CORPSES, GUNS, PENISES AND PRIVATE MILITARY AND SECURITY
CORPORATIONS

CHRISTOPHER BRYAN HENDERSHOT

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ABSTRACT

      The purpose of this dissertation is to reconceptualise how the work of private military and security companies (PMSCs) comes to matter. The overarching argument is: PMSC work is made to matter through an entanglement of 'things', agencies and processes that are not exclusively bound to the needs or desires of clients, regulators or PMSCs themselves. The word matter is used in a dual-sense of becoming meaningful and becoming materialized. I advance the possibility that PMSC work comes to matter through multifaceted enactments of human, formerly human (e.g. the dead), not exclusively human (e.g. penises), and non-human (e.g. guns) agencies. Simultaneously I perform a thorough accounting of the four processes – privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing– that overdetermine what this works means to global relations of security. Constituting the (meta-)theoretical apparatus of this dissertation is an entanglement of post-human, queer and feminist considerations of materiality, agency and agents, normativity and accountability. By privileging a post-human, queer and feminist analysis I produce an uncommon understanding of PMSC work that reconfigures the boundaries of what actually matters amongst global relations of security. I also offer an incisive critique of the political-economic processes that overdetermine the meaning of the work that PMSCs perform.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
CRS	Congressional Research Services
CWC	US Congressional Commission on Wartime Contracting in Afghanistan and Iraq
DOD	Department of Defence (United States)
DOS	Department of State (United States)
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
ICoC	International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers
IR	International Relations
ISOA	International Stability Operations Association
MPRI	Military Professional Resources Incorporated
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRA	National Rifle Association
NSA	National Security Agency
PMC	Private Military Company
PMF	Private Military Firm
PMSC	Private Military and Security Corporation
POGO	Project on Government Oversight
PSC	Private Security Company
PSD	Personal Security Detail
PSP	Private Security Provider
SAS	Special Air Service
TCN	Third Country National
TST	Tactical Support Team
USAID	US Agency for International Development
USCENTCOM	United States Central Command

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Private Military and Security Corporations (PMSCs) are a global phenomenon. A report by the Small Arms Survey (2011, p. 101) estimates that PMSCs employ between 19.5 and 25.5 million people globally, which represents a 200-300 percent increase since the 1980s (Evans, 2011). Commercial security guards operating in Brazil, Russia, India and China respectively number in the millions and South Africa "is home to the largest private security market in the world measured as a percentage of GDP" (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2009, p. 2).[1] The largest PMSC on the planet, G4S, employs over half a million people making it the "second largest private sector employer after Wal-Mart" (Pingeot, 2012 p. 11). The Small Arms Survey (2011, p. 101) also found that PMSCs legally "hold between 1.7 and 3.7 million" firearms and if undeclared and illegally held weapons could be counted this number would be much higher.[2] Globally, the annual revenue of the commercial security services sector ranges from US $100 to $400 billion (Pingeot, 2012 p. 11) with a consistent annual growth rate of 7-8 percent (Small Arms Survey, 2011, p. 103).

Regarding the most noticeable, most controversial and most studied service provided, i.e. (armed) personal and site protection, PMSCs are globally responsible for securing everything and everyone from the mundane to the spectacular. Grocery stores, shopping malls, gated communities, prisons, hard-currency transfers and pop-culture celebrities are all protected by armed commercial guards. In 2011, maritime cargo companies spent US $530 million on ship based guards from such companies as Trident Group Inc. and Protection Vessels International Ltd in order to deter and thwart piracy in the Gulf of Aden (Bockmann & Katz, 2012).

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[1] As of 2013, South Africa had an estimated 9000 commercial security companies and 400 000 registered contractors (Eastwood, 2013).

[2] Although the number of commercial security guards is double the number of public law enforcement personnel, police services hold an estimated 26 million firearms, which significantly dwarves the number held by PMSCs (Evans, 2011).

Multinational companies such as British Petroleum, DeBeers and ExxonMobil have also relied on the site security and risk assessment services of PMSCs (Avant, 2004). Endangered mammals in East Africa are regularly protected from poachers by armed commercial guards and advisors (see VETPAW, 2015). In 2012, G4S was tasked with providing thousands of security guards for the Summer Olympics in London, England. Humanitarian organizations such as Care, Caritas, GOAL, International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, and Worldvision have respectively contracted the training and protective services of Olive, Lifeguard, MPRI/L-3 MPRI/Engility, ArmorGroup and Control Risks Group (Spearin, 2007, p.5). Stoddard et. al. (2009, p.2) claim in 2008-2009 forty-one percent of "major humanitarian organizations contracted some form of armed protective services." In the mid-2000s PAE, Dyncorp and Medical Solutions Services were contracted by humanitarian groups and armed forces involved in redressing the crisis in Darfur (Leander & van Munster, 2007, p.2). The UN has increasingly contracted protection and logistical needs to G4S, Securitas and Saladin Security (Pingeot, 2012). Although private/commercial entities have a long history of providing services to militaries, security forces, development organizations and intelligence agencies[3], operations in the (post-)conflict spaces of Afghanistan and Iraq between 2001 and 2012 significantly raised the public, financial and academic profile of PMSCs.

A report by the US Congressional Commission on Wartime Contracting in Afghanistan and Iraq (CWC) estimates that between October 2002 and December 2010 the US Department of Defence (DOD), State Department (DOS) and US Agency for International Development (USAID) entered into US $177 billion worth of contracts for operations in Afghanistan and Iraq (CWC, 2011, p.6). A Congressional Research Services (CRS) report estimates that as of 27 July

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[3] As Spearin (2003, p. 28) writes, "it is important to note that a private sector element has always supported American military forces, dating back even to colonial times. Civilian wagon drivers, as but one example, supplied and assisted George Washington's Continental Army during the Revolutionary War."

2010 the US Congress approved US $1.121[4] trillion in spending on "military operations, base security, reconstruction, foreign aid, embassy costs, and veterans' health care for the three operations initiated since the 9/11 attacks" (CRS, 2010, p.1). Proportionally the value of contracts held by PMSCs represents approximately fifteen percent of the total allocated by the US Congress for Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle. Although drastically smaller in comparison to US expenditure, the United Kingdom (UK) is estimated to have spent £91.8 million between 2007-2010 (Townsend 2011) while Canadian expenditures totalled CAN $41 million between 2006-2011 (CBC, 2011) for site security services provided by PMSCs. Regardless of the size of their military, diplomatic and development contingent in Afghanistan and Iraq, Anglosphere nation-states have respectively spent millions-to-billions and collectively billions-to-hundreds of billions on the services provided by PMSCs.

In terms of boots on the ground, the CWC (2011) report estimates that for the 2010 fiscal year the total number of contractors operating under DOD, USAID and DOS contracts in Afghanistan and Iraq was 199 783[5] (p. 7). In March 2013 the *Financial Times* reported that approximately 140 000 commercial contractors were active in Iraq even though the "last" US military personnel withdrew in December 2011 (Fifield, 2013).[6] A more disheartening numerical tally is the number of casualties suffered by PMSCs. Between September 2001 and December 2010 "over 2,200 contractor employees of all nationalities […] died and over 49,800 were injured in Afghanistan and Iraq (CWC., p. 8)". During the first six months of 2010, *ProPublica*.org reports that 250 contractors were killed in Afghanistan and Iraq compared to 235

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[4] Gregory (2011, p.9) estimates that by the end of the 2011 fiscal year this number increased to US $1.369 trillion.
[5] It should be noted that in breaking down the total number of contractors operating in Afghanistan and Iraq a *Rand* report estimates that the total number of armed contractors has fluctuated between 10,000 in 2003 to 30,000 in 2006-7 to 10,422 in 2009 (Cotton et. al., 2010, p. xi).
[6] For quarterly updates on the number of contractors employed on missions run by US CENTCOM refer to http://www.acq.osd.mil/log/PS/CENTCOM_reports.html.

enlisted US personnel (Miller, 2010). With Antiwar.*com* (2011) estimating that 7,113 enlisted coalition personnel had been killed in Afghanistan and Iraq between 2001 and 2011 the proportion of contractors killed to total coalition deaths is approximately thirty percent.

Such quantitative significance is reinforced by qualitative assessments that emphasize the indispensable value of the work that PMSCs did in Afghanistan and Iraq. Speaking before the US Congress, General David Patraeus is quoted as saying, "Private security contractors – do perform very important missions. They are securing a variety of different activities in Iraq, and those are so important that we would likely have to use U.S. or other forces to secure them" (quoted in Petersohn, 2011, p. 783). Speaking on the relationship between the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and PMSCs in Afghanistan, Brigadier General Denis Thompson (quoted in Fitzsimmons, 2009) asserts, "Without [commercial] security firms, it would be impossible to achieve what we're achieving here." Major Mike Blanchette of the CAF also notes, "A lot of these companies fulfill an important need that does contribute to the good guys cause" (quoted in Montpetit, 2010) by acting as force multipliers for overstretched NATO forces. Put succinctly, "Contractors are part of the solution" (Carafano, 2008, p. 97). Whether assessed qualitatively or quantitatively, it is difficult to deny the importance of the tasks and roles undertaken by PMSCs in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In terms of actual services and tasks, PMSCs have been and are currently responsible for training, advising, consulting, guarding, transporting, engineering of and for military installations and supply lines, cooking, healing, maintaining materiel, threat assessing and intelligence gathering and analyzing. More specifically, contractors from Vinnell and MPRI/L-3 MPRI/Engility have been tasked with training the Iraqi and Afghan National Armies. In preparation for operations in Afghanistan, CAF soldiers conducted specialized training at the

Blackwater/Xe/Academi facilities in North Carolina. Aegis, KBR and SNC-Lavalin PAE received some of the more lucrative contracts to provide coordination, monitoring, logistics and facility management services to NATO and coalition forces. DynCorp, Triple Canopy, ArmorGroup and Blackwater/Xe/Academi have and are providing site and personal security details (PSD) for US embassies and diplomatic staff – and in the case of Dyncorp PSDs for the former President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzi and former head the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) Paul Bremer. Canadian, British and Australian defence and diplomatic bureaucracies have relied on the site security services of Hart, Control Risks Group and Unity Resources Group for protection of embassies and military installations. Erinys, Crescent Security, Hart and Blackwater/Xe/Academi have also been contracted to provide security guards for oil pipelines, supply convoys and power generation facilities.

From this list of corporate names, clients, services, revenues, and locations of operation one begins to get a general sense of what PMSCs do on a global scale. What is not made evident through this brief review is how this work matters. Accordingly the purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the material-discursive practices and processes that make the work of PMSCs matter. My overarching argument is: PMSC work is made to matter through an entanglement of 'things', agencies and processes that are not exclusively bound to the needs or desires of clients, regulators or PMSCs themselves. As will be more thoroughly explained in chapter one, I use the word matter in a dual-sense of becoming meaningful and becoming materialized (Barad, 2007). In this dissertation I advance the possibility that PMSC work comes to matter through multifaceted enactments of human, formerly human (e.g. the dead), not exclusively human (e.g. penises), and non-human (e.g. guns) agencies. As Barad (2007, p. 178, emphasis in original) writes of agency, "*Agency is about changing possibilities of change entailed in reconfiguring*

material-discursive apparatuses of bodily production, including the boundary articulations and exclusions that are marked by those practice in the enactment of a causal structure." Or in short, "*Agency is "doing" or "being"* (Ibid.). At the same time I also perform a thorough accounting of the four processes (e.g. privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing) that overdetermine[7] what this works means. To understand how the work of PMSCs comes to matter requires a (meta-)theoretical apparatus that is determined to engage with and through "the unexpected, the unplanned irruptions [and] the denaturalizing of expectation through the juxtaposition of the seemingly unrelated" (Puar, 2007, p. xv). Or as Halberstam (2012, p. 217) exclaims, (meta-)theorizing needs to reject "the comfy notion of human uniqueness" and embrace "variation, mutation, cooperation, transformation, deviance, perversion, and diversion."

Constituting the (meta-)theoretical apparatus of this dissertation is an entanglement of post-human, queer and feminist considerations of materiality, agency and agents, normativity and accountability. By privileging a post-human, queer and feminist analysis I produce an uncommon understanding of PMSC work that reconfigures the boundaries of what actually matters amongst global relations of conflict and security. I also offer an incisive critique[8] of the political-economic processes that overdetermine the meaning of the work that PMSCs perform.

The source material for this dissertation is primarily textual – specific movies, television and video-games are sourced in chapter two. How PMSCs come to matter through text cannot be attributed to a single site of production. Accepting that PMSCs are not articulated through

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[7] Throughout this dissertation I use "overdetermined" as a linguistic method of suggesting that certain meanings are articulated and performed by and through domineering practices and processes. Overdetermined manifestations privilege singular, immutable and exclusive articulations and performances. However, as Barad (2007) asserts "individually determinate entities do not exist" (p.128) and "Boundaries do not sit still" (p.171) and thus overdetermination does and cannot prevent the manifestation of a diverse array of meanings. Overdetermining practices and processes will nonetheless suppress, oppress, repress or appropriate alternative determinations.
[8] As cited in Campbell (1998) Foucault writes of critique, "A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices we accept rest" (p.191).

one specific (con)text or media means that it is necessary to read an array of academic, regulatory, journalistic, industry and popular culture textualizations. This multi-textual reading is also necessary to unsettle how PMSCs become known by and through particular texts and textual practices. Textualization of PMSC knowledge is to be understood as a pertinent component of how PMSCs come to matter. Text's humanized ubiquity, mobility and reasonable non-perishability entangles it amongst a political-economy of (academic) knowledge that privileges easy storage, retrieval, communication and manipulation. The textual knowledge of PMSCs therefore becomes more stable and accessible than other components that make PMSCs matter – digitization further sediments the preferential status of this political-economic arrangement of knowing. Text cannot simply impel something to matter, but textual practices do significantly reconfigure how meaningful such matter becomes.

Throughout the dissertation I repeat the phrase "textual terrain" as a metaphor for the diverse arrangements of literatures, genres, media and documents that constitute the textual source material. I use "textual terrain" rather than literatures, genres, media and documents because the geographic inflections of "terrain" better determine how the source material becomes arranged. While I do acknowledge the import of contextual difference amongst texts, for the purposes of the dissertation it is necessary to read the source material as occupying contemporaneous space and thus terrain permits such a contemporaneous arrangement whilst not dulling or muting the contextual differences amongst the sources. Plus, literature, genre, media and even source material are too determined, too specific. Textual terrain is a less determined phrasing. Reading and writing text differently is a crucial aspect of my analysis and sometimes this reading and writing will get a little indeterminate. This indeterminacy will be caused

through the degrading of cemented possibilities that constrain what becomes a meaningful matter.

Organizationally, this dissertation is grouped into four sections. The first section consists of chapter one and concentrates on a discussion of the ontological, epistemological, methodological and ethical commitments that affect the analytical components of this textual terrain. Section two, which encompasses chapters two and three, delves into explanations of what PMSCs are, who owns and manages PMSCs, who is employed by PMSCs and definitions of privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes. This section is necessary to set the stage for the analysis that takes place in the remainder of the dissertation. In section three, which is comprised of chapters four, five and six, the empirical focus is event driven. Specifically, I concentrate on three of the most infamous incidents involving PMSC work in Afghanistan and Iraq between 2004 and 2009: 1) the March 31, 2003 shooting, killing, burning and disassembling of the bodies of four Blackwater contractors in Fallujah, Iraq which hence forth will be referred to as the Fallujah incident, 2) the September 16, 2007 shooting and killing of seventeen Iraqis by a PSD in Baghdad's Nisour Square which hence forth will be referred to as the Nisour Square incident and 3) the September 2009 revelations of hazing activities by expatriate contractors working for ArmorGroup tasked with providing security for the US Embassy in Kabul which hence forth will be referred to as the Kabul incident.

Section four includes the conclusion and a chapter titled *An Addendum of Revisions*. Recalling some of my favourite novels as child, this section can be understood as the choose your own adventure section. That is to say, one can choose to read this dissertation sequentially and thus engage with this section of the text as the fourth and final section. Or one can adopt a more playful approach and read it whenever one is so inclined. I do insist that one does read this

section as it contains text that makes an invaluable contribution to overarching thesis of this dissertation.

In section three each chapter features an analysis of a different entanglement of things, agencies and processes. In chapter four, discussion centres on relations amongst the living and the dead and how to understand the agency of corpses and decomposition amongst meaning-practices that are determined to obfuscate and/or exploit such agency. Chapter five begins with a discussion of how inequity becomes real through the relations amongst shooter, target, gun, bullet and environment in order to criticize the inherency and immutability of a right to self-defence. Such a critique will also demonstrate how the political-economics of self-defence overdetermine the meaningfulness of the Nisour Square incident. In chapter six, intimacy amongst masculinized bodies as well as the fallibility of penises are on full display so as to interrogate how normalizing practices and phallic privilege affect the meaning of the Kabul incident.

