Mobility through Self-Defined Expertise

Israeli Security from the Occupation to Kenya

Grassiani, E.

Publication date
2019

Document Version
Final published version

Published in
Civial–Military Entanglements

License
Article 25fa Dutch Copyright Act

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.
Contents

Acknowledgments vii
Introduction Rethinking Civil–Military Connections: From Relations to Entanglements Birgitte Refslund Sorensen and Eyal Ben-Ari 1
Chapter 1 The Invisible Uniform: Civil–Military Entanglements in the Everyday Life of Danish Soldiers’ Families Birgitte Refslund Sorensen and Maj Hedegaard Heiselberg 21
Chapter 2 Capable Patriots: Narratives of Estonian Women Living with Military Service Members Tiia-Triin Truusa and Kairi Kasearu 42
Chapter 3 Military, Society, and Violence through Popular Culture: Japan’s Self-Defense Forces Eyal Ben-Ari 63
Chapter 4 From Obligatory to Optional: Thirty Years of Civil–Military Entanglements in Norway Elin Gustavsen and Torunn Laugen Haaland 80
Chapter 5 Framing the Other in Times of War and Terror: Explorations of the Military in Germany Manon Tomfoerde 100
Chapter 6 Domesticating Civil–Military Entanglements: Multiplicity and Transnationality of Retired British Gurkhas’ Citizenship Negotiation Taeko Uesugi 121
Acknowledgments

The Entanglement Project received funding from the International Network Programme of the Danish Ministry of Education and Research. The workshop in Copenhagen was supported by the Department of Anthropology, University of Copenhagen, and the workshop in Israel by the Kinneret Center for Society, Security and Peace at Kinneret Academic College and the Open University of Israel through the very welcome support of Prof. Yagil Levy.
Morality through Self-Defmed Expertise

Israeli Security from the Occupation to Kenya

Eilee Grosszidd

Introduction

On Saturday, 18 July 2016, the Westgate shopping mall, which featured in international headlines after the bloody attack by members of Al Shabaab in 2013, was reopened. A newspaper covering the opening reports: "IRG, the Israeli security company hired in 2014 insists that with its overhaul the mall is now the safest mall in Nairobi today. Managing Director Haim Cohen has trained the mall's security personnel assiduously. 'Our lifespan as trained professionals abroad frame their work as the Israeli expert on security,' Cohen said. 'If you would have it differently you have to do it seriously.'"

This utterance by Cohen is an insightful example of how the many Israeli security professionals abroad frame their work as the Israeli expert on security. Cohen's utterance does not seem to take security professionals who export specific know-how and technologies as security experts. I will argue that these professionals are characterized by nationalist, racial, and colonial features, Israeli security.
rity actors use ideas of a specific "Israeli-ness" and "African-ness" to create a space in which a need for "Israeli security expertise" and the special, "superior" characteristics of this knowledge and technologies reinforce each other.

Importantly, I will contextualize this "security mobility" by paying special attention to the intimate relationship between the global and mobile security industry and the fact that Israel is a highly militarized society and a state that has been conducting a military occupation for over fifty years. This causes a civil-military entangling of different scales; the first is the existence of a close-knit security network (Sheffer and Barak 2013) within Israel, where military and (private) security actors are almost interchangeable as they move in and out of public and commercial positions. On an international scale, as I will show in this chapter, the military export becomes entangled with the private security industry as part of the global military industrial complex. These civil-military entanglements, furthermore, work in two directions; the military background of security professionals helps them in their commercial efforts, while the global security industry, as part of the military-industrial complex, strengthens the engagements.

