

The everyday political economy of private security

Adam White & Tessa Diphooorn

To cite this article: Adam White & Tessa Diphooorn (2024) The everyday political economy of private security, *Policing and Society*, 34:1-2, 1-9, DOI: [10.1080/10439463.2023.2268256](https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2023.2268256)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2023.2268256>



Published online: 02 Jan 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 427



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

INTRODUCTION



The everyday political economy of private security

Adam White^a and Tessa Diphooorn^b

^aSchool of Law, University of Sheffield, Sheffield, United Kingdom; ^bDepartment of Cultural Anthropology, Utrecht University, Utrecht, Netherlands

ABSTRACT

In this article we map out a new research agenda for studying private security. We do so by bringing together a series of theoretical, methodological, and geographical ‘turns’ in this area of research that, in our view, signpost the way towards a deeper understanding of this market. The first turn is theoretical and concerns the shift from neoclassical economic interpretations of the market for security towards more political economic readings that excavate the various non-economic structures through which this market is constituted. The second turn is methodological and refers to the move from an (over)reliance on formal-legal, census-like data, towards the embrace of thicker qualitative (often ethnographic) data that gives voice to a range of ground-level perspectives in the market for security. The third turn is geographical and relates to how the long-standing focus on the Anglosphere is giving way to a more expansive map of the market for security that incorporates studies from across Africa, Asia, Continental Europe, and South America. We call this research agenda ‘the everyday political economy of private security’.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 22 September 2023
Accepted 25 September 2023

KEYWORDS

Private security; plural policing; political economy; qualitative research methods

Introduction

The study of private security is now over half a century old.¹ Once a niche topic, it has today become a well-established field of social scientific enquiry, cutting across a range of disciplines (e.g. anthropology, criminology, gender studies, geography, law, political science and sociology) and giving rise to handbooks, edited volumes, textbooks, and journal special issues like this one (e.g. Grassiani and Diphooorn 2017, Abrahamsen and Leander 2016, Berndtsson and Kinsey 2016, Higate and Utas 2017, Churchill *et al.* 2020). This attention is unsurprising given that, according to *The Guardian* (2017), ‘at least half the world’s population lives in countries where there are more private security workers than public police officers’. And the concentration of economic power in this market is such that, as *The Financial Times* (2023) reports, Allied Universal – the world’s largest private security company which acquired former market leader G4S in 2021 – employs no less than 800,000 workers across 90 countries. The private security industry is a prominent – and some would say necessary (Rigakos 2016) – feature of twenty-first century capitalism, generating extensive regimes of protection and social control that transcend both nation-state borders and traditional public/private dichotomies. It makes sense that an ever-growing number of scholars have elected to explore its dynamics.

While it may be difficult to tease out overarching trends in this rich and diverse literature, this is precisely what we attempt to do here. Drawing from our long association with the field, we identify a series of complementary and intersecting theoretical, methodological, and geographical ‘turns’ in this area of research that, in our view, signpost the way towards a deeper understanding of the

private security industry. The first turn is theoretical and concerns the shift from neoclassical economic interpretations of the market for security towards more political economic readings that excavate the various non-economic structures through which this market is constituted. The second turn is methodological and refers to the move from an (over)reliance on formal-legal, census-like data, towards the embrace of thicker qualitative (often ethnographic) data that gives voice to a range of bottom-up perspectives in the market for security. The third turn is geographical and relates to how the long-standing focus on the Anglosphere is giving way to a more expansive map of the market for security that incorporates studies from across Africa, Asia, Continental Europe, and South America. In this introductory article, we offer a broad-brush profile of each 'turn', sketching out the contours of an interdisciplinary research agenda we call the 'everyday political economy of private security'. The purpose of the special issue is to showcase analyses that feed into and further develop this agenda.