Across all three of these chapters, analysis and criticism return to the pernicious, limiting and often ironic effects that privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes have on how PMSC work is determined to matter. In each chapter these processes are shown to have differing effects on the differing entanglements of agents and practices that do the work. Differing does not mean unconnected. The primary connection, or entanglement, that links the analysis in each chapter is that such meanings work to sustain the privileged capacities of these processes to determine meaning in the first place. Therefore, PMSC work can never only have a localizable effect because the scope of privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes is global. Nor can this work only ever matter to the things and agencies that do it and/or the things and agencies that contract it. PMSC work matters because it is a key source of

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labour for processes that currently overdetermine what it means to be human, how violence is waged, who and what can be exposed to death and how the social, political and economic world works, i.e. it is competitive, confrontational, inequitable and hierarchical. As will be discussed in the following chapter this contention is not an objective determination. It is motivated and measured by my (meta-)theoretical commitments that are inescapably normative.

CHAPTER TWO: ON (META-)THEORY

This chapter is about work. Not the work of PMSCs – that is for chapters two through six. The work to be discussed in this chapter is the work and works of (meta-)theory. Throughout the dissertation I rely upon various post-human, queer and feminist theorists to provide conceptual context to the matters being discussed. The text of this chapter is dedicated to a review of the conceptualizing that has the most influence upon the ontological, epistemological, methodological and ethical basis of and for this dissertation. As such it is not only a review, but also a justification of the particular provocations that motivate how I read and write the work of PMSCs.

OF MATTERS AND MEANING

The work of Karen Barad holds the most sway over the (meta-)theorizing of this dissertation. Barad's theorizing first came to my attention through Aradau's (2010) work on the security politics of critical infrastructure protection. Aradau (2010) writes that Barad "is of particular interest for rethinking 'matters of security'" (p. 496) because she engages with and reconfigures Butler's notion of performativity and Foucault's concepts of knowledge/power. Barad's reconfigurations of Butler and Foucault provide critical security studies scholars with "conceptual tools [that] enable us to understand the *relation* between matter and meaning rather than the fact they both matter" (Ibid., p. 496, emphasis in original). Of primary interest and adoption are Barad's concepts of post-humanism, intra-action, agency, the "mutual entailment" of the discursive and the material (Barad, 2007, p. 152) and accountability.[9]

POST-HUMANISM

As Cudworth and Hobden contend,

Theorizations of international relations have been little concerned with the vast variety of other,

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[9] For the application of Barad's concepts to humanitarian action in the Sonoran borderlands see Squire, 2014.

> non-human populations of species and 'things'. This has meant that scholarship has been
> narrowly focused and does not actually reflect the ways in which human social and political
> life is neither exclusively social nor exclusively human but bound up with non-human
> beings and things. (2011, p. 140)

Even with the slow inclusion of historical materialist, feminist, post-colonial, post-positivist,

sociological and post-structural analysis, questioning of what makes humans human is

superseded by questions of how threat(s), citizens(hip), borders, militarized masculinities and

global capital is produced. Or as Mitchell (2014, p. 5) contends, "one of the most powerful

beliefs in contemporary international relations [is] that 'the human' is the ultimate subject of

security, and that its protection should trump all other concerns." A post-human analysis does not

deny the significance of citizenship, borders or militarized masculinities, but rather arranges

these concerns amongst questions of how global relations are performed through the ethico-onto-

epistemic (see Juelsjar & Schwennesen, 2012) cutting apart and together of the world – more on

the importance of "cuts" in a moment.

> For Barad (2011),

> The "posthumanist" point is not to blur the boundaries between human and nonhuman, not to cross out all
> distinctions and differences, and not to simply invert humanism, but rather to understand the materializing
> effects of particular ways of drawing boundaries between "humans" and "nonhumans" […] Rather the
> point is that the very practices of differentiating the "human" from the "nonhuman", the "animate" from the
> "inanimate", and the "cultural" from the "natural" produce crucial materializing effects that are
> unaccounted for by starting an analysis after these boundaries are in place. (p. 123-24)

In short, Baradian post-humanism takes "issue with human exceptionalism while being

accountable for the role we play in the differential constitution and differential positioning of the

human among other creatures (both living and nonliving) […] Posthumanism does not presume

that man is the measure of all things" (Barad, 2007, p. 136). Baradian post-humanism therefore

differs from the post-humanism of transhuman technofestishism[10] or militarized superiority[11]

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[10] Transhuman technofetishism holds that digital, cybernetic, nano and genetic technological advancement will
allow humans to transcend 'our' material bounds thereby reversing or escaping the physical degenerations of aging
and death.

insofar as Barad proposes the possibility that humans are not the only meaning making

phenomena – more on phenomena in a moment. To be clear, posthumanism "is argued not as a

radical break from humanism, in the form of neither transcendence nor rejection, but rather as

implicated in the ongoing critique of what it means to be human" (Simon, 2003, p. 9).

Posthumanism is an acknowledgement that "humanism" often fails to take account how of its

prejudices, assumptions and myopias limit potentials to make humanist projects viable to

anyone/thing more than the beings/things that are regularly made to be human (Wolfe, 2009).

Barad's move to de-centre humans is imperative to taking a more thorough accounting of a

world where "Human practices are not the only practices that come to matter, but neither is the

world (at least as it currently exists) independent of human practices" (Ibid., p. 206). Humanity

cannot exclusively lord meaning over the world because "Humans are intra-actively

(re)constituted as part of the world's becoming" (Ibid.).

INTRA-ACTION

For Barad the terms intra-action, intra-act and intra-activity constitute recognition of

"ontological inseparability" (Ibid., p. 128). Forming the cornerstone of her onto-epistemic

concept of "agential realism", Barad (2011) writes, "what we commonly take to be individual

entities are not separate determinately bounded and propertied objects, but rather are (entangled

'parts of') phenomena (material discursive intra-actions) that extend across (what we commonly

take to be separate places and moments in) space and time" (p.125). In short, Barad (2007,

p.197, emphasis in original) uses "intra-action to signify *the mutual constitution of objects and*

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[11] In his study of how "humans interact with war technology" Tim Blackmore (2006) contends that "humans have engaged and are engaging ever more thoroughly in intimate connections with technology of all kinds in order to extend themselves on the battlefield" (p.3). Drones, smart munitions, infrared and night vision scopes and research into exo-skeletons, regenerative battle-fatigues and chemically and genetically enhanced soldiers are examples of the more recent efforts of militaries to extend war-fighting beyond the limits of the human body (see also Gray 2003).

agencies of observation within phenomena". Post-humanizing the epistemological notion that

apparatuses[12] of observation "form a non-dualistic whole" (Ibid., p. 196) with that which is being

observed/measured, Barad expands the ontological possibility that measurement and observation

is not an exclusively human practice. Intra-activity is thus the onto-epistemic entanglement of

subject and object where neither subjectificaiton nor objectification is exclusively determined

through human intentionality. Onto-epistemic entanglement of subject-object situates

knowledge production amongst multiple intra-acting agencies through which the world becomes

'known' to 'itself'. Phrased in slightly less idiosyncratic terms, intra-action is the constantly

active production of the world-within knowledge. What is real and thus knowable is however

not distinct, inherent or immutable. What is inherent is indeterminacy: "Outside of particular

agential intra-actions, 'words' and 'things' are indeterminate" (Barad, 2007, p. 150).

Words and things or "relata" are not primary or "primitive" ontological 'units',

phenomena 'are' (Ibid.). Phenomena "*are the ontological inseparability of agentially*

intra-acting 'components' (Barad, 2003, p. 815, emphasis in original). This means that the

meaning and matter of words and things only exist amongst relations. Contingent determinacy,

boundaries/exclusions, (un)intelligibility and knowledge become real through specific agential

"cuts". Agential cuts are specific intra-actions of phenomena through which a "resolution"

amongst indeterminacy is made (Ibid.). Phrased differently, agential cuts produce local and

specific differentiation amongst subject and object. Inherent indeterminacy and specific intra-

active cuts does "not mean that anything and everything [is] possible at any given moment"

(Barad, 2007, p. 177). Such specific intra-actions "cut 'things' together and apart. Cuts are not

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[12] Barad (2007, p. 171-2) defines apparatuses as, "open-ended practices involving specific intra-actions of humans and nonhumans, where the differential constitution of human and nonhuman designate particular phenomena that are themselves implicated in the dynamics of intra-activity, including folding and reconstitution in the reconfiguring of apparatuses."

enacted from the outside, nor are they ever enacted once and for all" (Ibid., p. 179). The cuts or determinacies performed through intra-activity "always entail particular exclusions […] intra-actions iteratively reconfigure what is possible and what is impossible – possibilities do not sit still" (Ibid., p. 177).

AGENCY

Possibilities do not sit still because what is real/known does not become immutable inasmuch as "Agency never ends; it can never 'run out' […] even when apparatuses are primarily reinforcing, agency is not foreclosed" (Ibid., p. 177-8). Agency "never ends" and is "not foreclosed" because "Agency is a matter of intra-acting; it is enactment, not something that someone or something has" (p. 214). Neither subjects nor objects, as an example of specific determinations manifested through agential cuts, can 'possess' or be "designated" agency because subjects and objects do not pre-exist agential cuts (Ibid.). Agency is what intra-activity amongst phenomena do (Ibid., p. 178). Agency is the reconfiguring of possibilities of what matters. Reconfigurations can enact reinforcing cuts, whereby multiple intra-actions amongst phenomena become reiterative or sedimented[13] and thus certain possibilities become constrained (Ibid., p. 177). Reiteration does not manifest onto-epistemic immutability or inherency because immutability and inherency demand a distinct being between the discursive and the material. By this it is meant that either the discursive or the material has to exist prior to the other in order to inflect the other with immutable or inherent being.

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[13] Barad is very much influenced by Butler's notions of discursive performativity, reiteration and sedimentation whereby the material reality of, for example, "sex" is a "sedimented effect of a reiterative or ritual practice" (Butler, 1993, p.10). Barad (2007) post-humanizes Butler when she "suggests a reworking of Butler's notion of performativity from iterative citationality to iterative intra-activity" (p. 208).

MATERIAL/DISCURSIVE

Pursuant to "ontological inseparability" manifested through the intra-activity of

phenomena, Barad maintains,

> … materiality is discursive (i.e., material phenomena are inseparable from the apparatuses of
> bodily production; matter emerges out of and includes as part of its being, the ongoing
> reconfiguring of boundaries), just as discursive practices are always already material
> (i.e. they are ongoing material [re]configurings of the world) […] The relationship
> between the material and the discursive is one of mutual entailment. Neither discursive
> practices nor material phenomena are ontologically or epistemologically prior […]
> matter and meaning are mutually articulated. (Ibid., p. 151-2)

The co-constitution of the discursive and the material means that meaning is not the exclusive

providence of linguistics, semantics or discourse (Ibid., p. 148-50) and that matter is not a

"fixed" property or the brute reality of a thing/object (Ibid., p. 150-52). To elaborate, "Discourse

is not what is said; it is that which constrains and enables what can be said. Discursive practices

define what counts as meaningful statements" (Ibid., p.146). In other words, "Discursive

practices are the material conditions for making meaning" (Ibid., p. 335). Importantly,

discursive practices are also not solely "human-based practices" (Ibid., p.149) and therefore do

not describe a human determined reality nor cause it to become real. For example, the discursive-

materiality of written description, i.e. text, which 'itself' becomes real through the multiple

entanglements of intra-acting phenomena, is a description/reconfiguration of the intra-activity of

being part of what is becoming described (Ibid., p. 207). Discursive practices, especially the

humanized privileging of verbalized or textualized knowledge, are not external to practices of

becoming real/known: "We don't obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know

because we are of the world" (Ibid., p. 185).

For the material, mutual entailment means that "matter does not refer to a fixed

substance; rather *matter is substance in its intra-active becoming"* (Ibid., p.151, emphasis in

original). Matter does not exist prior to being enacted through intra-action (Ibid., p. 150). This

means that matter is neither a "linguistic construction" nor an essentially irreducible object (Ibid.). Matter is a "discursive production in the posthumanist sense that discursive practices are themselves material (re)configurings of the world through which the determination of boundaries, properties and meanings is differentially enacted" (Ibid.). The material is a "contingent and contested, constrained but not fully determined" (Ibid. p. 237) process through which meaning becomes real/knowable. In post-human terms, matter is not the substance that humans use to produce other matter or to obtain essential meanings of the world. Humans materialize through intra-action and thus become subject-objects entangled amongst the constitution and reconfiguration of meaning.

Barad's theorizing of onto-epistemic inseparability, mutual entailment and intra-activity is an intriguing, if at times abstract, understanding of how and what becomes meaningful matters. The post-human sensibility privileges the meta-theoretical realization that humans or humanized practices are not the sole arbiter or attributor of meaning and that the production of knowledge is a process amongst and not external to the world. Even though "we know because we are part *of* the world" (Ibid., p. 185) Barad is careful to note that knowledge production is not "necessarily subjective" (Ibid., p. 91). Accordingly, "explanations of various phenomena, that do not take account of material, as well as discursive, constraints will fail to provide empirically accurate accounts (not any story will do)" (Ibid., p. 207). Humanized knowledge practices that fail to "provide empirically accurate accounts" can still be meaningful. Indeed Barad's post-human theorizing is very much entangled amongst the exceedingly meaningful meta-theoretical knowledge practices that constitute onto-epistemic separation between subject-object, human-non-human and culture-nature. Meaningfulness is not a synonym for accuracy nor is it a synonym for accountability.

ETHICAL ACCOUNTING

For Barad accountability is the ethico-onto-epistemic realization that "even the smallest cuts matter" (Ibid., p. 384). An ethical accounting of empirical reality is necessary because "We", a 'we' that is not limited to humanity, "are responsible for the world of which we are a part, not because it is an arbitrary construction of our choosing but because reality is sedimented out of particular practices that we have a role in shaping and through which we are shaped" (Ibid., 390). Furthermore, "Learning how to intra-act responsibly as part of the world means understanding that 'we' are not the only active beings – though this is never justification for deflecting our responsibility onto others" (Ibid., p. 391). Responsibility and accountability are "to be thought of in terms of what matters and what is excluded from mattering" (Ibid., p. 394). Similar to Smith's (1996) admonishing of positivist "empiricist epistemology" and Doty's (2001, p.525-6) concern that theorists of international relations "almost always fail to recognize and take responsibility for the violence of their own representations", becoming responsible and accountable is a matter of appreciating how matter becomes meaningful. Ethical or normative considerations cannot precede nor follow onto-epistemic conceptions because determining what can be real/known is the same as determining what should be real/known. Enacting an ethical accounting is therefore responsible for understanding, embracing and reconfiguring the entangled mutuality of the world.

Amongst the discipline of International Relations (IR) Barad's ethico-onto-epistemic reconfiguration of matter and meaning can be arrayed with the post-positivist reconfiguring of meta-theory (see Peterson, 1992; Tickner, 1992; Doty, 1997; Milliken, 1999). Where a Baradian meta-theory differs from strands of IR post-positivism is the overt commitment to post-human theorizing. This commitment is crucial for this dissertation because in order to thoroughly

18

account for how PMSC work comes to matter, it is necessary to understand that this work is an entangled enactment of the intra-actions amongst human, non-human and not altogether human agencies. Analytically, what comes to matter is how entanglements of words, things, practices and agencies become overdetermined through privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes. These political-economic processes receive particular attention because, as will be further discussed in chapter three, they overdetermine the work that PMSCs do. By this I mean to say, that the labourious efforts of PMSCs most meaningfully come to matter through efforts that are constrained to be(come) private, militaristic, secure and/or commercial. PMSC work is not bound to matter through these processes, much like meta-theory is not bound to dichotomous articulations of subject-object, human-animal, masculine-feminine etc. The work is overdetermined and thus readily excluding of differential possibilities. Performing a Baradian meta-theorizing through the textual terrain of PMSCs becomes imperative to understanding how overdetermination of PMSCs comes to be and how taking account of what comes to matter can open possibilities for reconfiguring what PMSC work means.

"Why so serious?" – The Joker, The Dark Knight (Nolan, 2008)

Although Barad's meta-theorizing significantly determines what becomes known through this dissertation, it is not the sole source of theoretical inspiration. The work of Judith Jack Halberstam (2008; 2011) also influences how I write and read the textual terrain of PMSCs. What becomes possible through Halberstam's theorizing is made all the more enthralling or desirous through the performatives of the prose. Halberstam's textual stylings are forthright and biting. There is a rhythmical flow to Halberstam's articulations, a flow which permits a pleasurably convincing arrangement of sneering wit and playful candour. I note this now

because Halberstam's notions would certainly be less enticing if they were articulated through a more 'disciplined' style. Written through a style that is "A little less professional [and] a little more upfront and confrontational" (Against Me, 2007), Halberstam's texts become aspirational.