This work feeds into the work on other kinds of "security circulations" of security workers, such as veterans in Sierra Leone, or "militarities" of security workers, instead of foreign private security companies (Christensen 2017), and South African veterans joining private security companies after apartheid was abolished (Singer 2003). In these cases, military expertise is used in order to gain employment after becoming redundant as a result of political and social changes, and to overcome or professional changes. While these studies usually focus on lower-level engagements, I will look at the ways Israeli veterans who have become business-owners use a self-definition as experts and Israeli security branding (Grassiani 2017) in their private careers. Israel is often perceived as a security hub; the country has succeeded in framing itself as the place to be when one needs security solutions. This Israeli security brand (Grassiani 2017), which is largely based on military experiences and on stories of Israel's battles in the past, is sold abroad as part of a global security market. Israel makes for an interesting and telling case here, as its brand seems to pay off: Israel is successfully selling its products worldwide, using its military experience as capital, and is internationally seen as a major player in the security industry. Besides its successful branding, Israel invests heavily in military technologies that are later sold to foreign parties, and it has a big pool of retired military specialists who are eager to take their knowledge into the private sphere. As mentioned before, these civil-military entanglements, which go from the national to the global, make Israel quite unique and a good case to show the ways security expertise can be framed and how it mobilizes security technologies and knowledge.

I will examine the self-proclaimed expertise of these security professionals and the ways they frame their knowledge and skills as authoritative, efficient, and "authentic" vis-à-vis an incompetent "Other." Through this focus I hope to shed light on the ways military expertise and ideologies become mobile, and how specific, militarized ways of thinking and acting become entangled with the global security industry and civilian surroundings far away from where they were developed.

I will begin this chapter by briefly explaining my use of the concept of "security," together with my methods, and continue to discuss the social and political context of the phenomenon I am discussing. I will elaborate here on processes of militarization, the Occupation, and the resulting production of a pool of security professionals. I will then go on to look at the ways these professionals become mobile through the construction of a militarized, colonial expert discourse that is infused with logics of "Israeli-ness" and "African-ness," in order to understand more deeply how elements of militarization become entangled within the global security industry.

Using "Security" as an Emic and Etic Term

"Security," as has also been argued by Neocleous and Rigakos (2011), often hides the many asymmetrical power relations that stand behind it, the human rights violations that are done in its name, and its selective character. "Security" is not neutral and not something necessarily good (for all).

"Security," furthermore, Neocleous and Rigakos (2011: 20) write, "alienates us from solutions that are naturally social and forces us to speak the language of state rationality, corporate interest and individual egoism." I largely agree with their statement and hence believe it to be important to explain how I intend to use the term here. In the Israeli context, security has become an almost sacrosanct concept or a security fetish (Neocleous 2007), which dictates that you can never
have enough of it. In her work, Juliana Ochs (2011: 2) shows the ways
Israelis, who often call the political situation of conflict “the security sit-
uation” (or haamatat haḥitchon), have internalized ideas of security. Wars
have first in its name and peace is seen as only possible if there is
the ways it is used by the people I
that the concept should be seen k fh concept of security for granted,
has argued for. I will thus not take the concept of security for granted,
hand investigative what it means for people who use it and, in this case, sell
it and analyze its use by critically examining the contexts in which it is
constructed.

Methods
This chapter is based on fieldwork in Israel and Kenya, consisting of par-
ticipant observation and interviews and on the analysis of media reports
security specialists, consultants, and employees. Meeting with security
professionals is not always easy as they have a tendency to be very closed
and secretive. By using a snowball method, however, I managed to inter-
view quite a few consultants and managers. When I started looking for
view quite a few consultants and managers. When I started looking for
Israels working in security in Nairobi, it seemed at first they would be
hard to find; however, very soon, with the help of my fellow researchers
in Nairobi, I found some names and stories about Israeli connections
present in Nairobi. I found some names and stories about Israeli connec-
tions, such as the rumor, which proved to be true, of an Israeli security
operations, such as the rumor, which proved to be true, of an Israeli security
managers at one of Nairobi’s many shopping malls. These men (they were
manager at one of Nairobi’s many shopping malls. These men (they were
all men, almost all between forty-five and sixty years of age), furthermore,
all tended to know each other.

The fact that I am Israeli helped tremendously. The moment potential
research participants learned this fact, their tone changed and their will-
ingness to help me increased. Language also became important: the in-
terviews I conducted with Israelis were in Hebrew, their mother tongue,
which made communication and understanding each other much easier.