From neoclassical economics to political economy

In basic terms, neoclassical economics views the market as a self-regulating sphere of economic activity in which patterns of production, consumption, and valuation are brought into effect through the rational behaviour of buyers (seeking optimal purchases) and sellers (seeking profit maximisation). By contrast, political economy regards the market as part of the wider social system, constituted through an almost limitless array of social structures such as patriarchy, class, race, colonialism, tradition, democratic will, and zeitgeist, to name just a few. While some of the early 'classics' in the private security literature were written from an explicit political economic perspective – perhaps most notably Spitzer and Scull (1977) who interpret market dynamics through the prisms of class conflict, urbanisation, globalisation, and pacification – it was a long time before political economic scholarship in the field moved beyond this important starting point. Many, if not most, of the studies conducted in the 1990s and 2000s leaned (usually implicitly) towards the neoclassical economic approach, especially with reference to questions of market growth (e.g. Jones and Newburn 1998), market regulation (e.g. Button 2002) and police-private security relations (e.g. Nalla and Hummer 1999). Not coincidentally, this period also witnessed the ascendance of the nodal governance model that embraces the proliferation of commercial nodes within decentred or polycentric security networks (Johnston and Shearing 2003, Shearing and Wood 2003, Wood and Shearing 2007). Although this model does not rule out the influence of social structures within the market for security, it does little to bring these structures into frame, thus reinforcing a neoclassical economic reading. We do not seek to diminish the importance of research in this vein – either then or now. Yet we do think it provides an incomplete picture compared to those studies which align with a political economic perspective.

Importantly, then, towards the back end of the 2000s we see the beginnings of a conscious turn towards a political economic analysis of the market. There are two notable markers of this trend. The first is Loader and Walker's (2007) anchored pluralism model that gives conceptual prominence to one of the most influential social structures in the market for security – the institutional and cultural legacy of the state and its police forces. The second is Abrahamsen and Williams' (2011) security assemblages model that, channelling Bourdieusian theory, maps out the different forms of not just economic capital but also social, cultural, and symbolic capital animating the private security industry. Over the past decade or so, a growing number of scholars have taken their lead from and/or entered into a constructive dialogue with the anchored pluralism model (e.g. White 2012, Scarpello 2017, Loader and White 2017, Puck 2022) and the security assemblages model (e.g. Lippert and O'Connor 2003, Bureš 2014, Schouten 2014, Diphoorn and Grassiani 2016, Colona 2020), or have pursued new directions of political economic research on private security (e.g. Chisholm 2014, Chisholm and Eichler 2018, Kammersgaard 2021, Kostara and White 2023). What all these studies have in common is that they dig beneath the illusion that the behaviour of buyers and sellers is shaped (solely) by economic motivations in an unfettered marketplace and

instead reveal the manifold non-economic materialities and normativities that also run through this sphere of activity. This theoretical positioning represents the first axis of the 'everyday *political economy* of private security'.

From census-like data to ground-level data

In hindsight, a notable feature of research on private security conducted in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s is that it relies heavily on two particular forms of data. The first is quantitative data on market structure, size, and value collected from national governments, national registers of occupations and corporations, and/or national-level professional and trade associations in the private security industry. Common subdivisions within these data include: the annual turnover of the sector; the number of companies in the sector; and the number of private security officers in the sector as a whole and in its numerous subsectors (e.g. security guarding, door supervision, surveillance, close protection, and so on). The second is legal data on the statutory regulations surrounding the industry in any given country. These data usually centre upon licencing regimes that target companies and/or individual workers and specify fitness to work criteria, minimum training standards, complaints mechanisms, and sanctions for non-compliance. Studies based on these two forms of data can be described as 'census-like' because they offer a snapshot view from above, drawing high-level economic and legal contours on national maps of the sector (e.g. Shearing and Stenning 1981, George and Button 1999, De Waard 1999). They also invite comparisons between countries across clearly demarcated national borders and with national police forces across neatly defined public/private divides (see chapters in Jones and Newburn 2006). These forms of data, together with the analyses they give rise to, will always occupy an important position in the private security literature because they offer basic but essential context. However, they shed little to no light on what private security workers are doing on the ground, including how they are performing and experiencing tasks, interpreting regulations, engaging with police officers, interacting with publics and impacting upon social orders. To explore these dynamics, richer and more empirically grounded data is required.