I aspire to write like Halberstam because I want to write about utterly serious matters without assuming that seriousness can only be textualized through prose that reiterates the gravity of the matter. PMSC work is too meaningful to become constrained amongst textual practices that entangle seriousness amongst sober and staid articulations. Too often, seriousness as sobriety and staidness become filters for what matters. As Halberstam (2011, p. 6) exclaims "terms like serious and rigorous tend to be code words, in academia as well as other contexts, for disciplinary correctness; they signal a form of training and learning that confirms what is already known according to approved methods of knowing." Although I do go off on some "flights of fancy" (Ibid.), what I read and write is serious. Corpses, guns and penises do seriously affect how PMSC work comes to matter. As such, rather than circumventing seriousness I repurpose it.

Becoming serious is to become ethical and to become ethical is to become considerate of the inclusions and exclusions that one is entangled amongst. It matters that seriousness can be written and read through exuberance, outlandishness or snark. Referencing dialogue from the movie *V for Vendetta*, Halberstam (Ibid., p. 21) quotes the following exchange: "'Is everything a joke to you?' 'Only the things that matter.'" Writing seriously through unserious means matters because it reconfigures how textual practices determine what is meaningful – as well as determining what will be re-read. Aspiring to write like Halberstam matters because I want to do what I write. To conduct a thorough accounting of PMSC work means more than investigating post-human entanglements of words, things, agencies and practices. It also means performing the possibility of reconfiguring how these entanglements come to matter through text.

NEAGTIVITY

A pertinent component of Halberstam's work is the development of an archive of knowing, doing and becoming that sustains, motivates and realizes queer, feminist, post/anti-colonial and anti-capitalist matters. Amongst the variety of methods and concepts that Halberstam employs to construct such an archive is the theorizing of a politics of negativity. A politics of negativity is a strand of anti-social queer theory that does not shy away from the historical welding of queerness and queer sexuality "to negativity, to nonsense, to anti-production, to unintelligibility" (Halberstam, 2008, p. 141). Rather than rehabilitating queerness and queer sexuality so it can better coincide with liberal projects of hope and happiness, a politics of negativity seeks,

> […] to turn away from the comfort zone of polite exchange in order to embrace a truly political negativity, one that promises, this time, to fail, to make a mess, to fuck shit up, to be loud, unruly, impolite, to breed resentment, to bash back, to speak up and out, to disrupt, assassinate, shock and annihilate, and, to quote Jamaica Kincaid, to make everyone a little less happy! (Ibid., p. 154)

Queer negativity does not wallow in the dirt, the unpleasant, the detritus to spite the clean, pleasant and useful; this would be a navel-gazing negativity which prematurely closes off the possibilities of achieving a "little less happy". Negativity refuses the meaningfulness of becoming happy insofar as happiness comes to matter through the exclusion of queerness – as well as other ways and means that labour to make others happy. Queerness arranges "the other possibilities, the other potential outcomes, the non-linear and noninevitable trajectories that fan out from any given event and lead to unpredictable futures" (Ibid., p. 153). The materialized-discursivity of queer negativity reconfigures 'new' determinacies of and for matters and meanings. These new determinacies scramble the intelligible and unintelligible, the concrete and ephemeral, the human and non-human. The avowed politico-emotionality of negativity also

means that reading is not a process that should be conducted in order to find, experience or realize happy-endings.

Embracing queer negativity means eschewing the notion that a thorough accounting of PMSC work will be fruitful to efforts that seek to make PMSCs work better. Better is certainly not negative. Queer negativity cannot be better because better is historically a determination of progress, positivity and productiveness and such determinations are very much entangled amongst the heteronormative configuring of time, space and being. Queer negativity rejects the possibility of better, not for nihilistic determinations, which as Halberstam notes too frequently line "up against women, domesticity and reproduction" (Ibid., p. 154), but for the possibility of alternative configurations of time, space and being. Amongst the textual terrain of PMSCs better is entangled with concepts, codes and policies that seek to make PMSCs more efficient, effective, functional and regulated. In other words, the textual terrain of PMSCs is hopeful that PMSC can work better.   My queer negative reading of this terrain holds no such hope. I do not seek to understand how PMSCs can work more efficiently or effectively.

A desire for a queer negative reading does drive my selection of 'case-studies'. The Fallujah, Nisour Square and Kabul incidents are most notable because they readily realize a little less happy. There is nothing redeemable about death and decomposition, shooting at and killing people and sexualized intimidation and initiation rituals. Embracing the negativity of these incidents is not a celebration of the negative. Rather a queer negative reading of the Fallujah, Nisour Square and Kabul incidents is vital to performing an accountable reading. In particular, a queer negative reading confronts and impedes methods of recuperation, i.e. textual tactics that are only concerned with addressing the problematic work of PMSCs in order to create better working PMSCs. This is the difference amongst a queer negative reading and the

22

(over)abundance of pop-cultural, journalistic, regulatory and politically partisan texts that concentrate on the negatives of PMSCs.

While any negative coverage annoys proponents of the commercial military and security services industry, a queer negative reading exploits the faults and failures of PMSCs in order to arrange other possibilities of meaning. The textual terrain through which PMSCs are construed as unregulated, out-of-control and/or nefarious agents, much of which will be discussed in chapters two, four, five and six, is actually not negative. Such texts are really positive. They are positive that the faults and failings of PMSC can be remedied. This positivity is constricting because it rearranges the possibility that PMSCs can work efficiently, effectively and functionally. As will be read, making PMSCs work better does work for certain entanglements of words, things, agencies and processes, but in doing so other words, things, agencies and processes are excluded, exploited and made to sediment inequity. A queer negative reading does not actually seek to make "everyone a little less happy." That is too liberal a goal. It does, however, seek to expose how happiness, positivity and becoming better for some, comes at the labourious expense of others.

GETTING LOST

At times in this dissertation I forget that I am writing a dissertation. Not literally forget while I am in the process of writing, but forget that I am supposed to be writing a text that can and will be read and adjudicated amongst the criteria of Political Science, IR and/or Critical Security Studies. Even though I am aware of this, I stupidly[14] persist with writing a text that

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[14] On stupidity, Halberstam (2011) writes, "Stupidity could refer not simply to a lack of knowledge but to limits of certain forms of knowing and certain ways of inhabiting structures of knowing" (p.12). In other words, stupidity is not necessary a lack of intelligence, wisdom or comprehension per se, but rather an unknowing, a disregarding of how knowledge is produced and disciplined. Stupidity cannot deny the (academic) disciplined determination of knowledge. Stupidity can only refuse to listen.

desires to become undisciplined. Becoming undisciplined is as Beier and Arnold (2005) assert,

in an article of the same name, no easy task. For Beier and Arnold the difficulty of becoming

undisciplined is a problem of ontology: "Disciplinarity, however, is not a condition;

disciplinarity is a practice" (Ibid., p. 43). Assuming that disciplines are things, reifies them as

such, thereby confusing a practice for a condition (Ibid., pp. 52-60). Accordingly, disciplines do

not exist prior to the disciplining/sorting of knowledge into distinct compartments – or in the

case of the University, departments (Ibid.). Becoming undisciplined, or becoming

"supradisciplinary", means constant awareness of "the choices we make about what we think is

and is not worth including in our work and, equally, our choices about how best to approach that

which we include" (Ibid., p. 59).

In their book titled *The Queer Art of Failure*, Halberstam echoes Beier and Arnold's

concerns with the academic disciplining of knowledge. For Halberstam (2011, p. 10) academic

disciplines "qualify and disqualify, legitimate and delegitimate, reward and punish; most

important, they statically reproduce themselves and inhibit dissent."   As such, *The Queer Art of

Failure* "is a book about alternative ways of knowing and being that are not unduly optimistic"

(Ibid., p. 24). It is an "extended mediation on antidisciplinary forms of knowing specifically tied

to queerness" (Ibid., p. 147) that seeks to "provoke, bother, irritate and amuse" (Ibid., p. 21) in

order to "untrain ourselves so that we can read struggles and debates back into questions that

seem settled and resolved" (Ibid., p. 11). Amongst the antidisciplinary knowledge that

Halberstam discusses, including "failure, forgetfulness, stupidity, and negation", is the desire to

get lost: "We will wander, improvise, fall short, and move in circles. We will lose our way, our

cars, our agenda and possibly our minds, but in losing we will find another way of making

meaning" (Ibid., p. 25).

Getting lost amongst knowledge may seem antithetical to the awareness that Beier and Arnold assert is necessary to become undisciplined. To actually get lost one does have to have a sense of where one wants to go, just not a presumption that the going must be determined by the where. Nor a presumption that one will actually get there. I know that I want to conduct a thorough accounting of how PMSC work comes to matter. I also know that I want my work to be read as an academic work. I just do not want to presume that academic reading and writing can only become meaningful if it respects the disciplining of knowledge. When I write that at times I forget that I am writing a work of Political Science, IR and/or Critical Security Studies I am also saying that I am getting lost amongst the entangled intra-actions that materialize PMSC work; intra-actions that matter much less if I only follow disciplinary predispositions.

Getting lost is also not a romanticized attempt at escapism. My getting lost is a failure to necessarily abide by the metaphorical road signs that disciplinarity erects to direct how knowledge will be pursued. I, however, cannot escape, cannot get outside of disciplinarity. My capacities to write academic work are most certainly indebted to the disciplining experiences of an undergraduate and graduate education in Political Science. Furthermore, I also do not do away with all disciplining practices, particularly when it comes to the organizational arrangement of this dissertation. Becoming undisciplined through getting lost amongst the matter is not so much about "untraining" as Halberstam asserts, but is a practice of re-training. I cannot rid myself of disciplining effects, but I can reconfigure how those effects matter. Getting lost is an ethic and an effort to know that matters do not always go where we expect/want them to as much as it is a willingness to not discipline the unexpected and unwanted.

SKATING THROUGH THE MATERIAL

To conclude this chapter I want to get completely lost with some methodological play. That is to say, what follows is a re-writing of the above text through the creative, versatile, persistent and injurious activity known as skateboarding. As an analogous methodological practice skateboarding very much lends itself to the (meta-)theorizing that is practiced throughout this dissertation. Reading, writing and researching like a skateboarder means this dissertation confronts, repurposes, degrades and impedes how PMSC work comes to matter. The confrontations that occur are not reiterations of the masculinized aggression that unfortunately typifies too many intra-actions of skateboarders, security guards, police officers and concerned/annoyed by-standers. Rather what is confronted are the day-to-day, minute and/or presumed to be commonsensical practices and processes that determine what matters.

For example, in each of the following chapters numerous confrontations occur. Two important confrontations include: 1) the textual and visual documentation of what occurred in Fallujah, Nisour Square and Kabul and 2) the interpretations of and reactions to what occurred. Similar to skateboarders who do not contest how the architecture of the urban street was built, I do not contest how these incidents are documented, nor do I disqualify an interpretation or reaction because it is unique, rugged or potentially dangerous, e.g. the orientalising reactions discussed in chapter five and the visceral reactions discussed in chapter six. In skateboarder verbiage, I do not shy away from an interpretation or reaction because it should somehow be unskatetable. More specifically, I concentrate on the negativity of the textual terrain primarily by focusing on interpretations and reactions that foreground how PMSCs failed to work properly in Fallujah, Nisour Square and Kabul. These confrontations are then repurposed through post-human, queer and feminist sensibilities into confrontations with the failings, difficulties and

uneasiness of the privatized, militarized, secured and commercialized work that PMSCs do in (post-)conflict spaces.

Skateboarders can be an industrious bunch, but they typically repurpose the "spots" they skate by altering the meanings of, for example, handrails. A handrail repurposed by skateboarders becomes more than a mobility interface, it also becomes entangled amongst the pursuit of pleasure. The repurposing of the Fallujah, Nisour Square and Kabul incidents specifically occurs through analysis of how corpses/decomposition, guns/self-defence shooting and penises/functionality come to matter through Anglosphere processes of production/consumption, e.g. the chapter four discussion of the Anglosphere funeral industry's influence on how corpses are treated and the prominence of phallic marketing techniques as discussed in chapter six. Through this repurposing, I demonstrate how seemingly disparate realizations of privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes, e.g. the American domestic self-defence industry as discussed in chapter six, overdetermines the work of PMSCs amongst corpses/decomposition, guns/self-defence shooting and penises/functionality.

Degrading and impeding are two most frequently cited reasons why skateboarding is not permitted in large swaths of urban space. The persistent grinding, sliding and waxing of and on the metal, wood, concrete, asphalt, marble and glass architecture of the urban street degrades the shape, colour and function of this architecture. Likewise, skating is regularly performed amongst thoroughfares, and without even having to consider skateboarders disregard for their own wellbeing, this performance regularly impedes smooth, sterile and disciplined transit. Rather than conceiving of degrading and impeding as problems, I conceive of them as a method of critique. I grind down cemented determinations and impede the easy reiteration of meanings

through a persistent and versatile exposure of the incongruities, inconsistencies and ironies that are made manifest amongst the work of PMSCs in (post-)conflict spaces.

For example, as discussed in chapter four, conflict spaces exacerbate corpse decomposition because they inhibit the timely and effective intervention of sanctioned funeral industry practitioners. Also, as discussed in chapter five, the securing of armed self-defence as inherent and immutable and thus a legitimate violent practice makes it possible that only certain selves can actually, effectively and legitimately enact a violent defence. Exposing incongruities, inconsistencies and ironies also works to impede common methods of holding PMSCs to account. Failed and faulty PMSC work is not conceived of as fixable through increased regulation, stricter oversight and/or more effective management. These efforts at holding PMSCs accountable need to be impeded, but not entirely prevented, because although they do make PMSCs work better, the improvement in job performance still comes to matter through the unaccountable seizure of the matter/meaning of corpses, guns and penises. A regulatory accounting of PMSCs does not take into account the necessary exclusions and exploitations that are required to make corpses, guns and penises passive, functional and useful components of PMSC work. By exposing incongruities, inconsistencies and ironies it becomes impossible to ignore that a real accounting of PMSC work means a thorough accounting of what actually does the labour as well as how the meaning of that labour becomes overdetermined/cemented.

Similar to skateboarders who derive their meaning from the contemporary urban terrain that they skate, my arguments and analysis cannot be considered meaningful without the textual terrain of PMSCs. Confrontation, repurposing, degrading and impeding are meaningless if they are presumed to be enacted from without, from a supposed neutral, romanticized outside. What will become known through this dissertation cannot be considered to be an objective

28

comprehension any more than skateboarding could become meaningful without the contemporary materialization of urban architecture. What matters is not known as immutable. Consequently, my reading and writing work amongst the textual terrain that I skate through. It should not be presumed that what worked in one instance will necessarily work in another. The varied contextual articulations of my reading and writing are undoubtedly fraught with failings, or in skateboarder parlance slams. Such constant potential for failure is neither a distraction nor detraction for my methodology. It is rather a constant reminder of the inclusions and exclusions that are materialized to make it work. Likewise, the failure of this methodology to perform a thorough accounting of PMSCs work is still privileged in comparison to harms borne by the matters that are most regularly subjected to both the success and failures of global security relations.

(Meta-)theorizing PMSC work through post-humanism, queer negativity, getting lost and skateboarding "works on the basis that possibilities for disruption, innovation and creative change take place in experimentation, by relating what is usually kept apart" (Aradau et. al., 2015, p. 23). I contend that "what is usually kept apart" are certain matters that permit PMSCs to work for and through the constraints of privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes. Keeping apart does not necessarily mean geographic separation, but rather the exclusion of possibilities, which constrain what matter becomes. To bring together is therefore an effort to reconfigure how entanglements of words, things, agencies and processes come to matter. Skateboarding through, getting lost amongst and performing post-human and queer negative readings and writings of PMSC work reconfigure what matters because exclusions, exploitations and inequities are more thoroughly accounted for. A more thorough accounting opens (textual) possibilities for differential mattering; mattering which is no longer

29

overdetermined by politico-economic processes that privilege exclusion, exploitation and
inequity.

CHAPTER THREE: PMSCs?

