Peul and Lambada, who have no land at all. Indigenous land claims are often for hunting and pasturage, which require extensive areas. Are such generous allocations fair to urban residents? Mining rights are never timeless, and worldwide they follow contradictory principles: the right connected with the sovereign, land owner or discoverer versus the right to participate in their operation.

The senior author (Glassner) has a distinguished career in international organizations and devotes much space to them. Yet the chapters about the UN leave mixed feelings. The need for a discussion forum is obvious but the section is excessively verbose. There is too much pure description and history; there are too many lists of participants and resolutions in small print, with giant tables of completed actions. Does international law also apply when the parties in conflict widely differ in size? Be that as it may, one must begin somewhere, and the other topical chapters about the Law of Sea, Antarctica and outer space are both interesting and innovative.

The existence of international law should not disguise the competition between some national laws and commercial practice at large. English law is widely applied in shipping, and the law of the State of New York presents a challenge in international finance. The pages about economic integration unrelated to the UN are also very detailed, but since impressive results have been achieved, it is rational to put forth some idea of the complexity of the process. The success stories are of necessity quite few, since the non-overlapping areas into which the globe can be partitioned are not many.

A book that covers several disciplines from a global perspective cannot be exhaustive in its discussion of each question and will resort to inference when direct evidence is not readily available. Populist statements and factual errors occasionally follow, immaterial to the broader conclusions reached but mentioned for the sake of good order. Taxonomies, terminologies and the vocabularies of international relations are plentiful and welcome. The bibliography contains few foreign authors and then only in translation. There are over 300 black/white exhibits. Graphs are well designed, though some maps and photos are technically muddy. Most photos are too everyday. Some might find the style too expansive.

Three textbooks by three individuals or teams from three countries, all focused on geopolitics and all widely different. What is dominant, the authors’ background or their personality? We believe the former to be true. The Nartovs base their reasoning and recommendations on an established theoretical foundation, bringing to the discussion a genuine Eurasian angle, and are whole-heartedly in the service of their country here and now. Lacoste has a detached global outlook, in line with his country’s grasp of the maritime as well as the continental worldwide dominance two centuries ago. Glassner and Fahrer venture into neighboring sciences and geopolitical fundamentals. They elaborate the geopolitical structure of their country and push the discipline’s boundaries to polar areas, the depths of oceans and outer space.

References

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The recent anniversaries of Israel’s 60th year of independence and 40th year of colonial occupation of the West Bank, inspired a surge of new publications about one of the last (overt) colonial regimes. In geography, too, notable political geographers such as Derek Gregory and David Delaney, devoted important segments to the understanding of Israeli colonialism and to the conceptualization of power/space interaction, that is, to political geography. These descriptive and conceptual strands are woven through the entire book in an original and eye-opening manner.

The book’s first task is a ‘blow-by-blow’ account of Israel’s spatial control in the Palestinian Territories, and is rather ‘dry’ and documentary in nature. However, it fills a gap, as the literature on Israel’s occupation was lacking a systematically spatial account of the type offered here. Weizman meticulously outlines the steps enabling the settlement of close to half a million Jewish settlers in the West Bank (including of course occupied East Jerusalem), preventing to date the establishment of a Palestinian state. The Judaization, militarization and fragmentation of the previously Arab space was termed by my own work as a colonial ‘fracturing’ and ‘entrapment’ of indigenous groups causing a process of ‘creeping apartheid’, and by Palestinian sociologist Sari Hanafi as ‘spacio-cide’ – a thorough destruction of national space.2 Weizman’s book extends these analyses and unpacks the making of Israeli apartheid and the resultant spacio-cide.

A central part of the book is rightly devoted to the role Ariel Sharon, one of Israel’s mythical military-political leaders. Sharon was a most prominent figure in the planning and construction of the occupation, and –ironically – also in the beginning of their dismantling. Yet, the latter ‘disengagement’ and partial retreat


stage is rightly viewed by Weizman, not as a move towards peace, but as a new configuration of spatial oppression, notably demonstrated by the separation barrier (‘the wall’ built against a vocal settlers’ opposition), and most strikingly – by the ‘scorched earth’ method of evacuating Gaza and later placing it under siege.

Weizman traces Sharon’s spatial-military thinking over time and demonstrates convincingly how Israeli ‘civilian’ authorities and herds of professionals (architects, engineers, planners, geographers) had little hesitation in putting in motion Sharon’s military–civilian–colonial vision. The symbiosis between military and ‘planning’ control is nowhere more clearly symbolized than in Israel’s Orwellian ‘administrative government’ authorities of the West Bank, which rules based on the basis of military decrees.