Israeli Militarization, Securitization, and the Occupation

While much work on the Israeli military (e.g., Ben-Ari 1998; Levy 1998);
and the “security network” (Sheffer and Barak 2013) have insightfully an-
alyzed the internal processes within the military and within Israel’s society,
these studies have rarely been outspokenly critical of Israel's occupation,
leaving a distinct political point of view outside of their analysis. Here I
have chosen to incorporate such a political view and to analyze Israeli so-
ciety as context for the security industry with distinct colonial dimensions
(Zureik, Lyon, and Abu-Laban 2010; Zureik 1979; Gregory 2004). This
frame of analysis will emphasize the significant power differences that
exist between Israelis and Palestinians and the way the colonial activities
of Israel give way to an array of security technologies and self-proclaimed
expertise to be sold elsewhere. Analyzing Israel as such means to critically
look at its ongoing military occupation of the Palestinian territories. Rigat-
ko (2011) defines a settler colonialist state as being wrapped up in a set-
ters’ enterprise, which means it occupies and disposesses land of a peo-
ple who were already living on this land, tries to forcibly pacify this local
people, and beats down any possible resistance. Israel, when looking at its
activities in the Occupied Territories, definitely fits this definition. Israel
has been maintaining a military occupation in Palestinian territory since
1967. While it can be argued that the colonial enterprise of Israel started
with the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948 and even before, for our
purposes I will focus on the occupation and settlement activities outside
of the green line, as it is in these Occupied Territories and in the “fight
against terror” that most technologies, skillsets, and knowledge have been
acquired and developed (see also Graham 2011; Klein 2007).

Since its creation, Israel has fought many wars and has been seen by the
international world and in particular by itself as the victim of the aggres-
sive Arab world surrounding it. Always on the defense, Israel constructed
an image of itself as a David fighting a Goliath, and used this image to
legitimize its growing defense and security industry. This siege mental-
ity that has taken hold of the state and society has only grown in recent
decades. Since the first Intifada in the late 1980s and the suicide attacks
following the defeat of the Oslo Accords in the early 1990s, Israeli society
has grown increasingly obsessed with its security and with warding off
any threat, real or imagined (Ochs 2011).

Israel’s internal civil-military relations are crucial here. As stated be-
fore, the military itself and processes of militarization play an enormous
role in society. Not only are all Jewish Israelis conscripted into the mili-
itary, but society itself is drenched with “things military,” with ideas about
the military as the most moral and righteous in the world and about the
good soldier” who, after service, becomes a “good citizen.” Children in
schools are taught about the military and learn about soldiers protecting
them at the “borders” (which are often not recognized physical borders in
the Occupied Territories). Much has been written about this militarization
The occupation of the Palestinian Territories, which was the result of the Six Day War in 1967, is often not called as such in mainstream Israeli media and society. People speak about “the territories” or “Judea and Samaria,” referring to the Biblical term for the region. The main message in the mainstream public debate is that Palestinians are a threat to Israel’s security and that they should be controlled and separated from the Israelis. Human rights violations that have been the result of this occupation, violence and humiliation at checkpoints and during raids for example (Grassiani 2013), are not problematized within this discourse, if they are raised at all. When one looks at how this occupation materializes, one can’t miss it. For example, that high tech companies that are looking for skilled workers eagerly recruit people who have served in the prestigious intelligence unit 8200 (Swed and Butler 2015). Military knowledge that has been developed within the context of a military occupation and has produced systems of surveillance, cyber technologies, and weapons are used in civilian context, often outside of Israel. This clearly shows how both realms, military and the civilian/commercial, become entangled with each other; not only through knowledge and technologies that move between them but also, as we shall see below, through actors who come from one realm (the military) and continue to the next (private security) while still intensely using their military networks (Sheffer and Barak 2013). Not only does the military background of these professionals help their role on an international level within the commercial world; the success of Israeli security products on the global security market also helps to legitimize Israel’s military activities and occupation. The entanglements thus work in both directions.