Even though I want to get lost amongst corpses, guns and penises, I first must sketch out a map of the textual terrain of PMSCs. Such a sketch is necessary so we can know where it is that I begin to get lost. To map the textual terrain of PMSCs one can make note of many different features. A most prominent feature is examinations that focus on the causes of the global rise of PMSCs. The most often cited aspects of this rise of the PMSC include: a surplus supply of trained professionals due to military downsizing following the end of the Cold War, neo-liberalization of public policy, post-modern methods of waging violence and the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq (Spearin, 2004b, Kinsey 2005; Rosén 2008; Wulf 2008; Carmola, 2010; Higate 2012). Another significant feature is analysis of the effects that PMSCs have (had) on the governance of global military and security affairs. PMSC effects on regulatory accountability and international law, shifting relations between the public and private sphere, democratic control of force, the exacerbation/alleviation of conflict and the militarization of humanitarianism are the most prominently discussed issues (see Avant 2005; Bjork & Jones 2005; Owens, 2008; Spearin, 2008; Wolfendale 2008; De Nevers 2009; Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011). In this chapter I explore and (re-)map the textual features which comprise how PMSCs are defined as things and agents of consequence amongst global security relations.

Determining what PMSCs are is also, always, a determination of how they matter. As will be read, definitions cite and reiterate a messy arrangement of (il)legal, (il)legitimate, (in)effective and (un)ethical practices and agencies through which PMSCs come to matter. Appreciating the multiple terms, things and practices that become a multiplicity of definitions not only enhances the texture of this (re)mapping exercise it is also a first gesture towards the possibilities of reconfiguring what matters. If, as will be read, the key defining components of

31

PMSCs are malleability and flexibility, the possibility to play with how malleable and flexible

PMSCs can become is made meaningful. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is dual. At once it is

a comprehensive review of PMSC definitions and an arrangement of knowledge that permits the

experimental reading that is done in chapters four, five and six.

Organizationally, this chapter is divided into two sections. Section one discusses

definitions that concentrate on institutional components such as the services provided by and the

legal status of PMSCs. This section is furthered divided into a review of 'objective' and

'normative' definitional methods. I risk reifying an onto-epistemic distinction between the

objective and the normative for the sake of providing heuristic signposts. At this juncture in the

dissertation there is no need to get completely lost. Section two is dedicated to tracing the

defining socio-anthropological components of PMSCs. In other words, this section discusses the

people who own, manage and work for PMSCs and how the demographic components of the

PMSC labour force becomes entangled amongst the institutional components. Taken as whole,

both sections (re-)map a complex arrangement and entanglement of features through which

PMSCs become defined.

OBJECTIVITY

To begin to objectively define a PMSC, analysts must work through a series of

complications caused by the very empirical facts which analysts (must) use to objectify PMSCs.

As evidenced in the introduction, to link a definition of PMSCs to clientele, services provided

and/or geo-political location of operations is to create an exceedingly expansive list of local,

regional and global agents. Object deciphering is further complicated by the relatively unstable

existence of PMSCs. Regular name changes[15], mergers and acquisitions[16] and shuttering of

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[15] For instance, Blackwater to Xe to Academi, Brown & Root to Kellogg, Brown & Root to KBR, MPRI to MPRI L-3 to Engility.

operations[17] means that the everyday existences of PMSCs can be in constant flux. As Spearin

(2004a) affirms:

> It is a fact while some firms provide services that are more military in orientation, others concern
> themselves with protection and more passive duties. But at the same time it is difficult to determine
> conclusively what firms provide what services because, on a regular basis, new firms arrive
> on the scene, other firms close, firms merge or are bought-out, and other firms add or drop services (p.2).

To engage with this flux of services, clients, organizational size and structure academic analysts

rely on a variety of methods to define PMSCs. For instance, Berndtsson (2012) by way of

explaining Carmola's (2010) conceptualizations settles on an abstract definitional method:

> As Carmola has argued, many PSCs are 'hybrid actors' that actively utilise multiple 'organizational
> cultures' and frequently shift among these. In her framework, private security actors are 'distinctly
> protean' and this is why they are so hard to define and understand. PSCs draw on and combine
> 'the worlds of the military, the business world and the humanitarian NGO' – organizations that are
> frequently defined in opposition to each other. Depending on context, PSCs invoke different aspects
> of these […] cultures or 'identities', sometimes emphasising [sic] their 'military' skills, sometimes
> presenting themselves as 'humanitarians' and sometimes conveying an image of themselves as being
> 'just like any other private corporation' (Berndtsson, p. 305).

In her own words, Carmola (2010) asserts, "All studies and accounts of PMSCs begin with the

problem of simple definition: they are ambiguous or polymorphous entities" (p.9). Incorporating

ambiguity into a definition means understanding PMSCs as "informal organizations", which

means that PMSCs are "entities whose basic structure resists easy categorization" (Ibid., p.10).

Construing PMSCs as hybrids, protean actors or informal organizations allows Berndtsoon and

Carmola to simultaneously put forth a bounded, but dynamic definition of PMSCs. Locating

definitional difficulty in the hybrid, protean and informal intra-actions of PMSCs provides a

precise, albeit abstract, determination of why and how PMSCs need to be analyzed through

malleable concepts; "The protean quality of PMSCs must be put front and center [sic] as an

object of analysis" (Ibid., p. 38). Put another way, the difficulty of defining PMSCs is not

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[16] For instance, in June 2014, Academi, which is the PMSC that began its operational existence as Blackwater, and
The Constellis Group, which is a "family of businesses" that provide "complementary security, support and advisory
services" to a range of clients "working in challenging environments worldwide" (Constellis Group, 2014), merged
to form Constellis Holdings Inc. (Yahoo Finance, 2014).
[17] For instance, Executive Outcomes, Sandline, and Crescent Security Group.

simply the empirical existences of PMSCs, but the methodological limits of analysis that cannot

effectively integrate the flux of PMSCs into a definition. PMSCs cannot be pre-contextually

defined and thus concerns about settling on a conclusive determination of what PMSCs are is a

misunderstanding of both the forest and the trees.

Another definitional method is to focus on a technical conceptualization. A technical

approach allows analysts to include some dynamism[18] in their definition, while also formulating

a more generalizable concept than a hybrid/protean approach may allow. As Taulbee (2000)

states,

> Private military companies are organized and chartered as corporations intended to conduct
> business as permanent, continuing concerns. They are not *ad hoc* ventures geared towards specific
> conflicts, but constitute legal entities which operate within the laws and parameters of the legitimate
> state system. Their success depends upon generating business on an ongoing basis presumably with
> questions of profit, loss, and growth and sustainability guiding decisions. The large, high profile firms
> dominate press reports, but PMCs exist across a broad continuum of size, capability and permanence (p.
> 436-7).

Taulbee's focus on the corporate and legal operating status of PMSCs is repeated by Kinsey

(2005) when he writes "PSCs can be defined as registered corporate entities […] They are

permanent business structures and have offices along with other kinds of assets […] PSCs are

also business profit driven" (p.278). Regulatory and policy oriented literatures offer similarly

succinct definitions. Claiming to use "an essentially functional definition" Human Rights First

(2008) defines private security companies as entities with "a core mission to protect people

(other than themselves) or things, including guarding government (and contractors') facilities

[…] and providing security for convoys" (p.1). According to the DOD (2009, amended 2011),

PSC or private security company "means a company employed by the Department of Defense,

performing private security functions under a covered contract" (p.12). Likewise, the *Montreux*

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[18] A technical approach registers the variance in size, clientele and services provided, but links to a core legal,
economic and socio-political concept of PMSCs as legitimate business entities.

Document on Private Military and Security Companies[19] defines PMSCs as "private business

entities that provide military and/or security services, irrespective of how they describe

themselves" (p.8). Understood and defined as technical agents, PMSCs become legally

sanctioned, profit-driven entities that market security products which include "armed guarding

and protection of persons and objects, such as convoys, buildings and other places; maintenance

and operation of weapons systems; prisoner detention; and advice to or training of local forces

and security personnel" (Ibid).

 With journalistic and popular cultural texts tending to emphasize the mercenary aspects

of the commercial military and security services industry, a technical approach actualizes

PMSCs as standard, legitimate and accepted corporate entities. Legally, economically and socio-

politically PMSCs are therefore indistinguishable from the hundreds of thousands of local,

regional and global incorporated business entities currently in operation. For technical

approaches the key distinguishing feature between PMSCs and other legally sanctioned profit-

driven entities is the services that PMSCs provide. This distinguishing feature, while key, can

also cause much consternation when defining PMSCs, not in the least because as demonstrated

above PMSCs provide a vast array of security services. Such a vast array of services does not

mean that definitions cannot be precise, but it does create confusion as a collection of general

and idiosyncratic acronyms are used to link PMSCs to the services they provide and to how

PMSCs go about providing those services.

 In the now canonical work, *Corporate Warriors*, Peter Singer constructs an elaborate

typology in an effort to best address the services for sale issue. Using the acronym PMFs or

private military firms to describe "business organizations that trade in professional services

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[19] With fifty countries as signatories and the EU, NATO and the OSCE the Montreux Document is the first and most comprehension effort to codify best practices for (inter-)governmental bureaucracies that contract PMSCs.

intricately linked to warfare" (Singer, 2003, p. 8) Singer devises a three tiered typology of

services. The first tier is military provider firms "which are defined by their focus on the tactical

environment", i.e., these firms provide command and implementation services which may

include providing combat ready personnel (Ibid., p. 92 -3). The second tier is military consultant

firms, which are firms that provide "advisory and training services integral to the operation or

restructuring of a client's armed forces" (Ibid., p. 95). The third tier is military support firms,

which are firms that provide "logistics, intelligence, technical support, supply and transportation"

services for client armed forces (Ibid., p. 97).

Singer's typology is useful in conveying the variety of services that companies provide to

state armed forces, however, the PMF label does not capture those companies that provide

logistics, threat assessment, transportation and protection services to non-military clients.

Accordingly, many scholars prefer to use the acronyms PMC or private military company and

PSC or private security company. As Kinsey (2006, p. 16) writes, where PMCs are more

concerned with militarily oriented services, PSCs "are generally more concerned with crime

prevention and public order" and are typically contracted by humanitarian NGOs, diplomatic and

development ministries and other commercial enterprises operating in (post-)conflict zones.

Distinguishing amongst PSCs and PMCs does acknowledge that different companies

offer different services to different clients, however, companies such as Academi, G4S and

Engility provide both military and security oriented services to a wide range of clients.

Accordingly, scholars such as Krahmann (2013), Joachim and Schneiker (2012b), Carmola

(2010) and Alexandra et. al. (2008) as well as the Montreaux Document prefer to use the phrase

private military and security companies or PMSCs.

A policy brief from the Humanitarian Policy Group provides another commonly used acronym: PSP or private security providers (Stoddard et al, 2009). PSPs are differentiated from PSCs and PMCs on the basis of their provision of "security services tailored specifically for the humanitarian sector" (Speers Meers, 2009, p. 5). PSPs need not be corporately organized and thus can include transitional and local sub-state groups (Ibid.). Like PMSCs, PSP is used to denote and/or collect an assortment of entities that provide an array of services including the services provided by PSCs.

Insofar as PMF, PMC, PSC, PMSC and PSP are used to signal what services particular corporately organized profit-driven entities sell to (non-)governmental agencies, these acronyms do very little to signal how the services are marketed and manifested. Momentarily leaving aside how PMSCs market their services,[20] the slight alteration made to PMSC by Paul Higate provides a useful insight into how security services are manifested. Higate (2012a, 2012b) uses the acronym PMSC, but changes what the "M" stands for from military to militarized and thus PMSCs are private militarized security companies. Private militarized security companies are entities which are, on the one hand, predominantly owned and operated by former soldiers and naval and air-force crew and/or predominantly employ contractors whose values, understandings and practices are shaped by prior training in the ways and means of militarily oriented violence. On the other hand, private militarized security companies can be defined as those companies whose strategic and tactical decision-making processes are grounded in gendered, racialized and sexualized notions of what it means to be a "good" solider, dichotomies of good-evil and presumptions of an inherently competitive and violent world.

Understood as such, PMSCs affect and are effected by militarization whereby "a person or a thing gradually comes to be controlled by the military or comes to depend for its well-being

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[20] As this is discussed in greater detail in my review of normatively empirical conceptualizations of PMSCs.

on militaristic ideas" (Enole, 2000, p. 3). Craft International offers a caricatured example of a militarized security company. Institutionally, Craft (2013a) was founded by a former Navy SEAL sniper, employs former members of the Dallas SWAT team, Navy SEALs, US Marines and Army special-forces and offers combat oriented training to military, law enforcement and civilian clientele. Symbolically, Craft's corporate logo is a slightly altered version of the skull which adorns the chest of ultra-violent comic book character *The Punisher* and is captioned by the words "Despite what your Momma told you … Violence does solve problems" (Ibid., 2013b). Labelling a company militarized assists in distinguishing Control Risks from SNC-Lavalin and in explaining Craft's self-presentation as a violent bad-ass.

Nonetheless, militarization takes on many forms and expressions in the commercial military and security industry. Young Pelton (2006) writes,

> Triple Canopy likes to promote their corporate culture as derived from Delta [Force], in comparison to Blackwater's [Navy] SEAL legacy and HART's SAS ethos. Promoting a Delta-based image implies a secretive and management-oriented method […] compared to Blackwater's boisterous and aggressive persona, while HART likes to maintain the lowest profile possible. (p.167)

Young Pelton's assessment of Triple Canopy, Blackwater and Hart is pertinent because it demonstrates the effects of specialized training on the organizational culture and operational practices of PMSCs. All of these companies are owned, operated and employ former soldiers, sailors and marines and thus can be considered militarized security companies. The actualization of "militaristic ideas", however, is mediated and/or altered through the specialized training and experiences of former Delta Force, Navy SEALs and SAS members. Raced, gendered and sexed performances also intra-act with militarized performance thereby influencing the particular employment and operational practices of companies. Higate's alteration of military to militarized is thus significant because it allows definitions of PMSCs to be more contextually precise, which is key both for an empirical and normative understanding of PMSCs.

As Donald (2008) contends, some key shortcomings of defining entities as PMCs, PSCs, PMFs and/or PMSCs are that these acronyms are widely used "in opposition to each other, as rival conceptual grab-alls for the sector as whole, and as loose synonyms or analogues, often with no clear sense of where one begins and another ends" (p. 132). Accordingly, "existing typologies fail to reflect contemporary operational reality" (Ibid.). Sidelining Donald's stated intention to distinguish his typology from the rest, his contentions are an important reminder that objective definitions are not at all devoid of normative considerations. Indeed, the desire to formulate a clear definition of PMSCs must be recognized as a privileging of the value of classification/sorting/ordering to the analysis of socio-political phenomena. Acknowledging that abstract and technical approaches to defining PMSCs are not strictly objective is not to dismiss these methods as biased or partial. Rather, it is to foreground the need for any definition of PMSCs to appreciate, as Berndtsoon and Carmola most overtly argue: context matters. Context is important not because it allows for a more precise definition of PMSCs, but because it is through contextual, i.e. local cuts, that PMSCs are actually made meaningful and thus definable.

NORMATIVITY

Where academic and regulatory/policy analysis[21] purports to work with the objectively empirical, journalistic and popular cultural texts are more readily willing, and able, to work through the overtly normative facts that define PMSCs. By 'normative facts' I am referring to classificatory articulations that most clearly convey a value judgment on either the existence or activities of PMSCs. The usage of sensational nouns and adjectives, decontextualized and/or sensational imagery and 'bad-guy' narratives are common in journalistic, activist and dramatic texts – depending on the medium, all three methods of classifying PMSCs can be present. The

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[21] With book titles such as *Corporate Warriors* (Singer, 2003), *Corporate Soldiers and International Security* (Kinsey, 2006) and *Shadow Force* (Isenberg, 2009) the "objectivity" of academic analysis must only extend to the actual analysis and not the marketing material.

most widely used noun/inter-textual reference is to call PMSCs mercenaries or mercenary outfits or mercenary armies – dogs of war, whores of war, private armies, private soldiers, private warriors, hired-guns and war profiteers are other commonly used phrases (see Joachim and Schneiker, 2012a, Scahill, 2007). Writers for *Wired.com's* security blog *Danger Room* are particularly fond of classifying PMSCs as mercenaries. Example titles of published blog posts include, *U.S. Ready to Offer Mercenaries $10 Billion for a Drug-War Air Force* (Ackerman, 2012), *Iraqis Want Mercs, Not U.S. Troops, To Stick Around*, (Ackerman, 2011) and *U.S. Hires Shady Mercenary for Somali Proxy War* (Axe, 2011). O'Brien (2009) notes "In modern times, the term 'mercenaries has become a pejorative one" (p.35) with mercenaries regularly cast and characterized as "useless and dangerous" (Machiavelli, 1947, p.32), "The Terrible Ones" (Time, 1967), and "savage and cold-blooded" (Forsyth, 1974). In a similar affirmation Baker (2008) writes "it is generally assumed that there is something deeply immoral about mercenarism, to the extent that 'mercenary' is unquestionably one of the more offensive descriptions" (p. 31) that can be bestowed upon a person or an organization. The exploits of Bob Denard and Mad Mike Hoare and the spectacle of violence proffered by such video-games as *Soldier of Fortune* and *Mercenaries 2: World in Flames* and such films as *The Dogs of War* only further the pejorative and immoral connotations and references invoked by classifying PMSCs as mercenaries. The *UN Convention Against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries* also makes mercenaries and/or mercenary activity illegal. Hence, to classify PMSCs as mercenaries is to foreground illegal, illegitimate and immoral characteristics rooted in the unsanctioned violence, unscrupulous associations and unvarnished pursuit of adventure and self-enrichment that has typified historical and contemporary intra-actions of mercenaries – be they flesh and

blood, text or digitized. Defined as such, PMSCs come to be understood as a contemporary

scourge which represents a regression of and in global security relations.

