy to understand why the text has been so influential: Israel's system of occupation is so deeply invested in "different spatial practices and technologies of control and separation" that it offers an example of such a system par excellence (p. 15).

In order to understand how Palestinians have been "forced into a territorial patchwork of sealed islands around their cities, towns and villages within a larger space controlled by Israel," Weizman deftly ties seemingly unrelated processes such as suburbanization to wider shifts in global politics of security (p. 12). He examines how Israel "treats Palestinians as a laboratory for military and political control," a fact that has reaped major profits for the Israeli security industry and has turned the occupation into a deeply profitable enterprise (p. xxi). Weizman pays particular attention to "how overt instruments of control, as well as seemingly mundane structures, are pregnant with intense historical, political meaning" (p. 6). As a result, he is able to tie together innocuous policies—such as Israeli regulations requiring settlements be constructed with an outer layer of Jerusalem stone—to their much more wide-reaching consequences: in this case, how the visual appearance of continuity between settlements and the Old City normalizes the occupation by presenting Israelis with the impression of a unified city.

As Weizman highlights in the case of Jerusalem, "Horizontally limited by the green zones around them, and vertically by a 'preservation' policy, the Palestinian neighborhoods of Jerusalem were transformed into an archipelago of small islands of conjured 'authenticity,' within an ocean of Jewish construction, their architecture functioning as an object of aesthetic contemplation to be seen from the concrete-built, but stone-clad Jewish neighborhoods" (p. 51). He masterfully traces the history of many of these planning policies to British colonialism, while also noting how Israeli authorities have adapted them to suit shifting needs over time. Israelis' use of these policies comes full circle in the "suburban colonization" across the West Bank that he details in chapter 4 (p. 122).

In the original text, Weizman stresses how the creation of this system was not planned by a single entity but emerged as a result of regulations produced by various bodies for different reasons. This "structured chaos" involving "the—often deliberate—selective absence of government intervention successfully promotes an unregulated process of violent dispossession" (p. 5).

He traces this neatly when examining the settlements' "battle for the hilltops" (chapters 3–4), the militarized infrastructure of separation, such as the wall and checkpoints (chapters 5–6), and the militarization of space in violent conflict (chapters 7–9).

In the preface to this edition, however, Weizman notes that this chaos has solidified in the past decade. "This evolving and elastic territorial architecture," he argues, "has hardened into a permanent mechanism of separation and control. Verticality has become a form of apartheid" (p. xvi). Fifty years after Israel captured the West Bank and Gaza, it is difficult to disagree with this assessment. Weizman's text offers a tremendous starting point from which to understand how we got here.

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