Importantly, the Israeli security professionals who take their knowledge and skills abroad are also products of this militarized society. They are former combatants, often having served as professionals in the IDF or in the ISA (Israeli Security Agency), after which they seamlessly enter the private security market (Grassiani 2017). Using their “military capital” (Sweed and Butler 2015), former military personnel become successful in the private sector while still working with military actors as well, making the distinctions between both realms, as said before, very blurry and entangled. As I will show here, this entanglement takes on an international flavor when Israeli military skills are used on the global security market.

Security Mobility: From Israel to Kenya

The global mobility of this industry sheds a new light on the way anthropologists have traditionally written about mobility. Mobilities and circulations have caught the interest of anthropologists and other scholars in the last decades; see, for example, the call for a new mobility paradigm by Sheller and Urry (2006). Anthropologists in particular have been working mostly on human migration within this field, Glick and Sala- zar (2013), for example, have done extensive work about what they have called regimes of mobility to emphasize how mobility for some means immobility for others and the unequal power relations that are at play.

Interestingly, within these so-called mobility studies, discourses on security are seen as counter-discourses to moving, since security efforts are seen as things that cause immobility or disruption (Salazar 2014). Or as
Sheller and Urry (2006: 207) write, “There are places and technologies that enhance the mobility of some peoples and places and heighten the immobility of others, especially as they try to cross borders.” I want to move beyond this focus on the mobility of people while security technologies are beyond the industry and asks how (post)colonial histories shape the security logic and technology, also when not related directly to migration and border security. Here I argue that a discourse of expertise makes the mobility of security technologies, actors, and knowledge possible by making mobility and border security. I hope to contribute to the mobilities debate by tracing the movement of “lay” Other who ing is logical, legitimate, and attractive to the client. The discourse that Israeli security actors in Nai- in apparent need of it. The discourse that Israeli security actors in Nairobi, “there is no such thing as a free lunch,” is drenched with notions about an expert self who comes to offer his help to the unknowing Other. Chisholm (2015: 116) alerts us to the “culture of whiteness that pervades the industry” and asks how (post)colonial histories shape the security industry. As Graham (2018) has shown, Israeli military knowledge and technologies are not only transported into other conflicts and wars, they also can be traced back to the Western state, not only exports its colonial technologies extensively to other Western countries (such as the United States and Europe), but extends them to the South as well; “to developing” countries that are thought to be in need of Israel’s expertise and tools to combat their problems with crime and terror. Within this mobility, racial discourses that differentiate the “developed, white Israeli expert” and the “underdeveloped, am­ between the “developed, white Israeli expert” and the “undeveloped, amateur, black Kenyan” become apparent, as I will show further on.

The Case of Kenya

Nairobi is a hub for Israeli security activities. Israel and Kenya have had diplomatic ties since 1963, when then prime minister of Israel Golda Meir met with Kenyatta, Kenya’s prime minister, and they agreed to form a partnership that was to help their ties and enter in a developmental program. In 1968, Israel launched the Oko Project, a development program with Kenya. This timing was not random; as African countries were establishing their independence, Israel was quick to create new relationships with these strategically located states. Already then, security ties were consolidated, with Israel training personnel in the National Security Unit, a notorious paramilitary group (Osenyo 2004). After the OKO Project, the Israeli security industry and the “undeveloped, amateur black Kenyan” became apparent. In the more contemporary context of the “fight against terror,” Israel has become a “natural” partner for Kenya in fighting against fundamentalist Islam. Recently (November 2017), Prime Minister Netanyahu undertook a trip to the African continent, including Kenya, bringing many businesspeople with him, among them representatives of big players in the Israeli security industry. While such trips (former Foreign Minister Lieberman already visited the continent twice, in 2009 and in 2014) are planned under the heading of diplomatic ties and agricultural and development work, security and military ties are at the heart of it (Molman 2009; Sadeh 2016). In 2011, Israel and Kenya signed a treaty to help each other in times of need against terror attacks, which has been enforced by several visits by officials to and from Kenya. During a meeting in July 2016, Kenyan president Kenyatta was quoted as saying that “As they have done for years, the Prime Minister and the Israeli people continue to extend invaluable support to Kenya; helping us build capacity and bolster internal and regional security” (in Namunane 2016). Furthermore, PM Netanyahu has pledged to help Kenya with the building of the wall between that country and Somalia (Namunane 2016). Comparisons with the wall in the Occupied Territories are easily made here.