While commentators such as *Danger Room's* Spencer Ackerman and freelance reporter

Jeremy Scahill regularly cast PMSCs as mercenary entities and thus reproduce definitions of

PMSCs as an illegitimate global phenomenon, academics and industry advocates strenuously

contest the linkage of PMSC and mercenary. For instance, Percy (2009) maintains that "it is true

that PMCs bear little resemblance to the seedy mercenary celebrities of the 1960s and 1970s"

(p.11) and Avant (2005) notes that she will avoid using the word altogether (p.23). In his four

part typology O'Brien (2009) lays out the distinctive features of mercenaries, private armies,

militias and warlords, PMCs and PSCs (pp.34-39). What distinguishes each group/organization

from the other is "the activity and nature of the actor" (Ibid., p.35). Accordingly, mercenaries

are typically individuals trained in the ways and means of war "seeking the only lifestyle that

they know" (p. 36), private armies are more organized units, typically transnational and have

diverse motivations (p.37), PSCs are corporate entities that sell a range of protection, training,

consulting and analyzing services (p.38) and PMCs are corporate entities which are actively

engaged in the offensive and defensive operations of military engagements (Ibid.).

Academically, linking PMSCs to and through mercenaries only serves to confuse and needlessly

complicate efforts to define PMSCs.[22] Industry advocates not only emphasize why PMSC and

mercenary associations are factually incorrect, but accentuate the subjective inappropriateness as

well. In one of only a few of his interviews with mainstream media outlets, founder and former

CEO of Blackwater, Erik Prince is quoted as saying "It's just not accurate to call us mercenaries

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[22] Sahadath (2013) is one dissenting academic in writing "individuals who are under the employment of PMCs and
are tasked with serving in active combat are mercenaries". Sahadath does not clarify what situations and operations
constitute "active combat", so it is not entirely clear if PSDs who exercise deadly force while operating in a conflict
zone can be considered to be engaged in active combat.

because you have Americans working for the American government. That in no way meets the definition of a mercenary. So I think "mercenary" is a slanderous term [...] kind of an inflammatory word [used] to malign us" (Hosenball, 2007, p. 39). Responding to the provocation "But if the definition of a mercenary is somebody who does military operations for profit – [sic]" former president of the International Stability Operations Association (ISOA) Doug Brooks flippantly retorts "Then you've just defined every army in the entire world" (Frontline, 2005).

If defining PMSCs as mercenaries is tenuous at best and slanderous at worst, analysts and commentators seeking to sediment PMSCs as illegitimate and immoral organizations can and do draw upon a wealth of alternative semiotics, framings and imaginations. Adjectives such as shadowy, secretive, shady and murky are often attached to descriptions of the business and tactical operations of PMSCs – e.g. *America's For Profit-Secret Army* (Wayne, 2002). Images of a silhouetted armed person lurking in the shadows (Scahill, 2007), the close-up of a man with a thousand-yard stare and face covered with green and black camouflage paint (Rosen, 2005) and the image of a man with a blurred out face, wearing battle fatigues and wielding a squad-automatic-weapon (Ashcroft, 2006) adorn the book jackets of popular literature texts on PMSCs. The titles of popular literature texts such as *Big Boy Rules* (Fainaru, 2008), *A Bloody Business* (Schumacher, 2006) and *Licensed to Kill* (Young Pelton, 2006) unmistakably market the violent, aggressive and morbid 'realities' of what PMSCs do/did in Iraq and Afghanistan. Activist groups seeking the abolition of the privatization of force rarely mince words and symbols when it comes to articulating their opposition to PMSCs. With a logo that is a not so subtle nod to the skull and cross-bones template used to identify poisonous substances the group *No Private*

Armies evokes a stunningly effective metaphor of PMSCs as a substance/phenomenon that poisons the national body-politic and thus should be avoided at all costs.

The American popular culture industry is particularly adept at staging PMSCs as the 'bad-guy'. Six examples of less than subtle characterizations of PMSCs as "bad-guy" are experienced in the films, *War Inc.*, *State of Play* and *District 9*, the seventh season of the television series *24*, the comic-book series *The Death of Capitan America* and the videogame *Call of Duty Advanced Warfare*. *War Inc.* (2008) is an utterly ridiculous comedic satire of American military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq as the PMSC Tamerlane is tasked with conducting the world's first fully commercialized war in the country of Turaqistan. In *State of Play* (2009) the PMSC Pointcorp becomes embroiled in a Capitol Hill controversy following the suspicious death of an aid to a member of Congress leading to a congressional investigation into the operating practices and intentions of Pointcorp. Half-way through the movie it is revealed that Pointcorp, through numerous shell companies, is attempting to monopolize all American government security and military contracts. In *District 9* (2009) the PMSC Multi-National United (MNU) is tasked with forcibly relocating over 1 million extra-terrestrial residents from their ghetto in Johannesburg. In the seventh season of *24* (2009) the PMSC Starkwood is the centre piece of a complex conspiracy that involves the military dictator of the country of Sangala, biological weapons, an armed assault on the White House and the securing of Starkwood's profit margins. By bombarding major population centres in the US with missiles carrying a biological payload Starkwood intends to cause so much panic and destruction that the public security/disaster response apparatus will be forced to turn to the commercial sector.

In the *Death of Captain America* (Brubaker, 2011) Kane-Meyer Securities is hired by the US government to provide temporary security services in Washington, D.C.. The problem is that

Kane-Meyer Securities is a subsidiary of a conglomerate headed by the arch nemesis of Captain America, the Red Skull. This contracting of Kane-Meyer is all part of an elaborate conspiracy launched by the Red Skull to bring the US to its knees. The conspiracy is undoubtedly thwarted by (a new) Captain America, as in the films it is a PMSC (and its employees) that do the work of/for the bad-guy.

A final example of the bad-guy PMSC can be found in both the marketing material and cut-scenes of the video game *Call of Duty Advanced Warfare*. A press release for the game reads, "Set in the year 2054, a private military corporation (PMC) has emerged with the power to rescue humanity from a devastated world struggling to rebuild after a global attack on its military and infrastructure" (quoted in Makuch, 2014). As can be inferred from the advertising material for the game (Call of Duty, 2014a) the Atlas Corporation, like Starkwood, is not a benevolent corporate citizen with "the power to rescue humanity", but rather it possesses and seeks to use the power to dominate it.

Deployed primarily as plot devices, Atlas Corporation, Tammerlane, Kane-Meyer Securities, Starkwood, Pointcorp and MNU are cast as villainous antagonists to the righteous or at least well-meaning protagonists. To fulfill this role as the villain or the bad-guy all of these fictionalized PMSCs are commonly tasked with instigating and committing some rather scandalous activities. As is briefly hinted at above, each PMSC is either embroiled in an elaborate conspiracy against the government/people of the USA and/or the world or is suspected or guilty of committing a litany of loathsome acts against innocent people or in the case of *District 9* against extra-terrestrials.

Other audio-visual productions of note include *Shadow Company* (2006), *Iraq's Guns for Hire* (2007), a trailer for the documentary *Superpower for Hire* (Call of Duty, 2014b) and a

YouTube formatted video entitled "Exclusive Bonus Scenes" from the documentary film *Iraq for Sale* (2006). Both *Shadow Company* and *Iraq's Guns for Hire* strive to provide an 'objective' view of PMSCs with *Shadow Company* giving screen time to an array of perspectives, while *Iraq's Guns for Hire* gives a first-hand account of the day-to-day realities of a commercial contractor working in Iraq. Nonetheless, such attempts at providing a more 'objective' characterization of PMSCs are betrayed by the titles of these documentaries. The title *Guns for Hire,* while literally true, also draws upon an inter-text which is populated by the gun-slingers of the American frontier, the gangsters of 1920s Chicago and action-movie characters regularly embodied by Sylvester Stallone, Bruce Willis and Jason Statham. Likewise, the title *Shadow Company* casts PMSCs as the dark-side of today's wars which further links PMSCs to the monsters, demons and criminals who lurk in the shadows. The *Vice* and *Call of Duty* co-produced documentary is a globetrotting redux of the more sensationalistic aspects of the commercial military and security services industry. All of the above mentioned tropes of villainy, secrecy, treachery, greed and aggression are on prominent display in this almost four minute video clip. Packaged as an exposé, the exclusive bonus scenes from *Iraq for Sale* assemble and privilege numerous bad-guy characteristics through visual allusion to the secretive status of Blackwater, the showing of decontextualized images of contractors firing pistols and rifles and expert testimony on the questionable character of Erik Prince. All of these bonus scenes are accompanied by a foreboding soundtrack, which only furthers the dark, mysterious and suggestively evil ambiance of the video.

Regardless of the easy dismissals of journalistic and pop-cultural articulations as misrepresentations (see Prince quoted in in Hosenball, 2007, p. 39) and/or "bad history" (Carafano, 2008, p. 136) popular perception certainly affects the reputation and consequently the

profitability of individual PMSCs. A company's reputation is significant inasmuch as "reputation is increasingly what 'distinguishes a company in a market that is growing and diversifying […] and hence helps to secure contracts" (Joachim and Schneiker, 2012a, p. 496). As the *New York Times* notes, when Blackwater changed its to Xe in 2009 this was done so in order to distance the company from the reputation it had received/earned from its operations in Iraq (Associated Press, 2009).

Although Hollywood backed productions and nationally influential journalistic sources arguably reach a broader audience than the marketing and branding platforms of individual companies or industry advocate organizations like the ISOA, PMSCs make use of some very effective methods of marketing their services, enhancing their reputations and advancing their profitability.   The first and perhaps the most significant approach available to PMSCs is a circular strategy – i.e. a self-reinforcing method of selling (in)security. According to Neocleous (2008), in order for PMSCs to make a profit they "must sell security [and] to sell security [they] must first help generate insecurities" (p. 154). Similarly, Krahmann (2008), contends that "Profit-oriented firms have an interest in the expansion of their market, and it is to their advantage to overstate the need for security" (p. 390). PMSCs do not simply supply "secure solutions" (G4S, 2013) they also contribute to the production of demand for this supply. As Leander (2005a) argues, PMSCs "increasingly shape which issues and problems are 'securitised' – turned into existential threats – and which kind of (re-)action is to be considered most appropriate" (p. 804). PMSCs engender the demand for their services rhetorically through corporate branding and practically through their roles as gatherers and analyzers of intelligence data and implicitly through their roles as trainers, consultants and lobbyists (Ibid., pp. 811-18). Construed as such, PMSCs need not intentionally seek to produce fear, chaos or insecurity like

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Starkwood strives to do in *24* because production of demand is already intimately linked to the methods of producing supply.

For instance, Eric Snowden's exposure of the PRISM intelligence gathering program reveals the extent to which commercial sector companies, such as Booze Allen Hamilton, are involved in the collection and analysis of intelligence data for such agencies as the NSA and FBI. Likewise, a report by Tim Murphy (2013) reveals that 483 263 commercial contractors working for the US government hold top-level security clearances. Through the creation of digital intelligence and surveillance systems and the capability to select what data is relevant, PMSCs can greatly influence how, for instance, the NSA, FBI, CIA or military intelligence agencies will interpret and act on the intelligence they receive. This ability of PMSCs to influence interpretations and action is further enhanced as the contracted analysts, consultants and engineers become the subject matter experts. The knowledge proffered by "security experts" thereby becomes preferential because they are the only ones able to offer it (Leander, 2005b, p. 618). The security knowledge wielded and proffered by PMSCs is "self-perpetuating" and therefore circular because expertise is enhanced through the access given to PMSCs through the operationalization of their services, which in turn means that the expertise is subsequently only accessible through the purchase of the services marketed by PMSCs.

Another marketing method used by PMSCs is to contrast themselves with the expertise and capabilities of public sector actors. Generally, PMSCs create a hierarchy with themselves at the top, their competitor PMSCs below them and public sector expertise at the bottom (see Joachim and Schneiker, 2012a, 2012b). These hierarchies are far from innocuous as public sector actors are regularly presented as "incompetent, mismanaged and ultimately immoral" actors (Leander, 2005a, p. 823). Conversely, PMCSs are defined as efficient, innovative,

motivated and capable. In political, bureaucratic and academic debates about the merits of

"privatizing" humanitarian interventions, PMSCs and their proponents are keen on pointing out

the unwillingness of Anglosphere nation-states to act in a timely fashion and/or the poorly

trained, equipped and led forces that have been recently called upon to intervene in crisis

situations (see Fitzsimmons, 2006; Brooks and Chorev, 2008; Pavel, 2010). Moreover, industry

advocates claim "the private sector offers faster, better and cheaper services […] if allowed

flexibility for innovation the private sector inevitably finds means for greater efficiencies"

(Brooks and Chorev, 2008, p. 122). Ideologically, PMSCs are actualized and actualize

themselves as neo-liberal agents able to mobilize capital, technology and expertise in order to

offer and deliver highly innovative, flexible and efficient security solutions.

In promoting the value of their operational capabilities over public sector actors, PMSCs

and the ISOA in particular also make it clear that they do not wish to supersede the nation-state

governance of global security relations. From the following phrase it is evident that the ISOA

(2013b) seeks partnerships and cooperation: "Instability stemming from any number of

destabilizing factors requires a coordinated and adept response led by governments and

multinational organizations, and supported by the expertise of the implementing community -

our membership." Contrary to the depictions of power hungry PMSCs in *24* and *Call of Duty*,

PMSC branding and marketing material presents a picture of PMSCs as agents of assistance,

coordination and facilitation. In militarized parlance, PMSCs self-represent as the tactical

actualizers of the strategic plans of their clientele.

Signalling their willingness to abide by international law and international humanitarian

law is also a key feature of the self-representation of PMSCs. As signatories of the ISOA Code

of Conduct, member companies such as PAE, Olive, Hart and G4S also commit themselves to

abide by all major human rights, weapons and security conventions such as the *Geneva Conventions*, *Chemical Weapons Convention* and the *Montreux Document* (Ibid.). The signing of the *International Code of Conduct for Private Security Providers* (ICoC) by 58 PMSCs in November 2010 and the expansion of that number to 708 as of 1 September 2013, further buttresses the desire of PMSCs to be viewed as working within the legal and regulatory frameworks of contemporary global security relations (ICoC, 2013). Cheekily put, this marketing strategy can be referred to as the alliteration strategy as PMSCs push an image of themselves as capable, competitive and cooperative.

In addition to constructing an image of capability, competition and cooperation, PMSCs readily market themselves as conforming to particular forms of masculinity. From a study of twenty-nine PMSC websites Joachim and Schneiker (2012a) contend that PMSCs self-represent as true professionals and ethical hero warriors in order "to present themselves as normal and legitimate while at the same time distinguishing themselves from other companies in the security industry, as well as the public sector" (p.497). In foregrounding masculinized self-presentations, PMSCs are able to market themselves to different audiences and potential clients "by emphasizing certain attributes more and others less" (Ibid.). In addition to allowing PMSCs to become various things to a variety of audiences, Joachim and Schneiker (2012b) note that masculinized self-representations allow PMSCs to cast themselves as normal and thus as unthreatening actors. This is to say, that while PMSCs may be an unfamiliar feature of contemporary global security relations, their activities are not going to upset the values and norms which govern how security is practiced globally. Indeed, as the sloganeering of the commercial security industry consistently reiterates, PMSCs can and will enhance how security is practiced globally. Claiming that their employees are the best trained, best equipped, most

experienced and ready and willing to get the job done anywhere and on a moment's notice

PMSCs create an air of unrivaled professionalism (Ibid., pp. 501-03) – a professionalism that can

be trusted to "Secure Success" (Triple Canopy, 2013a). To develop the self-image of ethical

hero warriors PMSCs weave together feminized discourses of helping, assistance, development

and peace and masculinized discourses of honour, commitment, loyalty, bravery and discipline

(Joachim and Schneiker, pp. 504-06). Conclusively, "Relying on a similar discourse [PMSCs],

on the one hand, portray themselves as superior, omnipotent and invincible and, on the other

hand, devalue the masculinity of other security actors […] by depicting them as weak, incapable,

ineffective and immoral" (Ibid., p. 507).