It is significant, then, that in more recent years there has been a turn towards the collection of qualitative (often ethnographic) data through interviews with and observations of individuals who work in the industry (frontline officers, security managers, company executives), individuals whose work brings them into contact with the industry (police officers, regulators, politicians) and/or individuals whose daily lives are somehow shaped by the industry (members of the public). While fieldwork of this kind was still in the minority during the 2000s with examples few and far between (such as Rigakos 2002, Wakefield 2003, Button 2007), over the past decade or so it multiplied at a striking rate (e.g. Søgaaard 2014, Diphooorn 2016, Grassiani 2018, Colona 2020, Larkins 2023). A key reason for this trend is the increasing attention given to policing and private security within the disciplines of anthropology and sociology (see contributions in Garriot 2013, Maguire *et al.* 2014, Karpiak and Garriott 2018, Low and Maguire 2019, Bacon *et al.* 2020a, b). What unites all these studies is that, while they regularly draw upon census-like economic and legal data for contextual purposes, they primarily use thick qualitative data that captures the behaviours and standpoints of those on the ground, generating a far more nuanced and complex picture of everyday dynamics in the industry – dynamics in which, for instance, national borders are transcended, public/private divides are blurred, regulatory structures are subverted, roles and identities are negotiated, imaginaries and beliefs are constructed, unintended consequences abound and social order is continually made, unmade and remade in unpredictable and often quite remarkable ways. This methodological orientation – which complements the theoretical turn towards political economic models outlined above – represents the second axis of the 'everyday *political economy* of private security'.

From the Anglosphere to the global

During the 1970s and 1980s, research on private security was conducted almost exclusively within Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States (e.g. Spitzer and Scull 1977, Shearing and

Stenning 1981, South 1988). While this is understandable given the prominence of criminology – and especially policing studies – within these countries, together with the growth of the industry against the backdrop of neoliberalism, it led to an early bias towards the Anglosphere. The 1990s saw the scope of the field open out to some extent, with Australia (e.g. Prenzler and Sarre 1998, 1999, Sarre and Prenzler 1999) and South Africa (Brogden and Shearing 1993, Irish 1999, Kempa *et al.* 1999) receiving particular attention, yet these new geographical currents more often than not served to reinforce rather than disrupt existing bias towards the English-speaking world. As a consequence, at the beginning of the twenty-first century the analytical toolkit for thinking and writing about private security reflected a distinctly Anglocentric worldview, especially in relation to questions of market security, the material and normative role of the state, relations between police and private security officers, and interactions between frontline workers and members of the public – a predisposition which remains evident today (see, for instance, the geographical orientation in all editions of the ever popular *Handbook of Security*, Gill 2006, 2014, 2022). To be sure, we are not critiquing research undertaken in the Anglosphere – it represents an important part of the overall picture. Our point is more that it constitutes only *part* of the picture, and we should therefore be wary of overgeneralising from it. To address this bias, we need studies of private security conducted from across the globe.

Fortunately, such a geographical turn is well underway. A notable early attempt to widen the horizons of the literature is Jones and Newburn's (2006) edited volume *Plural Policing: A Comparative Perspective*. Though half the book is devoted to countries in the Anglosphere (with chapters on Australia, Canada, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States), there are chapters on Brazil, France, Greece, Japan, and the Netherlands, thereby marking an important break with entrenched geographical patterns. This trend continued steadily over the next decade or so with a gradual increase in the number studies conducted beyond the Anglosphere (e.g. Davis *et al.* 2003, Mktutu and Sabala 2007, Juska 2009). In more recent years, however, the production of such research has accelerated at pace. There is now a dynamic body of work on countries across Africa (e.g. Wairagu *et al.* 2004, Gumedze 2007, Berg 2010, Diphooorn 2016, Diphooorn and Kyed 2016, Higate and Utas 2017, Chinwokwu 2018, Colona 2020), Asia (e.g. Gooptu 2013, Scarpello 2017, Choi and Li 2021, Paasche and Sidaway 2021, Polak-Rottmann 2018), the Middle East (e.g. Konopinsky 2009, Cihan 2016, Grassiani and Volinz 2016, Grassiani 2018, Volinz 2018, Dölek and Rigakos 2020), Continental Europe (e.g. Van Steden 2007, Terpstra 2017, Saarikkomäki and Alvesalo-Kuusi 2020, Light *et al.* 2022;), the Caribbean (e.g. Bishop 2013, Bishop and Montoute 2017, Jaffe and Diphooorn 2019), and Latin and South America (e.g. Argueta 2012, Müller 2016, Grajales 2017, Puck 2017, Lopes 2018, Larkins 2023) – alongside, of course, the still extensively studied countries in the Anglosphere.

