

the durability and adaptability of Arab authoritarianism. The dissertation on which this was based was perhaps a little too exultant in 2011, and it fares even less well in today's prevailing Arab political environment.

Govrin is an Israeli career diplomat who now serves as ambassador to Cairo, and he can be excused for his optimism. As a professional, he clearly saw Arab intellectuals with whom he could engage when many in Israel were—and are—skeptical of the possibility of any Arab political reform. His book is a helpful cataloguing of elite liberal ideas in the Arab world in the last century. The book might be read as a long refutation of those who argue there is no one to talk with on the Arab side. But as an analyst of how Arab societies work and the role that intellectuals play in its daily life and in its governance, Govrin is a less valuable guide.

The book provides a useful starting point for students looking to orient themselves in some of this writing, but it is marred by some errors that I wish an editor had caught. For example, the distinction between an *ʿayn* and *hamza* is often garbled, so Abel Monem Said's name is consistently spelled "Sa'id" rather than "Sa'īd," and al-'Afif al-Akhdar's first name is presented as "al-'Afif" on page 98 and "al-'Afif" on page 99. Saudi Arabia's Prince Alwaleed bin Talal is presented as "Saudi Crown Prince Walid Ibn Talal," (130) representing at the very least a grand promotion.

While the title of this book promises a textbook that could be of great use to survey courses that seek to explain the genesis of the Arab uprisings that began in 2011, professors seeking such a book will need to look elsewhere. But for those who seek to undermine the notion that the Arab world is monolithic, unthinking, and reactionary, this book provides a useful starting point. ✂

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JEFF HALPER. *War Against the People: Israel, The Palestinians and Global Pacification.* London: Pluto Press 2015, xi + 296 pages, index. Paper US\$25.00 ISBN: 978-0-7453-3430-1.

W*ar Against the People* could not have come at a more important time. But the reality it presents is shocking and unnerving, even to someone who's spent their whole life working on Israel/Palestine. Halper shows us, in frightening detail, just how central war and violence have always been to Israel's strategic power and position, both vis-à-vis Palestinians and globally. This portrayal

reveals the impossibility of a successful transition to peace with Palestinians, not merely because of unending settlement expansion, but because of the very foundations of Israel's broader political economy.

This is not a book to digest in one sitting. It's too hard to understand how one small country can have so many connections to so many regimes. Halper masterfully reveals how deftly Israel made itself an indispensable part of the world system. Its partnerships around the world not only ensure the state's survival, but also its prosperity through militarization, pacification, and securitization of entire polities: "Lacking bases and the weaponry of the US, it is no less extensive in range ... It surpasses the US in depth, however. In addition to ingratiating itself into the military-industrial complex of the core, its presence in 'Third World' countries, including many Arab and Muslim ones, runs far deeper" (67).

Halper demonstrates how contemporary warfare that involves "securitization at home and abroad, counter-terrorism and militarized domestic policing," (144) allows Israel to transform its interminable struggle against the Palestinians into an exportable commodity (140). War against the people then becomes a marketing advantage because the "failure to come to terms with the Palestinians is not presented as a failure at all, but as a successful case of pacification—or at least 'sufficient,' ongoing pacification" (144).

Israel has developed special expertise in the technologies of contemporary warfare and has used the Occupied Territories as the premier testing ground for such weapons. These weapons and the policies that deploy them are incredibly complex, an admixture of realpolitik and highly technical knowledge.

For over two decades Halper, an anthropologist by training, has been one of Israel's foremost activists on behalf of Palestinian rights. His extensive fieldwork on the ground convinced him that a "Matrix of Control" is the most useful model for understanding how Israel achieved and maintains its stranglehold on the Occupied Territories. But Halper always understood that the matrix extended outside Israel's borders. It was never just that Israel received billions of dollars every year in American military aid, or that it maintained often clandestine military and security relationships with assorted regimes across Latin America, Europe, Africa, and East Asia. It is that Israel's actions, policies, and its function in the larger global system were and remain a cipher for the workings of the world system writ large.