The complex and diverse array of services, clients, slogans, ideologies and political and

financial goals which are articulated with and through websites, films, headlines, contract

tendering, etc. constitute a contested factuality to overtly normative methods of defining PMSCs.

Indeed the key difference between objective and normative empirical conceptualizations is not

proximity to a factual truth. Rather what differentiates objective and normative texts are the

contexts through which defining exercises are articulated. Likewise, my review of objective and

normative methods must be understood as a heuristic sampling of the definitional articulations of

academic, industry, policy/regulatory, journalistic and pop-cultural texts. No individual text

properly exists as expressing either an objective or normative conceptualization of what PMSCs

are. Whether technical, satirical, promotional, defamatory or idiosyncratic, the meaningfulness

of how PMSCSs are defined depends upon the parameters of the context through which

definitions are articulated. Technically written explanations of the institutional character of

PMSCs do capture corporatized, profit-driven, militarized and security oriented aspects.

Technical texts are also rather sanitary thereby failing to capture the emotional, affective and

visceral qualities that undoubtedly underwrite contemporary concerns with (defining) PMSCs. As such, technical definitions more than often emerge in contexts where reasoned and rigorous analysis is held to be the standard for proper knowledge production, e.g. the academy, whereas emotional and visceral definitions more than often emerge in contexts where rhetorical and exhilarating analysis is held to be the standard, e.g. popular culture. The curtailments, failings and thus differences amongst definitions of PMSCs are certainly traceable to the complexity of services, clients, organizational structures and norms noted above. As argued here however, definitional limits are also a product of the knowledge that is sought and whether that knowledge is accepted as legitimate. Disciplinary and genre boundaries play an equally important role in limiting how certain texts can define PMSCs. And so while objective and normative empirical considerations should not be allotted ontological status, they certainly have methodological and epistemological consequences.

Speaking of the limits of text, the above review is largely dedicated to institutional or organizational definitions of PMSCs with only fleeting recognition of the people who most immediately work for PMSCS. To rectify this deficiency is not an easy task for as Higate (2011) argues "there is a paucity of fine-grained, qualitative data with which to capture the diversity of those working as contractors" (p.3). Beyond Higate's own work and the short list of academic work that he reviews, it is true that there is a "paucity" of quality data on who owns, operates and is employed by PMSCs. In part, this lack of information is traceable to a preponderance of analysis emerging from political science, IR and international law scholars (Ibid.) and their preferences for structures, institutions, regimes and aggregate actors. Higate more squarely lays the blame for poor data with "continued misrepresentation in the media" (Ibid.). As I consider media and pop-culture articulations to be relevant sources through which to define PMSCs I

contend that "misrepresentation" is more properly a pre-occupation with a particular type of

contractor. This pre-occupation is problematic not because it distorts a more realistic or truer

understanding of the people who manage and are employed by PMSCs, but because it limits

understandings of the meaningfulness of PMSCs. Specifically, media pre-occupation as

evidenced in the print, cinematic and televisual productions discussed above, regularly constitute

PMSCs and their employees as criminals and mercenaries who operate outside the norms and

institutions of contemporary global security relations. What can and should be emphasized

however, despite a lack of quality data, is that both PMSCs and the people who operate them are

legitimate features of global security relations. Asserting that PMSCs are legitimate is not to

whitewash or excuse the numerous troubling instances involving contractors. Nor is it my

intention to uncritically accept that the legitimate practices of global security relations, of which

PMSCs are an integral component, should be accorded a legitimate status.

EXECUTIVE CLASS

One name that stands out when it comes to founders, owners and executives is Erik

Prince. Erik Prince, the founder and former CEO of Blackwater, stands out, not because

demographically he is uniquely different from other founders and owners of PMSCs, but because

he and the PMSC he started became the poster-boy for the arrogant, aggressive and unscrupulous

PMSC. Being the son of billionaire, a staunch Calvinist, a former Navy SEAL with close ties to

the far-right of American conservatism (Scahill, 2007) does not make Erik Prince unfit to found

and run a PMSC. For authors such as Scahill and the producers of *Iraq for Sale* and the seventh

season of *24*, this background provides enough fodder to construct him as a merciless and

murderous figure. Allegations that he ordered the killing of former Blackwater employees who

were cooperating with U.S. government investigators (Mail Foreign Service, 2009) do lend some

credence to Jon Voight's performance as the sinister head of Starkwood in *24*. That his company was also involved in some of the more egregious and illegal actions perpetrated by PMSCs in Afghanistan and Iraq do not assist Prince's image either. Nevertheless, my point in discussing Erik Prince is neither to vilify nor exonerate him. Rather, it is to substantiate Higate and my concern with misrepresentation/pre-occupation and to begin to demonstrate how a focus on the scandalous and salacious stories involving owners, CEOs and contractors skews definitions of PMSCs. Definitions become skewed inasmuch as PMSCs are cast as threatening entities, specifically threatening to destabilize global security relations. Erik Prince and his methods leave much to be desired, but the dramatization of him and his approach to commercial security is not congruent with the corporate management of the commercial military and security industry. Moreover, demographically his existence as a middle-age man with a military background means that Erik Prince is more of a typical PMSC founder, owner or executive than his notoriety suggests. Indeed to become enthralled with the exploits of an Erik Prince is to miss how he and his executive colleagues emerge through the legitimatized practices of developing Anglosphere corporate leaders.

A review of the corporate websites of twelve Anglosphere PMSCs[23] produces three categories of founders, owners and executives: 1) highly educated, middle-aged men with a long history in the financial, engineering, defence production or security services sectors, 2) highly educated, middle-aged men with a (distinguished) military career as either a general or as a member of a special operations force such as the Navy SEALs or SAS, 3) highly educated, later-aged men with a long industry and military background. With a MBA, over thirty years of experience working for Harris Corporation, Dyncorp and L-3, President and CEO of Engility,

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[23] The company sites reviewed include Hart, Control Risks, Triple Canopy, PAE, Engility, Academi, Dyncorp, Olive Group, G4S Secure Solutions (North America), CACI, Aegis and KBR.

Anthony Smeraglinolo embodies the first type of executive (Engility, 2013). Co-founders and Directors of Triple Canopy, Tom Katis and Matt Mann, embody the second categorization of executives. Tom is a graduate of Yale, a former member of the "the U.S. Army Special Forces (Green Berets)" and "Bronze Star and Combat Infantryman's badge" recipient (Triple Canopy, 2013b). Matt is a graduate of the University of Alaska and during his twenty-three career with the U.S. Army he served six years with the "U.S. Army's 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta (Delta Force)" (Ibid.). The third type of executive is eminently represented by Lord Richard Westbury who is the Founder, Chairmen and CEO of the Hart Group. Lord Westbury is a graduate of the Sandhurst Royal Military Academy, a former member of the Scots Guard and the SAS, a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and a former Deputy Chief Executive of Defence Systems Ltd. (Hart Group, 2013).

Although the founders, directors, CEOs and presidents are predominantly men, some women do hold key executive positions. At KBR, Sue Carter is the Executive Vice-President and CFO (KBR, 2013). Sallie Stone is the "Director of Hart's Asia Pacific division" (Hart Group, 2013). Suzanne Folsom is the Senior Vice-President, General Counsel & Chief Compliance Officer at Academi (Academi, 2013). At PAE (2013) Jessica Bejarano is Chief Ethics & Compliance Officer, Meg Manthey is the Director of Communications and Tina Dolph is the President, Global Stability and Development at PAE. Lastly, Jody Brown is the Executive Vice-President, Public Relations, Corporate Communications, and Congressional Relations, Deborah Dunie is the Executive Vice-President, Chief Technology Officer and Dr. Lani Kass is the Corporate Strategic Advisor for CACI. Like their male counterparts, female executives are highly educated holding various degrees from prestigious universities such as Duke, Cornell, Tufts, Georgetown and Columbia. Female executives, at least the ones named here, have no

military experience[24], but they do have substantial backgrounds in the defence production and security services industry. Accordingly, female executives embody the first type of executives.

This review of corporate management suggests that PMSCs are much more integrated into acceptable structures and institutions than commentators emphasizing the mercenary or criminal aspects of PMSCs portray. Even the disparity between male and female executives, while troubling, does not necessarily make the commercial military and security industry uniquely sexist or gender discriminatory.[25] Moreover, each of the PMSCs reviewed draws their corporate managers from rather standard networks of recruitment – e.g. prestigious universities, the military, government and competitors. Insofar as financing and contract acquisition require investors and clients, highly educated and experienced individuals not only inspire confidence, but also possess the inter-personal knowledge and/or prior relationships with potential investors and clients; "Political connections are important to [PMSCs] when landing contracts" (Isenberg, 2009, p. 63). In the films *War Inc.* and *State of Play* and bonus scenes of *Iraq for Sale*, these political or insider connections are played up as unseemly and unscrupulous.

Not to deny issues with no-bid contracts, conflicts of interest and fraud,[26] but the potential for unethical practices to occur if corporate executives have close ties to politicians and bureaucrats is also not exclusive to the commercial military and security services industry. This is not a cynical reflection on contemporary structures of influence and authority, but rather a practical recognition of the status-quo modes of operation for PMSCs. Recognizing that PMSC executives are educated, recruited and trained by and through accepted and expected means and

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[24] Deborah Dunie and Dr. Lani Kass were civilian members of the DOD.

[25] A 2014 survey of Fortune 500 companies found that only 4.8 percent of CEO positions were held by women (Fairchild, 2014).

[26] Matt Kelly (2007) of *USA Today* reports a particularly salacious example of unethical behaviour wherein "Eric Barton, a former manager in Iraq for EOD Technology (EODT), was accused by the Army Suspension and Debarment Office of helping his company win convoy security work last year while having an affair with Air Force Capt. Sherrie Remington, a contracting officer" (p. 10A).

institutions of Anglosphere society buttresses definitions of PMSCs as legitimate/legitimatized security entities. PMSCs may be responsible for some very troubling activities, but, it is not so easy to demonstrate that such actions are the result of the bad-guy executives portrayed in *24, State of Play* and *War Inc*.

THE WAGE EARNERS

Creating a reliable socio-anthropological composite of PMSC executives, owners and founders is not so easily replicated when it comes to determining the socio-anthropological features of PMSCs employees. With millions of people employed globally by PMSCs, aggregating who actually works for PMSCs is at best a daunting task. Available analysis is also somewhat unreliable as there is a discernible myopic concern with one specific type of contractor. A *Google Images* search of the phrases "private military contractor" and "private security contractor" returns a predominant image of contractors as white, male, aged 28-44, weighing approximately 185-210lbs (predominantly muscle mass) and appearing to be proficient in the handling of numerous small arms and light weapons. Images from the book covers of Ashcroft (2006), Carafano (2008), Fainaru (2008), Isenberg (2009), Kinsey (2006) and Schumacher (2006) reaffirm the *Google Images* constitution of contractors.   An online poll of current and former contractors lends statistical legitimacy to this constitution of contractors in finding that of the 355 respondents to the poll all were "U.S. Citizens with a law enforcement background, the vast majority were male (216 or 96.9 percent), White (77.5 percent), and married (77.1 percent)" (Franke & von Boemcken, 2011, p. 730). This poll also found that "All respondents had completed at least high school (34.5 percent) and almost half (49.8 percent) held undergraduate and 15.7 percent held graduate degrees. Almost two thirds (136 or 61.5 percent) of respondents had served in the military and four-in-five of those (108) had been directly

involved in combat" (Ibid.). This type of contractor is also regularly featured in the images and imaginations of both dramatic and documentary film, television and *YouTube* formatted videos. The invasions and post-conflict rebuilding of Afghanistan and Iraq also enhanced, not necessarily in a positive way, the profile of the white, middle-aged, well-muscled and highly trained contractor.

Contractors working in Afghanistan and Iraq are the most studied, editorialized and imagined with armed security contractors receiving the bulk of this attention. Working for such companies as Blackwater, Triple Canopy, Dyncorp, ArmorGroup, Hart and Crescent, the white, male, 28-44 year old, muscled and experienced contractors were/are predominantly employed to provide armed close-protection for the movement of dignitaries, executives, journalists and supplies around Iraq and Afghanistan. Whether "rolling hard" or manning the "Hate Truck" Grizz, Tool, Wolf, J-Dub and Shrek[27] are the repository from and through which the image of the typical contractor is drawn (see Durkin, 2004; Pelton Young, 2006; Fainaru, 2008). With their 'unofficial' uniform of shaved-heads, tattoos, sunglasses, khaki pants, company polo shirts and ball caps one could be forgiven for assuming that these contractors were all alike. Such an assumption would however occlude some very important distinctions – regularly made by the contractors themselves.

Whether recognized respectively or collectively, bodily appearance, kit, skill and nationality are the most common markers of distinction used by these contractors to distinguish themselves from themselves. For instance, an animated scene in *Shadow Company* (2006) visually and audibly demonstrates the key differences between American, Italian and British contractors – with the narrator reading the words of the British contractor. According to this scene, American contractors are muscle bound "steely-eyed storm-troopers" or bikers

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[27] All nicknames of contractors.

"festooned" with multiple weapons and the latest and greatest tactical gear. The Italians are "comical in their vanity" with greased backed hair, bulging biceps and bulging stomachs. British contractors are portrayed as reserved to the point of being unremarkable. The contrast between American bombast and British reserve is a particularly common theme. In an interview with Fainaru (2008) a British contractor working for ArmorGroup is quoted as saying "People call us 'the school boys' because of the way we dress and the way we act […] We try to be conservative and not over the top" (p. 130). Embedded with Crescent Security, Durkin (2004) writes of an American contractor, "Wolf Weiss, as his name suggests, is not the polo-shirt sort. He wears his body armor, and his bravado, at all times". Commenting on the import of weaponry to American contractors a British contractor gleefully reports "if we found ourselves in earshot of some fierce-looking [contractor], who for some reason felt the need to wear full kit […] we'd start spouting off verbal diarrhoea about some fictional new weapon" (Low quoted in Higate, 2012c, p.331). For British contractors weapons are tools of the trade and are not and should not be used as markers of identity or symbols of ones proficiency as a contractor (Ibid.).

Differentials in skill or more precisely levels of professionalism are also readily evoked in distinguishing American and British contractors operating in Iraq and to a lesser extent Afghanistan.[28] American contractors are regularly said to rely on cowboy, gunslinger or Hollywood style tactics, i.e. unprofessional and unnecessary, while British contractors are "better able to read the street" (Young Pelton quoted in *Shadow Company,* 2006; see also Higate, 2012c). Remarking on the militaristic character of his British comrades Ashcroft (2006) proudly

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[28] Skill based distinctions and subsequent denigration of fellow contractors is not the exclusive preserve of American-British rivalries. Former director of the Private Security Company Association of Iraq Lawrence Peter, refers to the low/no skilled, weekend warrior, mall-cop contractors as the "Bubba Tier" who went to Iraq because "Hey, it looks fun" (Peter quoted in Frontline, 2005b).

proclaims "In a hostile environment […] Brits consistently displayed qualities of character, loyalty, toughness and humour" (p.9).

The identity skirmishes amongst American and British contractors do demonstrate some key methods of how the typical contractor distinguishes themselves from one another. This rivalry and the typical contractor image monopolize analysis of who works for PMSCs. A concentrated focus on this type of contractor and the companies which employ them is not inherently problematic. Indeed the focus of this dissertation is on these very contractors and PMSCs. What is concerning however, is that by focusing on these contractors the textual terrain permits the work of the contractors to be isolated amongst the actions of individuals – especially when it comes to failures and blame for egregious actions. To construe contractors as individualized, self-reliant and autonomous is not without merit. In labour terms, it is impossible to avoid individualization as contractors are institutionally and legally independent entities. To focus only on the legal or institutional status of contractors as independent is to miss the structural prominence of independent contractors in all sectors of the labour force and the labour advantages derived from the social privileges of being white, middle-aged and a man.

The oft referenced "Contractor's Creed" contains the lines "I look out for myself, the operators to my left and right, and no one else" and "I will deploy on my terms" (quoted in Young Pelton, 2006). Whether boastful or a practical recognition of their position as labourers, individualized self-presentation is easily disseminated as an explanatory variable when issues of unethical behaviour come along. Consequently, in needing to discuss egregious actions perpetrated by white, middle-aged, male contractors, authors such as Scahill, Young Pelton and Fainaru end up reinforcing an understanding that these are the only contractors which matter.[29]

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[29] This critique is a bit unfair as these authors are specifically concerned with uncovering who the individuals working for Anglo-American PMSC are in Iraq and Afghanistan. Hence, it is unfair to expect these authors to

In other words, the (self-proclaimed) individuality of these contractors becomes both attraction and explanation. Attraction to or pre-occupation with individual white, middle-aged, well-muscled, experienced male contractors works to (further) marginalize the existence of other 'types' of contractors and how these other contractors are integrated into the PMSC labour force. Individuality as explanation similarly marginalizes possibilities that PMSCs and their failures are traceable to features, traits, practices and structures 'other' than the individuality of white, middle-aged, well-muscled, experienced men. Most notably, for PMSCs operating in Afghanistan and Iraq between 2001 and 2013, the white, middle-aged, well-muscled, experienced male contractor was not the typical contractor. Labourers from the global South, hired to provide a whole host of services, actually comprised the majority of people hired by PMSCs.

