

'Privati-nation' – Privatization, Nationalization, Housing and Gaps

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The paper examines the links between residential patterns and social disparities, created by the process of developing and settling Israel/Palestine. It conceptualizes this process as 'Privati-nation', that is, the intertwining of privatization and nationalization. In the standard planning discourse these two separate policy arms are commonly described as governed by opposing logics. Yet, we argue that in the making of a Jewish settler society over Israel/Palestine, the two policy arms have been intertwined systematically. The analysis shows that the last 'decade of reforms' in the planning and land systems has accelerated the Privatination process. Moreover, Privatination is shown to splinter space and society in Israel/Palestine into a series of 'ethno-classes' by creating deep segregation alongside widening socioeconomic gaps. As such, the process has deepened the association between residential patterns and social disparities, despite some exceptions in integrative middle-class suburbs of large urban centers. In general, Privatination processes have accelerated the commodification of housing and rapidly increased prices, particularly on land appropriated from Palestinians. Privatination upgrades the position of land and housing owners as well as high income earners (mainly, but not solely, Jews) while downgrading the interests of marginalized groups such as Palestinian Arabs, peripheral Jews, youth and immigrants. The paper then outlines a range of 'Privatination' types, and examines their impact on society and space. It ends by bringing into question the role of planning and planners in facilitating or correcting the regressive Privatination process.

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