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Review: Security Suspicion: An Ethnography of Everyday Life in Israel
Security & Suspicion: An Ethnography of Everyday Life in Israel by Juliana Ochs
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“but also condition how people see, the way they move, and the way they relate to Palestinians” (book cover). Indeed, her study bears out her argument that “everyday security practices create exceptional states of civilian alertness that perpetuate—rather than mitigate—national fear and ongoing violence” (book cover).

In *Security & Suspicion*, Ochs suggests that understanding Israeli state discourses and everyday practices of security and surveillance facilitates answering the questions, “Why does the Israeli population persist in supporting an occupying government?” and “What are the forces that perpetuate Israeli desires for separation from Palestinians?” (p. 15). The book examines a variety of security concepts and practices: the impact of suicide bombings (chapter 2); police and government profiling of “suspicious people” (chapter 4); the effect of security practices on everyday life (chapter 5); the “domestication of security” in the reconception of the home as a safe place (chapter 6); and tours of Israel’s “separation wall” and fantasies of a safe, bounded, and walled Israeli homeland (chapter 7).

Ochs presents valuable information about the Israeli way of life. However, her focus on a narrow stratum of the population—such as that residing nowadays in central Jerusalem—makes some of her conclusions inadequate. For instance, her central argument in chapter 6, which sites *home* as a place perceived by Israelis as protected (pp. 121–22), may be true for the Westernized elites who reside in Tel Aviv metropolitan area or central Jerusalem, but it does not apply to Mizrahi residents of the settlements, or Mizrahim who reside in the development towns on the periphery (e.g., Sederot, Kiryat Shmona) who may not perceive their homes as “protected.” By means of gentrification, a (mainly Mizrahi) lower class has been displaced into settlements in the West Bank, where they serve as human shields for the urban white elite. Similarly, the separation between Palestinians and Israelis, which Ochs frequently reiterates (pp. 83–84, 92, 118, 143), applies principally to Gush Dan and the whitened center of Jerusalem, but does not take into account the relations/frictions

OCCUPATION, FEAR, AND STATE DISCOURSE

Security & Suspicion: An Ethnography of Everyday Life in Israel, by Juliana Ochs, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011, ix + 216, Notes to p. 178, Bibliography to p. 195. Index to p. 202. \$35.00, hardcover.

Reviewed by Rahela Mizrahi

In Israel, “fear and suspicion not only permeate political rhetoric,” writes Ochs,

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between Mizrahim from Ma'aleh Adu-mim and Palestinians from neighboring al-'Azariyya, or residents of "mixed cities" such as Acre, Lod, Ramleh, Jaffa, and Haifa.

The book is also replete with factual inaccuracies. For instance, Ochs states that Arabs do not serve in the Israeli army (pp. 56, 88), contradicting this assertion just pages later when she points out that Bedouins and Druze do in fact serve (p. 124). Some of the book's historical inaccuracies derive from her adoption of the Zionist narrative of the events of 1948. Ilan Pappé, in his book *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, has shown that 250,000 Palestinians were expelled *before* the "invasion" of Palestine by the Arab countries in 1948 and *not* after it (Pappé, p. 40). Pappé has shown that the expulsion of the Palestinians from their homeland in 1948 was a planned ethnic cleansing rather than the accidental by-product of a "war" initiated by Arab countries, as Ochs presents (pp. 22–23). Pappé's *Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, and the works of writers such as Edward Said and Joseph Massad that challenge the Zionist narrative, appear in the bibliography, bestowing on Ochs's book a semblance of progressiveness, but their key claims are not discussed.

The book does contain a critical discussion of some problematic issues, such as the use of the term *terror* by the West, the post-Zionist historians as new Zionists (p. 8), the limitations of human rights organizations (p. 158), the representation of the Jew as victim (p. 15), and the use of the Holocaust (pp. 68–69). Nonetheless, focusing only on Israeli Jews (p. 15), and concentrating the analysis on suicide bombings, decontextualize and dehistoricize the analysis, thereby actually reinforcing the depiction of the Jew as a victim. Moreover, other controversial terms in the book are used uncritically: *occupation* (for territories occupied only in 1967 not including Jerusalem; p. 5); *war* (for the events of 1948); *the peace process* (p. 37); *Palestinian violence* (pp. 5, 10, 11a, 11b, 15, 69) as compared with *Israeli military operation/acts* (pp. 6, 9, 13); Jewish *defense* and *guarding* as compared with Arab *hostility*, *attacks*, and *riots* (pp. 20–21); and the unquestioned

assumption that the State of Israel is a *democratic regime* (p. 15). Without a discussion of the term *occupation* and the character of the Israeli regime, it is difficult for Ochs to answer the question why Israelis support this or that "occupying government" (p. 15).

Ochs contends that the cause for the second intifada from the Israeli perspective is the Palestinians' refusal to recognize "the right of the State of Israel to exist as a Jewish state" (pp. 5–6), which arouses fear, which is then reinforced by state discourse and practices. An Arabic folk parable says that a thief cannot sleep at night, and won't let anyone else sleep. The second intifada in particular reminded Israelis that in addition to the occupation, they are sitting on land that they and their fathers plundered not so long ago from its legal owners, who sit and wait patiently nearby.