In this way, Weizman doesn’t only shame these professionals, who undoubtedly betrayed many of the ethical standards on which their professions are based, but also demonstrates the inextricable connection between civilian planning and military power in areas of ethnic conflict. Beyond the professional and political critique, the militarization of planning enables Weizman to provide insightful re-conceptualizations of power/space relations. He uses the West Bank as a giant laboratory, in which a range of power geometries are being tested, adjusted, re-calibrated and re-planned by the controlling powers.

Rather than a ‘state of exception’ (so fashionable in today’s social sciences), Weizman treats the West Bank as a hyper-example of controlling the unwanted ‘other’ – any unwanted ‘other’. This tends itself to ‘exporting’ his analysis to other cases of ‘creeping apartheid’ where populations are stratified by spatial means. Through this perspective, the West Bank is different only in detail but not in principle, to other ghettos, gated communities and no-go zones, sprinkled around the world. This analysis starkly highlights the implicit violence lying behind most legalized spatial relations of control, articulated and administered by respected members of architectural, planning and geography professional guilds.

Weizman is at his best in connecting the concrete to the conceptual: using a range of insights from philosophy, history, poetry and science fiction, he travels to some uncharted zones of geographical imaginaries. Some of his conceptualizations may be raw and not fully articulated, but the readers are presented with an array of promising concepts, such as ‘elastic geography’, ‘politics of verticality’, ‘civilian occupation’, ‘optical urbanism’, ‘suburban frontiers’, ‘walking through walls’, ‘inversion of the inside’ and more. These not only describe the surreal and violent relations in the West Bank, but possibly also sketch spaces of the future, when and where power has to deal with the inevitable existence of excluded masses.

The book title too, cleverly uses a spatial metaphor for the process at hand: a land is made ‘hollow’ by militarized planning which constantly attempts to both facilitate Jewish colonization, but at the same time separate the colonialists from the locals. Given the small size of the West Bank, this incessant effort results in a surreal political geography of multi-dimensional and temporal separations, with constant ‘surgical’ attempts to reshape space in the logic of ethnocentric power.

Drawing on 19th century authors such as Edgar Allan Poe and Jules Verne, Weizman describes the Arab West Bank land as being ‘hollowed’ by the many attempts to partition it. The construction of the new territory is likened to a giant airport, characterized by different strata of the vertical spatial configurations, by which power is divided vertically, and not horizontally as commonly perceived by two-dimensional geographers. Hence, Israel’s dynamic remoulding of the West Bank valorizes vertical space, redefining the political meaning of geographical elements such as aquifers, archaeological diggings, sewerage and road infrastructure, housing, hill tops, militarized airspace and even satellite surveillance. The ‘slicing’ of vertical space which is so explicit in the West Bank, provides a powerful methodological tool of significant implications for all political geographers.

The book, however, has some weaknesses, three of which may be mentioned here briefly. First, the many eye-opening concepts and insights do not quite mesh together to a theory; the reader often wonders about the links between spatial reconfiguration and deeper societal currents, mobilizations and struggles. Second, the book lacks serious engagement with aspects of the Zionist project beyond the Occupied Territories. Needless to say, the practices found in the West Bank, important as they are, are only part of the colonial project through which Palestine has been Judaized for over a century. No analysis of the spatialization of control in the West Bank can be sliced out of its historical and geopolitical context. Finally, Weizman analysis underplays of the dialectics of space/violence. Israel’s expansion and oppression of the Palestinians is fuelled in part by Palestinian resistance and violence. Weizman diminishes the role of Palestinian agency, and does not account sufficiently for the mutual (though clearly asymmetric) dynamics of violence that have caused and legitimized oppressive spatial dynamics.

These weaknesses, however, may be viewed as challenges for Weizman’s future work, which is undoubtedly set to make further insightful contributions. In the meantime, the current book should definitely be read by all students, scholars and activists concerned with Israel/Palestine, and by political geographers interested in unpacking the working of spatial power in zones of conflict.

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Sometimes we can judge a book by its cover. The photograph adorning the cover of Global “Body Shopping”: An Indian Labor System in the Information Technology Industry—a thatched roof of an Indian village hut juxtaposed with an advertisement peddling complex software offerings of a local computer-training center—sets the tone for this ethnographic study of an under-scrutinized, India-based labor management practice called “body shopping”.

Between the covers, Xiang Biao tells the fascinating story of how body shopping brought globalization into the lives of hitherto minimally influenced rural youth and facilitated their movement into the highly volatile global arena of information technology. Biao has engaged in a detailed study of the intricate networks of global body shopping, which connects local, state and transnational non-state actors. With multiple interviews and participant observation