This intense security cooperation was again in the media headlines after the attack on the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, mentioned before, as rumors went around about “Israeli forces” that helped the Kenyans to end the siege. If even though my investigation has not given me any evidence for this involvement, the mythical status of Israel helping out as experts on anti-terrorism persists and is very telling. Over the years Kenya has become a major trading partner for Israel, and in November 2018 it signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Israel geared toward improving this partnership considerably (Kondo 2018). Much of this trade is agricultural. While Israel advertises the agricultural or economic empowerment projects under MASHAV, Israel’s Agency for Development Cooperation, within this development discourse of “helping and educating” the needy in Kenya, there is also room for security. Israel frames itself as an expert, more knowledgeable partner who comes to help its friend in need, and offers training, expertise, and equipment
Below I will indicate how we can analyze such discourse of expertise anthropologically in order to understand its effects on the mobility of these security goods.

Expertise: Israeli Security Actors in Kenya

Thinking about Experts

Dominic Boyer (2008: 39) defines the expert as “an actor who has developed skills in, semiotic-epistemic competence for, and attentional concern with, some sphere or practical activity.” He starts out from the idea of “the expert” to investigate how the anthropologist should go about investigating him/her. Here, however, I am interested in looking at the way expertise comes into being through the use of distinct discourses. I am less interested in knowing whether someone is or is not a “real” expert, as much as I want to understand the ways expertise is performed and framed. Expertise is thus not only about “knowing,” but also about “doing” or even “acting,” and about “becom(ing) intimate with... culturally and also the language that is used to self-identify as an expert, are equally important to consider here. In her review of anthropological work on expertise, Carr (2010) notes that besides behavior of an individual, expertise, is made up of Israeli “integrator” firms that sell complete security systems. These companies are registered in Israel and compete in tenders of the Kenyan government, for example, or of electricity/energy companies. Once they receive the job, they come in with Israeli personnel who stay in Kenya for months, sometimes years, to finalize the project. They offer a “turnkey” solution, meaning that they bring in all different aspects of technologies and services to the client, who then only needs to “turn the key” and ignite the “engine.”

An example of such a company is company X. A big contract that was given to this company was for a project at the Jomo Kenyatta International
Airport in Nairobi (JKIA). An employee of company X whom I had contacted already in Israel invited me to come to their office at the airport. I took a taxi and undertook the forty-minute to two-hour-long journey (depending on Nairobi traffic) and found the company in a new office, which was also of Nairobi National Park, where, as the employees told me, you could see the giraffes walking by while sitting behind your desk. The job that was to man the control room was won by the Kenyan Airport Authority with a contract worth US$6 million. Besides setting up an elaborate technological advanced over this group one can find individual consultants who work with local and managers at specific sites, such as shopping malls. They work with security professionals and Israelis living abroad. This group typically had lived in Nairobi for years, some even decades. They know the local context well and have had relationships with the local security industry as well.

The second group of Israeli security actors is more diverse. Within this group one can find individual consultants who work with local and international clients, but also consultants who are employed as security managers at specific sites, such as shopping malls. They work with security companies, train security professionals and Israelis living abroad. They also assist with the hiring of local personnel, who security system, they also assisted with the hiring of local personnel, who security system, they also assisted with the hiring of local personnel, who

The knowledge and the technologies such consultants and companies brings to Kenya can be traced back directly to the "security network" (Sheffer and Barak 2013). They find their origins in the strategies of control and notions on security that are constructed in Israel and the Occupied Territories, and that are used by Israeli security and defense agencies, of which the security actors were part of. Such ideas—about who the enemy is, how the enemy should be "taken out," for example—are also deeply embedded in society. Furthermore, fences, surveillance methods, and models of facility security are copied directly from the systems of control in place in the Occupied Territories (Berda 2011, 2013). Many of the Israeli security professionals I spoke to pride themselves, for example, in the use of Israeli security models that were based on proactive security instead of "just waiting till something happens," emphasizing the difference between these approaches and the inferior "African" ones (or the absence of the latter). Their approach has been developed in Israel in response to the threats of suicide bombers and similar "surprise" attacks Israel has known for decades. These threats, as will also become clear below, are not seen within a context of the occupation, and thus the methods to counter them are also sanitized from any reference to Israel's systems of control; no mention is made of Palestinians and their hardships.