To provide a limited but demonstrative example, a July 2013 report from USCENTCOM reports the number of security contractors under contract to the DOD as 217 Americans, 1783 third country nationals (TCNs) and 148 locals operating in Iraq and 873 Americans, 1533 TCNs and 13812 locals operating in Afghanistan. A prime motivator of employing locals and TCNs is the suppression of labour costs. For instance, both men and women from Uganda offer a cheap and plentiful source of low-skilled labour. As a *BBC* story on Ugandan contractors hoping to work in Iraq reports "Applicants out number available places by more than 1,000" (Mmali, 2009). Differences in experience, supply and demand as well as the broader wage differential amongst the global North and South permit PMSCs to pay local and TCN contractors significantly less than their Anglosphere counterparts. Lax or non-existent labour codes also mean that local and TCN contractors have very little options for recourse if they are mistreated

provide anything different than an individualized view. My concern is more properly directed at the literature as a base of articulation and constitution of one particular type of contractor.

by an employer or fellow contractor. Despite these conditions the prospect of "lucrative" financial opportunities, particularly in the case of Ugandans (Ibid.), continues to drive locals and TCNs into security work. The availability of a 'willing' but low-cost labour force also means that PMSCs readily treat local and TCN contractors as an expendable resource. Whether tasked with the most vulnerable jobs or experiencing direct abuse from colleagues and mangers (see Vicky, 2012), local and TCN contractors experience PMSC work in markedly different ways than the white, middle-aged, well-muscled, experienced male contractor.

To be accurate, not all TCN contractors are sought after for their low-skill or are considered to be highly expendable. Contractors from Fiji, Chile, El Salvador, Serbia and certain Ugandans have been/are sought because they are believed to be uniquely prepared for the rigours of security operations in combat zones. During the early stages of post-War Iraq, companies such as Dyncorp, Triple Canopy and Sabre turned to Uganda in order to recruit veterans of the conflicts in the Great Lakes region (Ibid.). This recruitment of Ugandan veterans lead to the employment of 3000 contractors in 2007 and 10000 contractors in 2008 in Iraq (Ibid.). Unique preparedness is however not simply a reflection of a contractor's combat/military experience. For Higate (2012b) perceptions of men from the global South as rougher, tougher and thus more willing and capable of handling the down and dirty aspects of security operations are motivated by militarized and colonial discourses of "martial races" and "enforcement masculinities." Accordingly, colonial perceptions of Fijian men as inherently suited for military service/combat and historical associations of certain Chilean men with the repressive regime of Augusto Pinochet are "(re)constituted, harnessed and deployed in contemporary times" in order to satisfy "demands for low-cost privatised enforcement masculinities" (Ibid., p. 47). In short, TCNs are

an attractive source of labour for PMSCs because of their perceived inherent characteristics and their disadvantaged political-economic position vis-a-vis Anglosphere contractors.

Having limited this discussion to contractors tasked with providing armed guarding services is itself a limiting discussion of who PMSCs employ in Iraq and Afghanistan. Returning to the data from the USCENTCOM (2013) report reveals that as of July 2013, 41941 Americans, 43800 TCNs and 43359 locals were employed by PMSCs under contract to the DOD. As armed protection services constitute a small portion of the overall roles[30] performed by contractors, it is now important to acknowledge that the majority of contractors employed in Afghanistan and Iraq are responsible for cooking, cleaning, constructing, repairing and moving services. This logistics and maintenance work is performed by both men and women from India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Philippines and Bangladesh (Stillman, 2011). Describing scenes from the documentary *Private Warriors*, Barker (2009) writes,

> In one scene, a South Asian man in a "Pizza Hut Iraq" baseball cap serves pizza to soldiers […] Another scene takes place […] in Camp Anaconda [...] Here, we see a Southeast Asian man pushing a laundry cart past countless aisles of washing machines and dryers. In several other scenes […] a South Asian man serves a cheeseburger […] and another South Asian man scoops ice cream for [soldiers]. And finally, in another scene, yet another South Asian man is filmed moving in and out of individual portable latrines, cleaning each (p. 212).

Hired by sub-contractors for contracts tendered by KBR, the U.S. military's primary source for logistics and maintenance services, these South Asian men work(ed) for as little as US $1.25/hour, twelve hours a day, seven days a week for two years straight (Ibid., p. 215). In a story on Fijian women working for PMSCs in Iraq, Stillman (2011) details incidents of misleading recruitment information, e.g. the women were initially told that they would be working in Dubai, and more egregiously incidents of sexual intimidation and assault by supervisors. In fact, accusations of sexual assault and other forms of mistreatment of TCNs were

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[30] The USCENTCOM (2013) report reveals that in Afghanistan 16 percent of all DOD contractors are employed to provide "security" services.

troublingly common in Iraq. Adding to the threat of sexual violence for women was the threat of armed violence from combatants opposed to the American led occupation of Iraq. Stillman reports that "As early as 2004, Sunni militants launched a campaign to kill T.C.N.s [sic]" (Ibid.).

Recognizing the exploitative and threatening labour conditions that constitute the work experiences of local and TCN contractors is dually significant for definitions of PMSCs. Firstly, to acknowledge the role that PMSCs play in advancing the accumulation of capital through intensified exploitation of labourers from the global South means also acknowledging that PMSCs are intimately linked to broader processes of political-economic intra-action amongst the global North and South. Acknowledging that KBR, for instance, is a publically traded company and thus has share-holders to answer to and that labour costs are understood as a liability for profit-centric enterprises, means that PMSCs are very much linked to contemporary political-economic structures that constitute the global South as an expansive repository of low cost, low risk labour. Likewise, many companies providing risk assessment and security guards literally secure the resource apparatus which fuels (see Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011, pp. 122-71) inequitable flows of capital, resources and people throughout the global North and South. Where many authors have used neo-liberal alterations of global political-economic structures to explain the rise of PMSCs (see Singer, 2003; Rosén, 2008; Carmola, 2010; Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011) this review of who works for PMSCs demonstrates that PMSCs are also active agents of the neo-liberal structuration of flows of capital in its financial, labour and political forms. Actualized as neo-liberalized agents means that the operations of PMSCs are further integrated into the accepted, if not expected, practices of global political-economics and not just global security relations. To be sure the ascendency and global spread of neo-liberal modes of governance, accounting and investing is not without its critics. However, to define PMSCs as

somehow external to these practices is to become ensnared with the idea that PMSCs are shadowy, anachronistic and alien entities whose operations actually frustrate the functioning of global political-economics. PMSCs may be problematic, but it is not because they are outsiders, criminals[31] or the mercenary remnants of the Free Companies of pre-Westphalia Europe or decolonization Africa.

In addition, Barker (2009) argues that the predominance of South Asian men employed to cook and clean for American soldiers in Iraq "reinforces the devaluation and disavowal of social reproduction and, in the process, serves as a site of symbolic politics underwriting the gendered dimensions of the national identity of the American soldier" (p. 215). The employment of South Asian men to perform traditionally feminized tasks is of both practical and symbolic benefit to the American military. Practically, contracting socially reproductive tasks keeps soldiers out of the kitchens and on the battlefields (Ibid.). Symbolically, relying upon contract labour allows the American military to assert a masculinized image of itself as America's protector insofar as to keep "America safe and prosperous" (Carafano, 2008, p.39) in a dangerous world requires an institution which is strong, courageous and willing to do whatever it takes. Outsourcing feminized work by contractors ensures that the American military can present itself as a singly focussed institution. For contractors this means that while they assume a devalued, private and non-visible role, their employers become even more integral to practices which orient global security and political-economic relations in the interests of Anglosphere states.

Recognizing the social reproductive work done by and through PMSCs also expands the definitional properties of who contractors are. Whereas Joachim and Schneiker's (2012a, 2012b) research focuses on articulations of true professionals and ethical hero warriors and Higate's

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[31] It should be noted that investigative journalists have uncovered instances of TCNs being illegally "trafficked" for contract work in Iraq (Stillman, 2011; Isenberg & Schwellebbach, 2011). Hence, my assertion that PMSCs are best understood as legitimate and accepted actors does not preclude their involvement in criminal activities.

(2012b, 2012c) research focuses on articulations of enforcement masculinities and professionalism, Barker's use of social reproduction introduces articulations of mature manhood and/or fatherhood to the identity formation practices of contractors. According to her analysis, because they perform traditionally feminized tasks, South Asian men can be said to assume a motherly role. Extrapolating to armed security contractors, because they perform traditionally masculinized tasks, i.e. protection, Anglosphere, local and TCN men can be said to assume a fatherly role. Construed as fatherly protectors alters understandings of how contractors use professionalism to distinguish themselves. Read through a social reproductive lens, it can be inferred that expressions of recklessness, posturing and narcissism are differentiating articulations rooted in expected roles of fathers as mature and responsible men. Inserted into the American-British contractor identity rivalry discussed above, the "Hate Trucks", brandishing of weapons, tattoos and "Fuck-you" and devil may care attitudes are not only unbecoming of a professional, but are unbecoming of mature family oriented man. A contractor working for Blackwater in Iraq expresses differing masculine roles in less divisive terms,

> You've got hundreds of people coming through. They usually fall into two categories. You've got the under-thirty crowd –the whippersnappers just looking for the biggest paycheck. Then you've got the over-thirty crowd –the guys with a family and kids that are looking for a company to work for. (Young Pelton, 2006, p. 92)

As a method of differentiation, social reproductive roles/expectations certainly enhance understandings of how contractors define themselves and their colleagues. The ability to provide for one's family is a commonly expressed sentiment amongst contractors when addressing reasons for seeking work in Iraq or Afghanistan. For TCN contractors, the ability to remit most of their wages to their families was/is both a push and pull factor (Maclellan, 2006, p. 50).[32] The

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[32] A Ugandan government official is quoted in the *Christian Science Monitor* as saying "The Iraq opportunity brings in about $90 million dollars, whereas our chief export, which is coffee, brings in around $60 or $70 million a year," and "That figure is mostly made up of remittances" (Delany, 2009).

potential to provide financial stability is often juxtaposed with the daily physical danger

encountered by contractors.

Additionally, male contractors are frequently cited as providing (unrealistic and

misleading) reassurances of their well-being to their families; "I must reassure all of you that

there is nothing to worry about and that we feel safe and happy" (quoted in Fiji Times cited in

McLellan, 2006, p.50). Foregrounding their roles as protectors and providers further entrenches

a context of acceptability as presumptions that contractors are singularly motivated by personal

exhilaration and greed are undermined. Undoubtedly adrenaline-junkie, bank-account obsessed

contractors exist. However, the structural and agential push-pull factors of social reproduction

are arguably a more useful and more accurate frame of general reference when attempting to

define the contractors who have worked/are working in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Defining PMSCs through owners, managers and employees produces a similarly diverse

set of understandings of the ways PMSCs can be defined as institutions and organizations. To

weave together highly educated, trained and networked owners and managers with their highly

precarious work-force I have directed this review towards the agential and structural labour

identities and conditions experienced and performed most often in Iraq and Afghanistan. I have

focussed on labour identities and conditions in part because such a focus provides a more

thorough understanding of who the people were/are that work(ed) in and for the commercial

military and security industry. Emphasizing labour experiences also retrenches the place of

PMSCs as legitimate global actors. The labour practices of PMSCs are certainly questionable.

Unfortunately and ironically, poor-to-abusive treatment of employees does not make PMSCs

marginal employers. Rather it entangles PMSCs in the broader, more global, problems of labour

exploitation and therefore centralizes as PMSCs as both cause and consequence of the global exploitation of workers.

MAKE WORK

Defining PMSCs is one practice of determining how they matter. As demonstrated in this chapter, PMSCs become defined through the textual arrangement of the material-discursivity of company nomenclature, organizational size, ownership structure, geography of operations, employee pool, client rolodex and services offered/marketed. A key insight of this (re-)mapping of how PMSCs become defined is what academics such as Carmola (2010), Joachim and Schneiker (2012a) and Berndtsson (2012) understand to be the malleability and flexibility of PMSCs. Defining PMSCs as malleable and flexible is a key insight because, as previously mentioned, it allows for the possibility of playing with how malleable and flexible PMSCs can become. It allows for the possibility that what PMSCs do, which is really what they are, is constituted through other components that are not captured through extensive listings of institutional and personnel traits. Although defining PMSCs as malleable and flexible can be read as a gesture towards a Baradain notion of ontological indeterminacy, what PMSCs do/are is highly overdetermined. That is to say, how malleable and flexible PMSCs can become is already constrained by and through certain processes that make PMSCs work. These politico-economic processes, which will be discussed further in the next chapter, do not make PMSCs work in the sense of an employer-employee relationship. Rather PMSCs are made to work, or more appropriately come to matter, through the constraining expectations manifested by and through these processes.

CHAPTER FOUR: OVERDETERMINED WORK

Leaving aside Hegelian and Marxian efforts to overdetermine what work and its labouriousness mean (see Sayers, 2007), using work to understand how PMSCs come to do what (they are expected) to do is appropriate because work is amorphous. Work works as a textual engagement tool because it is not linguistically restricted to the services provided or the contracted operations conducted by PMSCs. As a tool of engagement, work works to conceptualize services provided/contracted operations as well as other activities that PMSCs are expected to do and other agents that PMSCs 'employ'. Work, as used in this dissertation, is therefore a post-humanized concept that determines that PMSCs perform tasks that are not limited to the immediacy of their marketed services. Work also determines that the human-centricity, as evidenced in the previous chapter, of assumptions that only individual, whole, living, functional, adult humans work for PMSCs is a limited understanding of who and what works for PMSCs. By concentrating on work, it becomes clear that PMSCs recruit, employ and exploit the labour of not altogether or exclusively human things and processes. Of specific concern, the work performed by and through corpses, guns and penises is an integral determinant of how PMSCs are (textually) made to matter.

To the extent that work is understood as a practice of exertion for a determined purpose, engaging PMSCs through their work also alters conceptions of who or what PMSCs (are expected to) work for. PMSCs most obviously work for nation-states, NGOs and private citizens, but as argued here PMSCs (are) also (expected to) work for four key processes: 1) privatizing, 2) militarizing, 3) securing, and 4) commercializing. This chapter is therefore dedicated to elaborating what these four processes are and how PMSCs (are expected) to work for them.

PRIVATIZING

Analyzing privatization typically leads down three conceptual paths. A highly trafficked

avenue is analysis of the effects that the privatization of security and/or military operations has

on the relationship between the public and private spheres (see Singer, 2003; Spearin 2004b;

Avant 2005; Leander, 2005a; Carafano 2008; *War Inc.*, 2008; *State of Play*, 2009; Abrahamsen

and Williams, 2011). If a general consensus can be surmised through these texts it is that

privatizing processes are partnership processes, partnerships which can function smoothly and be

of mutual benefit, can be tumultuous and be of mutual detriment or can be a complex of

functional, dysfunctional and even exploitative relations amongst public and private entities.

Secondly, privatizing processes can also be understood as synonymous with

individualizing processes. As Krahmann (2005, p, 390) notes, "private security companies can

generate demand and raise profits not only by identifying new threats and increasing risk

perception, but also by individualizing threat perception and security provision." Krahmann,

Leander (2005a) and Neocleous (2008) argue that privatizing as individualizing is driven by

commercializing desires of expanding the market for PMSC products and services. Privatizing

as individualizing must also be recognized as a public-policy response to the so-called threats of

contemporary global terrorism. Here, disaster response, crisis mitigation and risk analysis

mechanisms seek to affect the reliance of a population (Coaffee & Wood, 2006). *Ready.gov*, a

website maintained by the Department of Homeland Security, is a wonderfully illustrative

example of the individualizing/privatizing of security for the purposes of affecting civic

resilience.

A third conceptual understanding of privatization is to be found in the gendered and

feminist analysis of PMSCs (see Barker, 2009; Higate, 2011, 2012a, b, c; Joachim and

Schneiker, 2012a, b). Privatizing processes are those processes which feminize matters and meanings. Privatization can be the social reproductive practices that sustain militarized imperium (Barker, 2009), the derogatory and discriminatory emasculation of colleagues and competitors (Higate, 2012c) or the adoption of a softer, helpful, caring image by PMSCs (Joachim and Schneiker, 2012a). Like Hooper's (2001) understanding of masculinity explicated in chapter six, privatizing as feminizing is a complex and often contradictory process of gendering/gendered matters and meanings.