The dialogue resulting from these studies has revealed many convergences and divergences in private security dynamics, both within and between these different regions, spotlighting where established concepts and empirical patterns can be generalised and where they need to be disrupted. Some of the most important and interesting of these comparisons revolve around: regimes and trajectories of power; the distribution of wealth; notions of race, ethnicity, and gender; the range and prominence of agencies in the policing landscape (from police and private security to death squads and vigilantes); levels of trust in these different policing agencies and the political system more broadly; degrees of violence and lethality both in the industry and society at large; and the extent of technological integration in the industry. Furthermore, several studies have focused explicitly on the 'global' dimension of private security – that is, the flow of services, goods, people, technologies, logics, and norms across regions, and the impact of this movement on both global and local trajectories, understandings, and practices of security (e.g. Grassiani and Mueller 2019, Grassiani 2019, Arduino 2021;). This geographical openness represents the third and final axis of the 'everyday political economy of private security'.

The research agenda

We can now offer a guiding statement of our research agenda. The *everyday political economy of private security* is: theoretically aligned with political economic approaches that explore the manifold social structures through which the market for security is constituted; methodologically oriented towards the collection of thick qualitative data that capture the behaviours, experiences, and sentiments of those individuals who work for or come into contact with the industry at ground-level; and geographically open to global outlooks and comparisons that embrace convergences and divergences in market dynamics within and between different countries and regions. At the same time, however, it is important to clarify what this agenda does not do. First, it does not signal a radical new direction in this area of research. As preceding sections show, it draws together analytical currents that are already in motion. Our aim is to showcase these currents and illustrate how they can be harnessed more effectively moving forward. Second, it does not offer an explicit normative framework for evaluating the 'good' and the 'bad' in the market for security. Although some of work referenced over the preceding pages is certainly critically minded (e.g. Rigakos 2016, Garmany and Galdeano 2018, Diphorn and Grassiani 2020, Grassiani 2020), our agenda is more concerned with the descriptive, explanatory, and explorative questions of 'what', 'how', and 'why'. Finally, while it may offer a constructive critique of research conducted outside the theoretical, methodological, and geographical parameters delineated above, it does not seek to diminish or marginalise this body of work. There are many ways of doing social scientific research on private security and, so long as studies are undertaken with rigour and integrity, they have the capacity to add value to the field. Clarifications aside, though, the test of any research agenda is whether scholars choose to run with it. With this in mind, the remainder of this special issue assembles a group of scholars whose research is informed by and gives expression to this agenda.

To begin with, Erella Grassiani brings together the security assemblage model (and accompanying notions of military capital) with ethnographic fieldwork to explore the dynamics of Israeli security fairs. She uncovers how a series of orientalist and colonialist logics, relating in particular to the dominant 'us' and 'them' framings of post-9/11 (counter)terrorism policy dynamics, inform the buying and selling of what on the surface present as neutral security products and services. Next, Logan Puck and Adam White operationalise the security assemblage model using interview and archival data to compare police-private security relations in Mexico and the United Kingdom. They reveal patterns of convergence and divergence across these countries shaped by the differential market value placed upon the objectified cultural capital of the police (uniforms, vehicles, etc) and the embodied cultural capital of the police (police officers themselves). Completing something of a trilogy, Susana Durao, Erika Robb Larkins and Paola Argentin also combine ideas of security assemblages (and related ideas of economic and symbolic capital) with ethnographic data to investigate configurations of police and private security in Brazil. They illustrate how resources and networks accumulated through the police, together with attendant class and racial hierarchies, penetrate deep into the practices of private security officers charged with protecting residential enclaves in urban areas.

