Book Review/Compte rendu

Vida Bajc and **Williem de Lint**, eds., *Security and Everyday Life.* New York: Routledge, 2011, 312 pp. $ US 44.95 paper (978-0-415-85344-6) $133.00 hardcover (978-0-415-99768-3).

For centuries the issue of security has been one of the central concerns of governing. However, the Foucauldian approach suggests that the role security plays in governing is reformulated with the rise of the liberal art of government, a government whose existence is dependent on the production of freedoms as well as the controlling, constraining, and coercing of such freedoms. Then, what is the cost of manufacturing freedom? What are the implications of the interplay between freedom and security for social control? What are the roles of new surveillance mechanisms in ordering, framing, and constructing appropriate social behavior? *Security and Everyday Life* presents a perspective through which these questions could be answered.

This volume addresses the complexities of the relationship between security and everyday life by formulating a meta-theoretical framework through which the operations of the security dynamics embedded in everyday life can be made visible, and by means of which the rationale behind approaching various "social situations and cultural phenomena" as "a potential threat to security" (p. 1) can be uncovered. In other words, by illustrating the scope of "bureaucratic surveillance" woven into the fabric of everyday practices, this volume seeks to demonstrate how security has become an ordering principle of cultural and social life.

The information gathered by the extensive security apparatus serves to generate exclusionary categories where the world is classified on the basis of a binary opposition between "orderly" and "disorderly" by means of which the sovereign power's legitimacy for preemptive action or reaction is guaranteed. However, in order for the activities of the security apparatus to receive acceptance from the public it is necessary to form a specific perception of reality within which the public is made to feel "protected from or — alternatively — of being exposed to, potential harmful irregularities in public life" (p. 3). This becomes possible by communicating to the public the fear of disruptive forces. Only then the conditions are completed for the creation of a context in which the concerns of security can trump all else.

This international collection is composed of ten chapters, organized around four sections. Each chapter cogitates about the idea that security is an ordering principle of everyday life, and contributes to the understanding of the dynamics of security meta-framing through an examination of various case studies. The section *Public Spaces and Collective Activities* concentrates on the issue of "securitized spaces" in order to examine the ways in which the social reality of security is imagined by the security apparatus of the state and how this reality is maintained through "the self-correcting behavior" (p. 21) of the public. The section *Struggle and Resistance* provides examinations of state-centric securitization processes in order to both demonstrate the possibility of the emergence of alternative perceptions of social reality when person(s) or groups confront the security-insecurity dichotomy, and also discuss the potential to challenge what the security meta-message should be, and by whom it should be determined. The section *Law, Citizenship and the State* questions the dominance of security in political discourse by juxtaposing the state's ability to produce preemptive visions of disorder and its corresponding preemptive responses, practices of social exclusion, and the manifestations of state exceptionalism to the rule of law, citizenship, and individualism in order to show how security becomes the ultimate trump card. The section *Global Agendas, Global Transformations* demonstrates how the security meta-frame has become the dominant determinant in the arrangement of everyday life globally while examining the implications of the global transformations of security at the transnational, regional, and international levels.

This volume is organized around the epistemological assessment of the concept of the security meta-frame. The analysis of the sovereign power's ability to classify suspicious individuals, groups, and activities on the basis of expert knowledge is criticized in reference to the exclusionary classifications it creates, the justifications it provides for state exceptionalism, the tensions it engenders between security and liberty, and perhaps more importantly, the function it serves to protect state security while producing and maintaining insecurities. This account of the security meta-frame is developed *via* a multidisciplinary approach — bringing together contributors from security and surveillance studies, sociology, social and cultural anthropology, international relations, criminology and criminal justice — and illustrated through various case studies from around the world including Israel, Palestine, Canada, US, Mexico, EU, China, and Latin America.

Although this volume makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of the dynamics of security apparatus and its implications on the "citizen-subject" (p. 260), it falls short of presenting a theoretical

framework through which struggles and resistance against security can be conceptualized. The reason for this is twofold. First, the alternatives suggested against the security meta-frame, namely, "human security" or "re-politicization of security," are not developed to an extent that could demonstrate by which means the concept of security will be "purified" from its exclusionary, exceptionalist, state-centric, criminalizing, and militaristic aspects that form the basis of the criticism in each chapter in this volume. Second, this volume does not present an explanation to *how* such alternatives can escape the monopolization of their goals by the security meta-frame. These issues need to be addressed if the solutions to the "security meta-frame" are to be sought within the "security meta-frame" itself. If not, security politics should be challenged and transgressed from within a new conceptual and theoretical framework — namely, Anti-security — which identifies the security project as a project of pacification through which the submission of populations is induced.

Moreover, the contributors of this volume articulate the concept of the security meta-frame solely on the basis of the relationship between the state and culture. However, neither culture nor the state functions separately from the material conditions at the national and global levels. I thus believe the neglect of the tri-polar relationship between the state, political economy, and culture leaves a significant gap in this volume.

Nonetheless, *Security and Everyday Life* offers valuable insight into the conceptualization of security as an ordering principle of everyday life, presents an in-depth analysis of the ways in which the security meta-frame orders the lives of citizens and noncitizens, and provides detailed documentation regarding the way in which the security apparatus functions throughout the daily lives of individuals. The examination of different geographic and cultural contexts as well as the presentations of various narrations about difference, exception, exclusion, and resistance makes this volume an insightful contribution to the discipline of sociology. I believe this volume would be a useful source at the senior undergraduate and graduate level courses concerning power and social control; studies in sociology of law; state, culture and security; and political sociology.

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