Halper zeroes in on the militarized neoliberalism, which he terms a type of "endocolonialism," a capitalism that feeds upon itself after there are no more foreign territories to conquer and exploit. This is accomplished through the intensification of what David Harvey famously described as "accumulation

by dispossession” from within as well as between countries. Halper explains this by deploying the term “neoliberal securitization,” a kind of governance that depends on the pacification of large numbers of people with whom there is little hope of creating a viable social contract.

Palestinians, then, are merely a seminal example of the “palestinianization” of a growing share of the world’s population—not just formally occupied people, but marginalized and superfluous populations within countries as well. Thus the technologies that Halper describes are almost all “dual use”—capable of enforcing Israel’s colonial project, or the power of capital in more developed countries. “Securing insecurity,” Halper demonstrates, is not only crucial to maintaining the matrix of control in the West Bank or Gaza, but around the world. Insecurity is instrumentalized to generate large-scale profits through pacification of “troublesome” populations.

Although the Occupation itself is not the focus of the book, the global political and security economies it treats are crucial to understanding the Occupation, and particularly why the Oslo peace process and the “New Middle East” it was supposed to herald were never going to deliver on their promises. Israel was already too embedded in a “New-Old” Middle East—a region and system defined by a century of colonialism, authoritarian rule, and intense conflict, now reinforced rather than weakened by the technologies that define neoliberal globalization.

The “war amongst the people” that Halper describes is epitomized by the intercommunal conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Jews that has defined the Zionist–Palestinian conflict for well over a century. And, as with the Occupation, absolute victory is rare. The best one can hope to achieve is “a condition” of superiority, or “sufficient victory.”

Halper’s work also reveals a direct link between Israel’s actions in the Occupied Territories and broader global processes in the “framing” and “lawfare” used to control and pacify local populations, whether occupied or one’s own citizens (80–85). As he points, out, a major reason for Israel’s advantage over other populations is precisely that it is the one major arms manufacturer in the “West” that also has a captive population on which all these technologies of securitization and control can be tested with broad impunity. Labels such as “Combat Proven,” “Tested in Gaza,” and “Approved by the IDF” on Israeli or foreign products greatly improves their marketability” (143).

Halper took a risk in delving into so much detail about the structure of the global arms and security industries, which will challenge even the experienced researcher. While one can feel lost in the forest at times, the

book offers a fundamentally important and powerful argument that should become part of the arsenal of critical scholars and activists on the Occupation and on contemporary neoliberal globalization as well. This book is ultimately a must-read both for specialists and advanced students, policy-makers, journalists, and politicians.

This book does not offer specific directions for resistance against the massive system he describes. But resistance can only succeed when one has a comprehensive understanding of the system against which resistance is being waged. Halper's book offers crucial information towards that end. For those ready to act after closing the book, they could do a lot worse than joining the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, where presumably Halper's insights are being put most directly into practice. ✂

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MICHAEL J. HARROWER. *Water Histories and Spatial Archaeology: Ancient Yemen and the American West.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. x + 214 pages, endnotes, bibliography, index. Cloth US\$110.00 ISBN 978-1-107-13465-2.

On first glance, a book title that compares ancient Yemen and the American West seems like a typist's error, but the author makes a compelling case for the relevance of his choice with regard to "human geographies of water." Harrower is an archaeologist with experience in Yemen and other parts of the Middle East and also one of the leading specialists on the use of spatial technologies, which include satellite imagery and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). When I took archaeology courses in the early 1970s, none of these new technologies were available, but the field of archaeology now has available a variety of new techniques that were only dreamed about back then. This is not only a book for denizens of archaeological research in Yemen, but also an interdisciplinary approach that involves social history and suggestions for dealing with the current political and environmental crises in the Middle East, including the "War on Terror." It deserves a wide audience.

The stage for the thesis of the book is set by comparing the 1928 catastrophic collapse of the St. Francis Dam north of Los Angeles that resulted in the death of six hundred people to the famous destruction of Yemen's Marib dam in the late 6th century, the latter even mentioned in the Qur'an (Surah Saba 34:15-16). "In both cases," argues Harrower, "these important junctures are interspersed throughout long histories of human