Subsequently, Cecilia Hansen Lofstrand combines structure-agency and community of practice heuristics with observation and interview data to explore how private security officers in Sweden balance the obligations and powers placed upon them by statutory regulations with often countervailing police expectations. She reveals an ongoing process of street-level negotiation in which these officers variously overstep and underplay their obligations and powers, thereby producing social orders noticeably at odds with the formal provisions set out in statute books. Continuing these themes, Leandro Mulinari blends a similar focus on state-market dialectics with interview data to investigate how violent encounters between private security officers and civilians play out on the ground in Sweden. He finds that while sometimes police officers arriving at the scene reinforce the authority of private security officers, other times they diffuse or undermine this authority, once again resulting in varied articulations of social order and state-market power. Finally, SJ Cooper-Knock, Julie Berg and Tessa Diphorn enter into critical dialogue with the nodal governance

and anchored pluralism models to reconceptualise the relationship between publics (rather than the singular public) and policing. Through an examination of gated communities, contractual collectives, and digital networks in South Africa, they argue that private security does not simply corrode publicness (as is commonly argued) but also creates it.

Taken together, these six articles illustrate the potential of the everyday political economy of private security. Drawing on a variety of political economic models, rich qualitative datasets, and a global outlook from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, they demonstrate how this agenda both captures a distinctive approach to conducting research on private security while simultaneously embracing analytical pluralism. We hope scholars in the field view this special issue as an invitation to explore this agenda further.

Note

1. By private security we refer to the buying and selling of policing-like products and services within civil society. We do not refer to the buying and selling of military-like products and services within hostile environments, which often goes by the same name, but has a somewhat different lineage.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the founding members of the Everyday Political Economy of Plural Policing network whose insights and enthusiasm fuelled our desire to assemble this special issue. We would also like to thank Jenny Fleming for her patience and belief in an idea that has been a long time in the making.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

References

- Abrahamsen, R., and Leander, eds. A.2016. *Routledge handbook of private security studies*. London: Routledge.
- Abrahamsen, R., and Williams, M.C., 2011. *Security beyond the state. private security in international politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Arduino, A., 2021. Chinese private security companies in the Middle East. In: J. Fulton, ed. *Routledge handbook on China–Middle East relations*. London: Routledge, 312–321.
- Argueta, O., 2012. Private security in Guatemala: pathway to its proliferation. *Bulletin of Latin American research*, 31 (3), 320–335. doi:10.1111/j.1470-9856.2012.00734.x
- Bacon, M., Loftus, B., and Rowe, M., 2020a. Ethnography and the evocative world of policing (part I). *Policing and society*, 30 (1), 1–10. doi:10.1080/10439463.2019.1701453
- Bacon, M., Loftus, B., and Rowe, M., 2020b. Ethnography and the evocative world of policing (part II). *Policing and society*, 30 (2), 117–119. doi:10.1080/10439463.2019.1701454
- Berg, J., 2010. Seeing like private security: evolving mentalities of public space protection in South Africa. *Criminology and criminal justice*, 10 (3), 287–301. doi:10.1177/1748895810370315
- Berndtsson, J., and Kinsey, C., eds. 2016. *Routledge research companion to security out-sourcing*. London: Routledge.
- Bishop, M.L., et al., 2013. *Private security companies in the Caribbean: case studies of St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Jamaica*. Saint Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago: University of the West Indies.
- Bishop, M.L., and Montoute, A., 2017. Private security in the Caribbean. *Crime, violence and security in the Caribbean*, 200–219. doi:10.4324/9781315525778-10
- Brogden, M., and Shearing, C., 1993. *Policing for a New South Africa*. London: Routledge.
- Bureš, O., 2014. Private security companies in the Czech Republic: rearticulating the security field and transforming politics. *Security dialogue*, 45 (1), 81–98. doi:10.1177/0967010613514789
- Button, M., 2002. *Private policing*. Devon: Willan Publishing.
- Button, M., 2007. *Security officers and policing. powers, culture and control in the governance of private space*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Chinwokwu, E.C., 2018. An assessment of the relationship between private security companies and the police in crime prevention in Lagos Metropolis, Nigeria. *International journal of police science & management*, 20 (1), 80–93. doi:10.1177/1461355718756413