My questions for the interviewees mainly focused on the reasons they were in Kenya and how they explained their success. In the answers to these questions, two logics surfaced: one that emphasized the Israeli characteristics of the business, and another that explained the attraction of their (perceived) expertise by emphasizing "African" needs. I do not in any way perceive these logics as being objective or constant. Instead, I see them as part of the way Israeli security experts perceive their own work abroad and as part of the discourse with which they enact this expertise and mobility. Obviously, the broader context is one of making money, of "capitalizing on expertise," as one of my interviewees insightfully said. But I am interested here in looking beyond those market forces to understand how its producers frame their expertise and identify as experts. Their appeal and imagined and performed expertise in light of a supposed security "vacuum" is, I argue, what makes them mobile.

The expert framing in this case, I pose, is characterized by colonialist and racist ideas, within which the Israeli specialist has something to teach the "incompetent and unaware African." This will become clearer by looking in more detail at the arguments these experts voice. As mentioned before, the discourse of Israeli security professionals is sanitized almost in entirety from any reference to the military occupation that stands at the basis of their specialty.
Israeli-ness: A Zionist, Colonial Logic

Israeli security experts working in Kenya frame their expertise first by emphasizing a specific “Israeli-ness,” which, I argue, consists of two main ideas. The first one is related to the Israeli experience in defense and security and Israel’s vast experience with fighting terror, thus using historical notions of experience and victimhood related to Israel’s past. The second idea with which security professionals explain Israeli presence and their own expertise in Kenya has to do with a specific Israeli style of working, of being able to improvise, get things done, think “outside of the box.” Both ideas are thus part of the way expertise is “performed” and framed to the outside world.

When I asked the employees (both in Israel and in Nairobi) about what makes their systems and work typically Israeli, they answered almost unanimously that it was related to “where we come from,” or “our reality.” Being an Israeli myself, most interviewees looked at me in a way that said something like “seriously... you know why.” This idea of Israelis being superior in the “security business” because of their vast experience with terror and with many enemies around is taken for granted completely, and it was hard for me to even ask people to verbalize it. When they did, they emphasized a certain reality that “we Israelis” live in, and have lived in for decades. Usually they uttered “unfortunately” afterwards to emphasize it was out of their hands; Israel was attacked and Israelis could not but defend themselves. Again, the political context of the occupation is absent in these explanations. One consultant in Nairobi told me, “It is about... being ‘smart’—Jews who came to Israel were smart, educated, ... went through a lot of wars and won most of them. This gave them experience to become experts in security.” In his perception, taking it all the way back to the fight for independence strengthens his argument; as another consultant said, “Israel has been fighting terror for years. If you live in Israel this is what you have to do.” Another added, “We [Israelis] have had bitter experience; that is why we know so much.” The Israeli as a security and anti-terror expert (against his own) seems to be the default model to have some kind of advantage in these explanations.

