

# SECURITY THEOLOGY, SURVEILLANCE AND THE POLITICS OF FEAR

This examination of Palestinian experiences of life and death within the context of Israeli settler colonialism broadens the analytical horizon to include those who "keep on existing" and explores how Israeli theologies and ideologies of security, surveillance and fear can obscure violence and power dynamics while perpetuating existing power structures. Drawing from everyday aspects of Palestinian victimization, survival, life and death, and moving between the local and the global, Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian introduces and defines her notion of "Israeli security theology" and the politics of fear within Palestine/Israel. She relies on a feminist analysis, invoking the intimate politics of the everyday and centering the Palestinian body, family life, memory and memorialization, birth and death as critical sites from which to examine the settler colonial state's machineries of surveillance, which produce and maintain a political economy of fear that justifies colonial violence.

NADERA SHALHOUB-KEVORKIAN is the Lawrence D. Biele Chair in Law at the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law and the School of Social Work and Social Welfare, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. She is a long-time anti-violence, native Palestinian feminist activist and the Director of the Gender Studies Program at Mada al-Carmel, the Arab Center for Applied Social Research in Haifa.



#### CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN LAW AND SOCIETY

Cambridge Studies in Law and Society aims to publish the best scholarly work on legal discourse and practice in its social and institutional contexts, combining theoretical insights and empirical research.

The fields that it covers are: studies of law in action; the sociology of law; the anthropology of law; cultural studies of law, including the role of legal discourses in social formations; law and economics; law and politics; and studies of governance. The books consider all forms of legal discourse across societies, rather than being limited to lawyers' discourses alone.

The series editors come from a range of disciplines: academic law; socio-legal studies; sociology; and anthropology. All have been actively involved in teaching and writing about law in context.

Series editors

Chris Arup Monash University, Victoria

Sally Engle Merry New York University

Susan Silbey Massachusetts Institute of Technology

A list of books in the series can be found at the back of this book.



## SECURITY THEOLOGY, SURVEILLANCE AND THE POLITICS OF FEAR

Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian





## **CAMBRIDGE**UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107097353

© Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2015

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2015

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Shalhub-Kifurkiyan, Nadirah, author.

Security theology, surveillance and the politics of fear / Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian. pages cm. – (Cambridge studies in law and society)

ISBN 978-1-107-09735-3 (hardback)

1. Palestinian Arabs – West Bank – Social conditions – 21st century. 2. Palestinian Arabs – Gaza Strip – Social conditions – 21st century. 3. Military occupation – Social aspects – West Bank. 4. Military occupation – Social aspects – Gaza Strip. 5. West Bank – Colonization. 6. Gaza Strip – Colonization. 7. Israelis – Colonization – West Bank – History – 21st century. 8. Israelis – Colonization – Gaza Strip – History – 20th century. 9. Israel-Arab War, 1967 – Occupied territories. 10. Palestinian Arabs – Government policy – Israel. I. Title.

DS119.76.S535 2015 956.95'3044 – dc23 2015006867

ISBN 978-1-107-09735-3 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.



To Mike





## **CONTENTS**

List of tables Acknowledgements	page ix x
Introduction: Settler colonialism, the politics of fe and security theology The settler colonial framework The politics of fear Historicizing Israeli fear and security theology Security theology within global racial politics: us/them Everydayness	ear 1 5 7 11 16 19
2 Price tagging Palestinians: Alternative methods of surveillance and control A history of body and mind control in colonial security police. Body, land and mind control What is Tag Mehir? Tag Mehir's violence: The political economy of surveillance. Psychosocial trauma, surveillance, security and fear: Borrowin meanings from the colonized. The writings on the wall: Necropolitics in security discourse. Conclusions.	21 24 28 29 33
3 Israel in the bedroom: Citizenship and entry law The Citizenship Law in context The Law as a tool for framing and racialization "Security" concerns about the claim to return Demographic policy and population control The judiciary as political On children, securitization and the law Necropolitics and the manufacturing of the feared Other Conclusions	47 50 53 53 56 57 61 64 69
4 Hunted homeplaces Homeland: Mapping geographies of violence The Nakba Law as memory surveillance The erasure of home as homeland	73 74 78 82

© in this web service Cambridge University Press

vii



#### CONTENTS

The Israeli policy of house demolitions: A "military necessity"	" 87
Trapped: Palestinians, their homes and colonial hunting zone	s 90
Maneuvering through the homespace to avoid demolition	92
The torture of self-demolition	92
Demolition day	96
Women and the attack on home	102
The meaning of home and fear of homelessness	108
The attack on the home: From topography to topology	110
5 Death and colonialism: The sacred and the profan	e 116
Enlivening the dead and killing the living	118
The sacred and the profane	120
Legalized spaces of difference: Court decisions on cemetery	
desecrations	121
The inscription of power over the Palestinian dead body	127
Nuha: Burial by stealth	128
Rasha: Losing her baby twice	131
"Sneaking" back home: Seta's fight to return	133
May and Reham: The fight to return	136
Mundane surveillance and securitization	137
Necropolitics and the economy of the sacred and the profane	139
6 Birth in Jerusalem	144
Time and space	149
The everyday: Calculus and revolt	155
Invisibility and liminal space	159
Ontological claustrophobia: Trying to take a deep breath	164
Inscribing power over women's birthing bodies	169
7 Conclusion: Newborns, new deaths and	
the "gravediggers"	172
Securitizing the political economy of fear	174
Topographies and relations of power	177
Surveillance, everydayness and "common sense"	179
The epistemology of the details	181
Gravediggers	184
Bibliography	188
9 1 1	
Index	209

viii



## **TABLES**

4.1 Home demolitions in the West Bank and East Jerusalem	
as of September 12, 2012 (source: B'Tselem, 2012b)	page 83
6.1 Population, birth rate and natural increase in selected	
cities, 2010	153



### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

It is difficult to write these words of gratitude to my wonderful friends and family in the midst of the attack on Gaza, when Palestinians are living in, dying in, challenging and surviving the settler colonial death zone. But I feel that in spite of all the dispossession around me, what I have learned from those to whom I owe this book is that we must engage with love, as thanking, acknowledging and loving is the only way to challenge the political economy of war.

Throughout the four years that I have worked on this book, I have learned a tremendous amount and have been supported by wonderful people. I am grateful to many Palestinian children, women and men who trusted me and shared their ordeals, hardships and resistance with me. I am also grateful to friends, colleagues, organizations and family who supported me throughout my research. I am profoundly grateful to a family member by choice, Professor Michael B. Preston, a man who is more than a scholar, friend and partner, a man to whom I am indebted. Professor Preston supported my work with a passionate commitment to critical race theory and critical engagement with issues of social justice in the context of accumulation of oppression. Our joint readings and discussions, and his phenomenal energy and discerning eye were the utmost power behind this book. I dedicate my work to his memory, as he passed the day this manuscript was submitted.

Special thanks are due to scholars/friends that read my writing, commented and helped with their invaluable reflections to shape my analyses, including Rosemary Sayigh, Rima Hamammi and Lila Abu-Lughod, who were always willing to find the time to read, discuss, comment and help in fine-tuning my arguments, which they did with love and care. I have enjoyed the discussions with and readings of Daphna Golan, Dorit Roer-Strier, Magid Shihadeh, Suvendrini Perrera, Joseph Pugliese, Sunera Thobani, Sherene Razack, Urvashi Butalia, Inderpal Grewal, Fionnuala Ni Aolain, Ann Stoler, Elia Zureik, Nadim Rouhana, David Myers, David Lloyd, Kathleen Barry, Ronit Lentin and Sumona DasGupta, who supported my work and were always willing to

Х



#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

reflect and debate with me over the past years. A special thank you goes to Professor Sally Merry for engaging with my work and for her constant support. Each of them encouraged me to bring together my work and helped me shape this book.

Very special thanks are also due to the institutions that engaged in, supported and helped me conduct research that became the foundation of the various chapters of this book, including the Women's Studies Center in Jerusalem and Mada al-Carmel – the Arab Center for Applied Social Research for supporting my research on the Citizenship Law, the Luce Foundation and Mada al-Carmel for supporting my research on Price Tag, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for supporting my research on housing demolition and the attack on Home, the International Conflict Research Institute (INCOR) at the University of Ulster for supporting my research on death, and the YWCA of Jerusalem for supporting my research on birth in Jerusalem.

I wish to thank Professor Nadim Rouhana, the Director of Mada al-Carmel, for many great discussions, and for helping me sharpen my arguments on surveillance and fear. I am grateful to Nadim and the staff at Mada al-Carmel, including Einas Odeh Haj for her insights, Suhad Daher-Nashef for her generosity and constant willingness to find time to sit, discuss and elaborate on sophisticated elements of my theorization, Areen Hawari, Mtanes Shihadeh and Himmat Zu'ubi for engaging themselves in various ways with my research, and for providing valuable information and perspectives, insightful views and invaluable friendship. Very special thanks are also due to Sama Aweidah and Aida Isawi from the Women's Studies Center in Jerusalem. Sama and Aida were always a source of knowledge and great friendship to me.

In the late stage of this book, I was blessed with a wonderful PhD student, visitor, young scholar and friend, Sarah Ihmoud, as well as the support and help of Nina Griecci, whose attentiveness and insights were priceless. I also benefited from the readings, comments and editing of wonderful professionals, students, research assistants and editors, including Helene Hogari, Katie Gonzales, Kate Rouhana, Laieth Jayousi, Mia Lattanzi and Stephan Dobson. A special thank you goes to two of my wonderful students and close friends who were there for me, by searching for new sources, court decisions, academic articles and much more, Sana Khsheiboun and Yossi David.

I am indebted to my family, Gaby, Maro, Tamar and Salpy, for their sustaining love and for our dialogues over the years. Gaby was a great supporter, as he helped me in collecting testimonies and articles for my



#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

work, and was there for me at every turn. This book was always a collective family project discussed over meals. My mother, who always listened to me, shared her own ordeals and was very attentive to the details of my work. My sister Yasmin, her husband Joul and their family, Siwar, Majd and Nadine for their warmth, love, great discussions and wonderful food. My brother George, his wife Suhad and their family always engaged in heated political discussions that paused more challenges to my research. My sisters Fatina, May and Lea provided unending love. This book would not have been possible without the care, unconditional love and support of my family.

NADERA SHALHOUB-KEVORKIAN Armenian Quarter, the Old City, Occupied East Jerusalem 12 August 2014