- Chisholm, A., 2014. Marketing the Gurkha security package: colonial histories and neoliberal economies of private security. *Security dialogue*, 45 (4), 349–372. doi:10.1177/0967010614535832
- Chisholm, A., and Eichler, M., 2018. Reproductions of global security: accounting for the private security household. *International feminist journal of politics*, 20 (4), 563–582. doi:10.1080/14616742.2018.1516512
- Choi, S.Y.P., and Li, S., 2021. Migration, service work, and masculinity in the global South: private security guards in post-socialist China. *Gender, work & organization*, 28 (2), 641–655. doi:10.1111/gwao.12605
- Churchill, D., Janiewski, D., and Leloup, P., eds. 2020. *Private security and the modern state: historical and comparative perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Cihan, A., 2016. The private security industry in Turkey: officer characteristics and their perception of training sufficiency. *Security journal*, 29, 169–184. doi:10.1057/sj.2013.4
- Colona, F., 2020. Police guns and private security cars. Ordering the state through socio-material policing assemblages in Nairobi. *Environment and planning D: society and space*, 38 (3), 436–452. doi:10.1177/0263775820923374
- Davis, R.C., et al., 2003. The public accountability of private police: lessons from New York, Johannesburg, and Mexico City. *Policing & society*, 13 (2), 197–210. doi:10.1080/10439460308029
- De Waard, J., 1999. The private security industry in international perspective. *European journal on criminal policy and research*, 7, 143–174. doi:10.1023/A:1008701310152
- Diphooorn, T., 2016. *Twilight policing. private security and violence in urban South Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Diphooorn, T., and Grassiani, E., 2016. Securitizing capital: A processual-relational approach to pluralized security. *Theoretical criminology*, 20 (4), 430–445. doi:10.1177/1362480616659821
- Diphooorn, T., and Grassiani, E., eds. 2019. *Security Blurs: The Politics of Plural Security Provision*. London: Routledge.
- Diphooorn, T., and Grassiani, E., 2020. 'Why do we need Your Research?': The Ethics of Studying Security and the Dilemmas of the Anthropologist-Expert. *Journal of Extreme Anthropology*, 4 (1), 116–134. doi:10.5617/jea.7605
- Diphooorn, T., and Kyed, H.M., 2016. Entanglements of private security and community policing in South Africa and Swaziland. *African Affairs*, 115 (461), 710–732. doi:10.1093/afraf/adw028
- Dölek, Ç., and Rigakos, G., 2020. Private security work in Turkey: A case study of precarity, militarism and alienation. *Critical Sociology*, 46 (1), 119–140. doi:10.1177/0896920518814293
- The Financial Times*. 2023. *World's biggest private security group puts multi-billion dollar IPO on hold* [online]. Available from: <https://www.ft.com/content/464b1562-c33d-4257-9d5e-c12e4972841f>.
- Garmany, J., and Galdeano, A.P., 2018. Crime, Insecurity and Corruption: Considering the Growth of Urban Private Security. *Urban Studies*, 5, 1111–20. doi:10.1177/0042098017732691
- Garriot, W., ed. 2013. *Policing and Contemporary Governance: The Anthropology of Police in Practice*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- George, B., and Button, M., 1999. The case for regulation. *International Journal of Risk, Security and Crime Prevention*, 1 (1), 53–57.
- Gill, M., ed. 2006, 2014, 2022. *Handbook of Security*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Gooptu, N., 2013. Servile sentinels of the city: Private security guards, organized informality, and labour in interactive services in globalized India. *International Review of Social History*, 58 (1), 9–38. doi:10.1017/S0020859012000788
- Grajales, J., 2017. Private security and paramilitarism in Colombia: governing in the midst of violence. *Journal of Politics in Latin America*, 9 (3), 27–48. doi:10.1177/1866802X1700900302
- Grassiani, E., 2018. Between security and military identities: The case of Israeli security experts. *Security Dialogue*, 49 (1-2), 83–95. doi:10.1177/0967010617747202
- Grassiani, E., 2019. Mobility through Self-Defined Expertise: Israeli Security from the Occupation to Kenya. In: B. Refslund Sørensen, and E. Ben-Ari, eds. *Civil-Military Entanglements: Anthropological Perspectives*. London: Berghahn Books, 185–205.
- Grassiani, E., 2020. Critical engagement when studying those you oppose. In: M. de Goede, E. Bosma, and P. Pallister-Wilkins, eds. *Secrecy and methods in security research: a guide to qualitative fieldwork*. London: Routledge, 248–260.
- Grassiani, E., and Diphooorn, T., 2017. Private security: ethnographies of private security. *Conflict and society: advances in research*, 3 (1), 1–72. doi:10.3167/arcs.2017.030101
- Grassiani, E., and Mueller, F., 2019. Brazil-Israel relations and the marketing of urban security expertise. *Latin American perspectives*, 46 (3), 114–130. doi:10.1177/0094582X19831442
- Grassiani, E., and Volinz, L., 2016. Intimidation, reassurance and invisibility: Israeli security agents in the old city of Jerusalem. *Focaal*, 75, 14–30. doi:10.3167/fcl.2016.750102
- The Guardian*. 2017. *The industry of inequality: Why the world is obsessed with private security* [online]. Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2017/may/12/industry-of-inequality-why-world-is-obsessed-with-private-security>.
- Gumedze, S., 2007. *Private security in Africa. manifestation, challenges and regulation*. Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies (ISS).
- Higate, P., and Utas, M., eds. 2017. *The politics of private security provision in Sub-Saharan Africa: from the global assemblage to the everyday*. London: Zed Books.
- Irish, J., 1999. *Policing for profit: The future of South Africa's private security industry*. Pretoria: ISS.