When I asked the employees (both in Israel and in Nairobi) about what makes their systems and work typically Israeli, they answered almost unanimously that it was related to “where we come from,” or “our reality.” Being an Israeli myself, most interviewees looked at me in a way that said something like “seriously... you know why.” This idea of Israelis being superior in the “security business” because of their vast experience with terror and with many enemies around is taken for granted completely, and it was hard for me to even ask people to verbalize it. When they did, they emphasized a certain reality that “we Israelis” live in, and have lived in for decades. Usually they uttered “unfortunately” afterwards to emphasize it was out of their hands; Israel was attacked and Israelis could not but defend themselves. Again, the political context of the occupation is absent in these explanations. One consultant in Nairobi told me, “It is about... being ‘smart’—Jews who came to Israel were smart, educated, ... went through a lot of wars and won most of them. This gave them experience to become experts in security.” In his perception, taking it all the way back to the fight for independence strengthens his argument; as another consultant said, “Israel has been fighting terror for years. If you live in Israel this is what you have to do.” Another added, “We [Israelis] have had bitter experience; that is why we know so much.” The Israeli as a security and anti-terror expert (against his will) surfaces here. Following this idea and Israel’s successful branding of its expertise, security models that have been developed in Israel in the “fight against terror” are incorporated in the security of local shopping malls in Nairobi, for example. One veteran consultant told me the most important aspect of the “Israeli security model” is “to be a hunter, not a fisher.” By this he meant that Israelis do not wait around for something to happen, but act proactively to guard against any attacks. Such ideas then find their ways to shopping malls, embassies, and airports.

Related to this historical reasoning is an idea that emphasizes the current reality, the reality of kids growing up while needing to learn about security: “you experience security as kids, you learn about it from your parents, about looking out for suspicious people... there is the security thought,” said one consultant. He continued: “Afterwards you go into the military; there you become disciplined, you become patriotic. You are experienced even if you are very young, you are born into it.” Here we see a notion of passiveness that also emphasizes the inevitability of Israel’s situation and its negative relations with its neighbors, experiences with terror and attacks.

This notion, however, is compensated by a more active and related idea that emphasizes a specific Israeli working style and attitude. Closely related to what Tamar Katriel (1986) has called “talking straight, dugri speech,” this style consists of a direct, to-the-point approach, hard work, and an ability to improvise and think outside of the box. In relation to this, Sence and Singer (2009) have written about the “chutzpah” of Israeli entrepreneurs in the “Start-Up” world, which could be defined as a specific confidence, “gall, brazen nerve, effrontery.” The idea is that Israelis are not afraid to say it as it is and, in taking this risk, often get much further (in business) than others. While one might expect elaborate security models to be the thing emphasized by Israelis, this particular daring working style was much more dominant in the way they framed their expertise.

One consultant told me the following in a comparison to the way U.S. consultants would work in Kenya: “Israelis say what they want, in the U.S. they are nice... try to connect. Israelis show confidence, are assertive, take it or leave it, [they] come from the point of view: ‘we know everything,’ Marketing is not needed.” The person described here is thus confident in his skills and knows that by only mentioning where he comes from, he can sell those skills with ease. “Israeli security experience” becomes an actual brand that sells itself (Grassiani, 2017).

Another consultant in Nairobi phrased it as follows: “Israel has experience, we live it, we work hard, [we are] creative, loyal to the working place.” Yet another one told me that there is more “caring” (ekipatiti) and he really felt “part of the company” (adding that he felt this way even though he was not his). It is all about a specific “way of thinking, speed, action, thinking ahead.” Often this style of working is then compared to the way the Others, in this case the Kenyans, is working. One security professional told me, “What a local does in a week I can do in an hour. [To] think ahead, they [Kenyans] can’t do two things at once. [These are] different standards. The question is how to bring people to this standard.”

I will get into this comparison in the next paragraphs, but for now I want to underscore the “educational” argument that is brought to the fore here: this consultant is wondering how one could bring the high (Israeli)
standards to the Kenyans in a way that will actually stick. In the same line another security professional said to me, "It is all about mentality; this another security professional said to me. It is all about mentality; this another security professional said to me. [It is] nothing; they want to ride the wave of business in security but they don’t know anything." He continued to say that Kenyan security officials would come to him for advice and then they would repeat to others what they had heard from him; this happened even on television shows.

What we can see here isan outspoken distrust of local security skills. Israeli expertise is established against a very dark and pessimistic idea about Kenyan security. The Israeli consultants I spoke to almost unanimously agreed that Kenyans knew close to nothing about security, that they mostly did not care, and that their main concern was to make money off the security business. Only one consultant was somewhat more optimistic, and he said he saw real improvement in the attitude and skills of Kenyans compared with some years ago.

