Book Review

Review of Low, Setha, and Mark Maguire (eds.).
2019. *Spaces of Security: Ethnographies of Securityscapes, Surveillance, and Control*. New York: New York University Press.
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In recent years, a tsunami of monographs, edited collections, policy reports and guidance, and academic journal articles have been published that reflect upon the current century's obsession with security and the processes of securing multiple types of space—from the individual to the planetary. The majority of this work has deployed conceptual frameworks that either draw on the work of Foucault and his followers in depicting social space as a metaphor for a site or container of power that usually constrains, especially in exceptional times, or utilise ideas associated with the Copenhagen School's conception of securitisation as a process-based explanation that explores how state actors transform subjects into security issues.

Although such accounts have illuminated the burgeoning of defensive landscapes, surveillance practices, and new regimes of security planning as responses to heightened levels of perceived risk, threat, and insecurity, they arguable preference synchronic accounts that portray forms of power and knowledge as monolithic, with state practices fitting seamlessly with practices of self-creation. This has subsequently resulted in calls to move beyond such meta-approaches to the study of security, which focus on formal institutions of government, and develop a more nuanced view of institutions and their effects on society that show greater sensitivity to diversity and heterogeneity. In parallel, an “everyday” turn within a broad range of security studies and their analyses of how non-elite knowledge—for example, how security perceptions differ according to identity, ethnicity, religion, class, and gender—is incorporated into state-level security strategies has begun to emerge with a focus upon how street-level spatial practices and feelings are embodied in spaces as a result of being received by citizens in ways that unsettle, disrupt, or resist traditional technocratic accounts.

Whilst *Spaces of Security* draws partially on the security studies orthodoxy of governmentality, biopolitics, and securitisation in terms of framing the collection of chapters, it is very much situated in new ideas and methodologies that belong to the everyday security camp. In particular, the chapters focus upon the myriad of ways in which anthropological accounts, and the methodologies they deploy, can assist our understanding of the complex and often hidden relationships between security and space. As the editors argue in the introductory chapter, through a spatial lens, “this volume draws together ethnographic research on spaces of security from different regions and scales, [with] each contribution focus[ing] of specific spatio-temporal

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configurations, infrastructural interventions, and shifts in discourse and practice [that] bring into focus the ways that security acquires its discursive and concrete form" (1).

The strength of this collection is the diversity and geographical spread of the case examples utilised in the ten chapters. Whilst much of the existing literature in security studies focuses almost exclusively upon Euro-American and Middle Eastern examples, this volume has detailed contributions that unpack securityscapes at a range of scales and that cut across a variety of security cultures in Kenya, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, the United States, Israel, Guam, Romania, and India. These studies highlight how security is both normative and interstitial to life in the new millennium, as well as how security is often hidden and almost invisible to conventional study. Collectively, the chapters demonstrate how the slippery political concept of security has an almost unique power to include and exclude and, hence, is central to contemporary concerns around social and spatial justice and more equitable forms of sustainable urban development.

This book's production is also timely. The majority of the chapters advance and complement discussions that resulted from prior writings on the "war on terror" through a focus upon everyday, embodied, or affective practices, and, in so doing, provide much needed critique of how such spaces of security are differentially experienced on the ground by different social groups or stakeholder communities. That said, the contributions in this volume can also help make sense of how we can best research the recent upsurge in novel terror attacks against the public spaces of the city or other critical infrastructure, the controversial deployment (and increased banning) of advanced facial recognition software by law enforcement agencies without adequate legal and ethical considerations, the social impacts and residential displacement linked to the continued hyper-securitisation of mega-events, and the potential of satellites and unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) to weaponise space in the vertical plane (215).

Overall, this volume provides a coherent set of contributions that collectively advance understandings of everyday security and space and, to quote the editors, demonstrate "how the ephemeral qualities of security actually take on concrete form and reproduce material landscapes of fear, violence and enclosure" (24). This collection will be of great use to those studying or researching multiple aspects of surveillance security across many different disciplines, notably, those who work at the intersection of anthropology, sociology, political science and international relations, and (urban) geography.