- Jaffe, R. and Diphoorn, T. G., 2019. Old Boys and Badmen: Private Security in (Post)Colonial Jamaica. *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 21 (7), 909–927.
- Johnston, L., and Shearing, C., 2003. *Governing security: explorations in policing and justice*. London: Routledge.
- Jones, T., and Newburn, T., eds. 1998. *Private security and public policing*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, Policy Studies Institute.
- Jones, T., and Newburn, T., eds. 2006. *Plural policing. A comparative perspective*. London: Routledge.
- Juska, A., 2009. Privatisation of state security and policing in Lithuania. *Policing & society*, 19 (3), 226–246. doi:10.1080/10439460902863329
- Kammersgaard, T., 2021. Private security guards policing public space: using soft power in place of legal authority. *Policing and society*, 31 (2), 117–130. doi:10.1080/10439463.2019.1688811
- Karpiak, K.G., and Garriott, W., eds. 2018. *The anthropology of police*. London: Routledge.
- Kempa, M., et al., 1999. Reflections on the evolving concept of 'private policing'. *European journal on criminal policy and research*, 7, 197–223. doi:10.1023/A:1008705411061
- Konopinsky, N., 2009. *Ordinary security: An ethnography of security practices and perspectives in Tel Aviv*. PhD Thesis. University of Edinburgh.
- Kostara, F., and White, A., 2023. Private security discretion: economic rules, social norms, and situational judgement in the night-time economy. *Criminology & criminal justice*, doi:10.1177/17488958231170162
- Larkins, E.R., 2023. *The sensation of security: private guards and social order in Brazil*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Light, M., Singh, A.M., and Gold, J., 2022. Private security and national security: The case of Estonia. *Theoretical criminology*, 26 (4), 664–683. doi:10.1177/13624806221099930
- Lippert, R., and O'Connor, D., 2003. Security assemblages: airport security, flexible work, and liberal governance. *Alternatives*, 28 (3), 331–358. doi:10.1177/030437540302800302
- Loader, I., and Walker, N., 2007. *Civilizing security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Loader, I., and White, A., 2017. How can we better align private security with the public interest? Towards a civilizing model of regulation. *Regulation & governance*, 11 (2), 166–184. doi:10.1111/rego.12109
- Lopes, C., 2018. Policing labor: the power of private security guards to search workers in Brazil. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 70, 583–602.
- Low, S.M., and Maguire, M., eds. 2019. *Spaces of security: ethnographies of securitescapes, surveillance and control*. New York: New York University Press.
- Maguire, M., Frois, C., and Zurawski, N., eds. 2014. *The anthropology of security: perspectives from the frontline of policing, counter-terrorism and border control*. London: Pluto.
- Mkutu, K.A., and Sabala, K., 2007. Private security companies in Kenya and dilemmas for security. *Journal of contemporary African studies*, 25 (3), 391–416. doi:10.1080/02589000701662442
- Müller, M.-M., 2016. *The punitive city. privatized policing and protection in neoliberal Mexico*. London: Zed.
- Nalla, M.K., and Hummer, D., 1999. Relations between police officers and security professionals: A study of perceptions. *Security journal*, 12, 31–40. doi:10.1057/palgrave.sj.8340028
- Paasche, T.F., and Sidaway, J.D., 2021. *Transsecting securitescapes: dispatches from Cambodia, Iraq, and Mozambique*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Polak-Rottmann, S., 2018. The safest country in the world? Notions of risk and security in the Japanese private security industry. *Vienna journal of east Asian studies*, 10 (1), 83–106. doi:10.2478/vjeas-2018-0004
- Prenzler, T., and Sarre, R., 1998. *Regulating private security in Australia*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.
- Prenzler, T., and Sarre, R., 1999. A survey of security legislation and regulatory strategies in Australia. *Security journal*, 12, 7–17. doi:10.1057/palgrave.sj.8340026
- Puck, L., 2017. Uneasy partners against crime: the ambivalent relationship between the police and the private security industry in Mexico. *Latin American politics and society*, 59 (1), 74–95. doi:10.1111/laps.12011
- Puck, L., 2022. The state in private security: examining Mexico City's complementary police. *Democracy and security*, 18 (1), 1–25. doi:10.1080/17419166.2021.1972286
- Rigakos, G.S., 2002. *The new parapolice. risk markets and commodified social control*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Rigakos, G.S., 2016. *Security/capital: A general theory of pacification*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Saarikkomäki, E., and Alvesalo-Kuusi, A., 2020. Ethnic minority youths' encounters with private security guards: unwelcome in the city space. *Journal of contemporary criminal justice*, 36 (1), 128–143. doi:10.1177/1043986219890205
- Sarre, R., and Prenzler, T., 1999. The regulation of private policing: reviewing mechanisms of accountability. *Crime prevention and community safety: An international journal*, 1 (3), 17–28. doi:10.1057/palgrave.cpcs.8140022
- Scarpello, F., 2017. Toward the political economy of plural policing: taking stock of a burgeoning literature. *International studies review*, 19 (3), 407–429.
- Schouten, P., 2014. Security as controversy: reassembling security at Amsterdam airport. *Security dialogue*, 45 (1), 23–42. doi:10.1177/0967010613515014
- Shearing, C.D., and Stenning, P.C., 1981. Modern private security: its growth and implications. *Crime and justice*, 3, 193–245. doi:10.1086/449080
- Shearing, C.D., and Wood, J., 2003. Nodal governance, democracy, and the New 'denizens'. *Journal of Law and society*, 30 (3), 400–419. doi:10.1111/1467-6478.00263