Management skills were also part of a theme that came back as lacking in the local skillset. The dominant idea was that Kenyans (or Africans in general) could not "look ahead" or "see the big picture." They didn’t have a "big head" (rosh gadol), a distinct military conceptualization of "looking beyond," at the whole context used by Israeli commanders and officers (Ben-Ari 1998; Grassiani 2013). Israeli expertise, in contrast, is highlighted as consisting of all those characteristics, as we saw earlier.

Related to the idea of the bad and sloppy security and management skills of Kenyans, or Africans in general, is a second logic I encountered consistently: the respect Israeli security companies and actors receive from the locals. As one interviewee said, "We know what we are doing; Israelis are respected." "As a consultant, being Israeli works," said another informant; "you are taken more seriously in this context." A manager of a big Israeli company that does a lot of work in Kenya talked about the image of authority (samchut) that Israel has. Another told me that people are in need of "knowledge, they ask for it, see you as different, also in tenders, when you say you are from Israel they look at you different." Again and again, people emphasized that being Israeli gave them extra standing in business; one security professional even told me they were "seen as gods."

Thus the ways that Israeli security expertise is framed through emphasis on "Israeliness" and "Africanness" can be seen as two sides of the same coin. This racist discourse shows the white privileged security expert who comes to "Africa" in order to share his knowledge with the black Other. With these different logics distilled from the discourse of these professionals, I have tried to understand how the experts self-identify and what ideas about the Other are part of this expert framing.
Conclusion

In this chapter, I analyzed the mobility of Israeli security professionals, together with their technologies and knowledge, through their self-framed narratives on a local level in Israel, through the security network, and internationally through the involvement of security agents and their military nationally through the involvement of security agents and their military through the security network. By looking at the case of Kenya, a capital in the global security market. By looking at the case of Kenya, a capital in the global security market. By looking at the case of Kenya, a capital in the global security market. By looking at the case of Kenya, a capital in the global security market.

The first logic consists of notions of a specific "Israeli-ness" that include a distinct Israeli working style and the "Israeli reality" as backdrop to Israel's knowledge and experience in security. The Israeli security professional is here defined as an expert who comes to the African continent to bring his knowledge to the lay Other. This lay Other comprises the second logic used. This logic is infused with colonialist and racist notions about a certain "African-ness" that includes the "incompetent African" who looks at Israeli superiority in security with awe. This discourse emphasizes Israel's position as (historical) victim in need of self-defense, posits that years of this defense grew an experienced security workforce, and is sanitized of any reference to Palestinian suffering or the occupation in general. In order to make these claims, I chose to analyze Israel as a whole, but also the language used by the security professionals, within its militarized social context and that of the military occupation. By doing so, it is possible to recognize the relationships and entanglements between the global security industry and the specific militarized and colonial background the security professionals come from.

Erella Grassiani

Erella Grassiani is an anthropologist and works as assistant professor at the University of Amsterdam. She is the author of Soldiering under Occupation: Processes of Numbing among Israeli Soldiers in the Al-Aqsa Intifada (Berghahn Books, 2013). Her current research is part of a wider project on Israeli privatization and globalization of security, with a specific focus on Israeli security and security mobilities (SECURCIT). It traces the flows of (Israeli) security and security mobilities worldwide and looks at the way cultural ideas, technologies, and consultants move around globally.

Notes

1. At the HLS/Cyber conference of November 2016, there were people from approximately eighty countries (Azulai 2016).
2. It is estimated that Israel is selling security and military products (including knowledge) to 190 countries (Halper 2015). In 2017, Israel was estimated to close export deals for defense products with the value of 9 billion US$ (from http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/israel-defense-export-sales-exceed-record-9-billion-1.6052046, accessed 29 November 2018.
5. I have used pseudonyms for the companies and names of employees in order to keep their anonymity (my concern is foremost with my interviewees anonymizing the companies protects them).
6. See Leo Rosten's definition (in Geiger n.d.).

References