- Søgaard, T.F., 2014. Bouncers, policing and the (in) visibility of ethnicity in nightlife security governance. *Social inclusion*, 2 (3), 040–051. doi:[10.17645/si.v2i3.34](https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v2i3.34)
- South, N., 1988. *Policing for profit. The private security sector*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Spitzer, S., and Scull, A., 1977. Privatization and capitalist development: the case of the private police. *Social problems*, 25 (1), 18–29. doi:[10.2307/800464](https://doi.org/10.2307/800464)
- Terpstra, J., 2017. 'Not just one node among many'—plural policing in a state-dominated context: the case of Austria. *Policing and society*, 27 (1), 68–81. doi:[10.1080/10439463.2015.1012169](https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2015.1012169)
- Van Steden, R., 2007. *Privatizing policing. describing and explaining the growth of private security*. Amsterdam: Boom Juridische Uitgevers.
- Volinz, L., 2018. Governance through pluralization: Jerusalem's modular security provision. *Security dialogue*, 49 (6), 438–456. doi:[10.1177/0967010618789758](https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010618789758)
- Wairagu, F., Kamenju, J., and Singo, M., 2004. *Private security in Kenya*. Nairobi: Security, Research and Information Centre.
- Wakefield, A., 2003. *Selling security. The private policing of public space*. Devon: Willan Publishing.
- White, A., 2012. The new political economy of private security. *Theoretical criminology*, 16 (1), 85–101. doi:[10.1177/1362480611410903](https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480611410903)
- Wood, J., and Shearing, C.D., 2007. *Imagining security*. Cullompton: Willan.