In this dissertation, I take a fourth conceptual trail – which is informed by the aforementioned understandings of privatizing processes. In the following chapters, privatizing work is the work that PMSCs do to ensure the (re)production of safe, comfortable and happy embodiments of the self and family as well as spaces, such as the home and the bedroom. In Afghanistan and Iraq privatizing work is most literally actualized through personal security details (PSDs) either through the protection afforded to the principal of the PSD or justifying the dangerous work of PSD as necessary in order to provide for one's family (see Ashcroft, 2006). Privatizing work is also fraught with vulnerabilities, not in the least, traceable to the irony of producing safe, comfortable and happy embodiments and spaces through the violence of (post-) conflict spaces. Entangled with militarizing, securing and commercializing processes only enhances the potential for an interruption or disruption of privatizing work. Rather than straightforwardly advancing privatizing processes, my analysis of the textual terrain of PMSCs demonstrates how militarized, securing and commercializing processes readily manifest anxieties, inhibitions and upheavals amongst the embodied performativities of PMSC personnel. The cruel irony is the workings of militarizing, securing and commercializing processes that inhibit privatizing processes are readily called upon to shore-up and shape-up the privatizing

work of PMSCs. This is made most evident in chapter six where the failings of ArmorGroup to 'properly' privatize male/homosocial intimacies justifies an intensification of militarized and commercialized regulation of PMSCs contracted by the DOS.

MILITARIZING

I have already introduced some key aspects of the militarizing work done by PMSCs in chapter two. In specific relation to Afghanistan and Iraq, militarizing processes motivate determinations of PMSCs as primary supporting-agents of Anglosphere military adventurism. As cooks, cleaners, mechanics, translators, interrogators, guards, trainers and consultants, PMSC contractors assume and perform intimately important roles in both the tactical and strategic functioning of Anglosphere militaries. Like privatizing processes, militarizing processes often become disjunctured through the work of PMSCs. When contractors are accused of fraud, shoddy work, rape, drunk and disorderly conduct or murder these accusations are not only reflective of a bad employee or a poorly managed company, but they also create fissures in how the military apparatus is perceived to function. Privatizing processes transform these egregious accusations into perceptual failures of the socially reproductive roles of military operations. When PMSCs impede militarizing work they literally fail to properly care for soldiers and they symbolically fail to properly nourish the nation/body-politic. To fail as militarized reproducers/care-takers of the nation/body-politics, PMSCs need not be directly working for Anglosphere military agencies. In the three examples discussed in the remainder of the dissertation none of the PMSCs were under contract to the American, British, Canadian or Australian militaries. By operating in a (post-)conflict zone, under contracts to agencies supporting Anglosphere efforts and foregrounding militaristic traits, these PMSCs become inescapably entangled in the militarized reproduction of the nation/body-politic.

Commercializing processes often take the blame for the inability of PMSCs to effectively conduct militarizing work. However, I spare no opportunity to repurpose the textual terrain of the PMSCs in order to demonstrate how militarizing processes readily actualize the conditions responsible for dysfunctional militarizing work. Indeed, dysfunction becomes a key articulation in chapter six's analysis of how penises come to matter to and through the work of PMSCs.

SECURING

PMSCs do securing work through their performance of constituting objects as securable. For Leander's (2005a, b) Copenhagen School influenced understanding of securitization, PMSCs do securing work through their material-discursive abilities to influence what things and processes require security. The selling of security services is not simply PMSCs providing supply for autonomous demand. The selling of security services also works to excite demand, as the selling and delivery of services demonstrates how and why (more and more) things need to be secured (see Neocleous, 2008). Hence, a core function of PMSCs is the expansion of the remit of security. By expanding the possibilities of what can and should be secured, PMSCs perform the central tasks of ensuring the everyday functionality of the secured object as well as its ontological functionality. Securing everyday functionality is the most evident task of PMSCs. Guarding, cooking, analyzing and training are the tasks which make PMSCs vital securing agents for military, diplomatic, development, intelligence, financial and resource extraction apparatuses around the globe. As a result of the co-constitutive relationship amongst supply and demand, this everyday securing also installs security as a prime feature of the operation of the thing being secured as a thing. More abstractly, securing affects ontological functionality as much as things being secured become actual and meaningful through (their own) security. Pipelines, embassies, soldiers and digital networks need not be secure to exist as real and

meaningful spaces, places and people. Nevertheless, that these spaces, places and people rely upon the securing work of PMSCs means that their everyday and ontological functioning becomes ever more dependent upon being or becoming secured. Without the securing work of PMSCs certain pipelines, embassies, soldiers and digital networks cannot exist in certain places and spaces – or at least cannot exist as stable and reliable things. The inability of PMSCs to properly perform securing work means not only isolatable instances of an inability to fulfil a contract, but more significantly the failure to organize and order spaces, places and people through (the value of) security.

Failures jeopardize the everyday and ontological functions of the secured things and consequently jeopardize the everyday and ontological authority of security. In Marxian terms, security lapses by PMSCs do not only undercut the ability of PMSCs to do security work, but also degrade the use-value of security work itself. If security work actually causes harm or damage to that which was supposed to be secured, the ideological use-value of securing work as a basic need becomes contested. PMSCs are rendered useless when in their inability to conduct practical securing work they simultaneously eschew the value of security to/for persons, places and things. Securing processes thus affirm the value of security as an essential everyday/ontological need, which means in (failing to) do(ing) securing work PMSCs are entangled in fundamental corporeal and ideological practices of the sustaining of persons, places and things. In chapters four and five securing work, particularly the failure of Blackwater to do it 'properly', is textualized through what is at times a profane discussion of corpses and self-defence. By profane I mean to suggest that this analysis holds no regard for the sanctity and sanctimonious determinants of how the living are to intra-act with the dead and how humans have an inherent and immutable right to (armed) self-defence.

73

COMMERCIALIZING

      Commercializing processes can easily be read as a synonym for privatizing processes where privatizing means the outsourcing of public or government competencies to business, charity, religious and other civil-society actors. As a synonym, commercializing is a more precise articulation as it excludes non-governmental organizations which are not primarily motivated by profit accrued through market oriented commerce. Another conceptual framing of commercializing processes is to concentrate on the contemporary championing of business and market oriented practices and principles as the best practices and principles for public/governmental bureaucracies. Flexibility, efficiency, resilience, innovation, value-added, competitive and responsive comprise the semantic spectrum of commercializing public governance. For military and security provision, commercializing governance is advocated as a necessity in order to effectively respond to asymmetric, mutable and global/local threats (Rosén, 2008). Entrenchment of commercializing practices and principles also means that public bureaucracies regularly look to "trim the fat" through the development of public-private relationships or through outsourcing (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2011). For Anglosphere military and security agencies this has meant outsourcing all but core functions, e.g. combat, (see Spearin, 2003). For non-state clients such as engineering firms or resource extraction corporations operating in volatile places, commercializing processes present PMSCs as better suited providers of specialized services – i.e. as commerce oriented entities PMSCs are likeminded actors who can tailor their services to the needs of their clients. Therefore, commercializing processes involve more than just outsourcing. These processes also motivate the advancement of the market oriented organization of governmental and civil-societal functions.

An alternative option for understanding the commercializing work conducted by and through PMSCs is to focus on how the exchange-value of security is produced. The exchange-value of security is not a financial metric; PMSCs may generate hundreds of billions of dollars in yearly revenue, but it is the ability to buy, sell, market, speculate on, trade or hold security that makes it valuable. According to Neocleous (2008) the commercial military and security services industry produces exchange-value by marketing consumption (of securitized commodities) as the solution to insecurity; "only an ever-increasing consumption can make us secure" (p.155). As market oriented commerce requires goods and services be produced to sustain relationships based on exchange and not necessarily for their usefulness in sustaining other relations amongst people, places or things, commercializing security makes security valuable by making it ubiquitously consumable. For publically traded entities such as CACI, KBR and Engility or entities such as Dyncorp and PAE which, respectively, are privately held by Cerberus Capital Management and Lindsay Goldberg, the exchange-value of security is paramount. Indeed, without social, political, legal and economic acceptance of commercialized security, highly financialized PMSCs, i.e. entities that rely on consistent external investment, would not exist. Commercializing processes thereby affect the possibility of PMSCs and vice versa, which is to say increasing the exchange-value of security ensures the existence of commerce committed exchangers of security and commerce committed exchangers of security work to ensure security is easily exchangeable.

Securing and (neo)liberalizing processes also enhance the exchange-value of security. Securing processes do so by producing security as an essential need. Securing processes are indispensable because they provide safety and stability for the everyday and ontological function of people, places and things. (Neo)liberalizing processes incessantly disseminate freedom of

(certain) people, capital, markets, commercial entities, etc. as the only way to ensure social, political, economic and ethical progress. Hence, the unencumbered exchange of security goods and services is the best method to ensure people, places and things are progressively safer and more stable. PMSCs readily rely on securing and liberalized slogans to enhance exchange-value. For example, Hart's (2013) company slogan is "When you face risk, you need Hart", Aegis (2013) insists it is "Securing a better future" and Dyncorp (2013) proudly proclaims "We serve Today for a Better Tomorrow". There is no need to read these corporate slogans cynically because in doing commercializing work, which is also securing work, Hart, Aegies and Dyncorp are sincerely fulfilling a progressive mandate of affecting a safe, stable and reliable world for the uninhibited movement of people, resources and capital.

Despite, and in spite of, the commercializing work performed by and through PMSCs, privatizing, militarizing and securing processes continue to manifest performances that cannot be disciplined by the market, freedom and capital. Whether protecting shooters, killers and exploiters or doing the shooting, killing, exploiting and dying, PMSCs cannot consistently guarantee the exchange-value of security. As will be discussed in chapter four, when PMSCs such as KBR and Blackwater do elevate commercializing work above privatizing, militarizing and securing work, family, political and journalistic attention is piqued. The general perception that PMSCs operating in Afghanistan and Iraq were callous, soulless profit-seekers did not necessarily impede expansion of the exchange-value of security, but it certainly became a troublesome and costly distraction. Scandals and the subsequent negative political and popular perceptions did, for example, limit the opportunities of Blackwater and ArmorGroup to secure contracts for work in Iraq and Afghanistan. In Blackwater's case financial and temporal resources were also expended dealing with lawsuits filed by the people most directly affected by

the emotional and corporeal upheaval of the Fallujah and Nisour Square incidents. Expanding

the exchange-value of security requires privatizing, militarizing and securing work, but,

commercializing processes do not so much exploit this work as much as require it to become

meaningful. This statement must be extended to the three other processes and thus privatizing,

militarizing, securing and commercializing processes require and array the work of the others to

be meaningful. Meaningfulness is not only found in the smooth functioning of these processes.

Disjuncture, upheaval and tumultuousness are just as telling as smooth, proper and expected

functioning. In chapters four, five and six understanding the entangled character of the

privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing work conducted by, through and

expected of PMSCs is paramount to not only understand the significance of disruptive incidents,

but also to critique how the disruptions of the Fallujah, Nisour Square and Kabul incidents have

been textualized.

CHAPTER FIVE: DEADLY LABOUR

Thinking of death is not an easy task. Beyond an unpleasantness of confronting one's portended demise, death becomes difficult to think because it is so easily entangled in the objective, transhistorical bifurcation of existence. For example, comprehension of and interest in death and compassion for the dead are routinely reiterated as exclusively human practices. Parroting an empirically narcissistic conception of the meaningfulness of death,[33] Bauman (1992, p. 20) writes, "the state of having discovered death is the defining, and distinctive, feature of humanity." If humans discovered death, thinking of it becomes a practice of reiterating a meaningful separation of the socio-cultural from the natural – a separation which matters political-economically, but is ethico-onto-epistemically untenable and irresponsible. Death is not a natural phenomenon waiting to be discovered. Nor is it the objective and inescapable constraint of life. Death does not exist prior to its realization, wherein realization is not sentient awareness, but a material-discursive reconfiguring of the possibilities of that which is 'now' or 'soon' to be dead and of those that 'remain' to work with and through death. Death is a labourious process and the meaning of death is made to matter through particular labours. It is a particular entanglement of deadly labour enacted through burnt and broken corpses that constitutes the investigations of this chapter.

The burnt and broken corpses that configure my analysis are the (textualized) remnants of four PMSC employees. To thoroughly account for the labours that make/made these four corpses matter, I pursue a re-imaging of the relations amongst the living and the dead and how the performances of the dead, especially in (post-)conflict spaces, contest humanized efforts to

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[33]In 2006, researchers from Oxford University, Save the Elephants, the University of California published an article in which they claim, "elephants and humans may share emotions, such as compassion, and have an awareness and interest about death" (quoted in Highfiel, 2006).

control and exploit labouriousness – too often for purposes of producing more death and more burnt and broken corpses.

THE FALLUJAH INCIDENT

On the morning of March 31, 2004, four contractors working for Blackwater Worldwide drove two sport utility vehicles (SUVs) into downtown Fallujah – an Iraqi city approximately 69km west of Baghdad. Providing an armed escort for three transport trucks tasked with moving kitchen supplies, the convoy became halted by a traffic jam[34] (Majority Staff, 2007, p. 12). Idling motionless for a few minutes the rear SUV was then engaged by an estimated five armed men (Blackwater Report, 2007, p. 4). At the sound of AK-47 fire, contractors in the front SUV tried to drive out of the ambush, but were quickly engaged by the attackers who unleashed a second barrage on their vehicle (Young Pelton, 2006, p. 132). The attack was so swift and lethal that none of contractors were able to return fire (Majority Staff, 2007, p.13) Eyewitness accounts report that three contractors were killed almost immediately by the gunfire and a fourth, who had been shot multiple times, was pulled from his vehicle and beaten to death (Scahill, 2007a, p. 102). As can be seen through visual recordings of the aftermath of the ambush, the SUVs were set ablaze, subsequently burning the bodies of the contractors (Shadow Company, 2006). The charred corpses were then disassembled by various men not believed to part of the initial ambush (BBC News, 2004). Two of the burnt and broken apart corpses were dragged through the streets of Fallujah by a car. At the conclusion of this morbid parade the corpses were strung up on the girders of a bridge that crosses the Euphrates River (Shadow Company, 2006).

Over the next few hours and days verbal and visual accounts of the Fallujah incident circulated through both mainstream and popular media networks. Coverage of the incident led

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[34] A report by the House Committee on Oversight and Reform (Majority Staff, 2007) suggests that three vehicles were intentionally blocking traffic. A report published by Blackwater (Blackwater Report, 2007) in response to this Congressional report claims that vehicles operated by the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps were involved in the roadblock.

the nightly national news programs of NBC, ABC and CBS (Agence France Presse, 2004a) on

March 31. Reactions of "horror, condemnation and resolve" (Coorey, 2004) emanated from the

mouths of politicians, editorialists, military personnel and the general public. The most fervent

of such expressions came from Americans. Determined to not let Fallujah become the

Mogadishu of the Iraq War (Kaplan, 2004), Bush Administration officials asserted that the US

would not be "intimidated" and that "We're going to stay the course and finish the job" (Agence

France Presse, 2004b). As a demonstration of this "resolve" the US Marines launched two major

incursions into Fallujah in April and November 2004. Coming to be known as the First and

Second Battles of Fallujah these incursions resulted in an estimated 6600 civilian casualties

(Majority Staff, 2007; MSN News, 2009).

In 2005, the families of the four contractors filed a law suit against Blackwater claiming

it was negligence on the part of the PMSC that led to the deaths of the contractors. The suit

alleges that Blackwater violated the employment contracts of the four men by failing to provide

hard-skinned/armoured vehicles, a rear gunner equipped with a squad automatic weapon (SAW)

and even proper maps (The Associated Press, 2012). Blackwater filed a US $10 million

countersuit (Parker, 2007). Bouncing between State and Federal courts this suit was only settled

in 2012 after closed-door arbitration hearings (Dalesio, 2012).

A 2007 Congressional report, chaired and championed by Representative Henry

Waxman, reaffirmed and expanded the empirical basis for claims that Blackwater embarked on

this "mission without sufficient preparation, resources, and support for its personnel" (Majority

Staff, 2007, p. 17). This report makes the case that the Fallujah incident could have been

prevented had the contractors been driving hard-skinned/armoured vehicles, had proper

appreciation of the threat level in Fallujah and if the escort team had consisted of six contractors,

which would have allowed one contractor per SUV to wield a SAW (Ibid., 6-13). Blackwater

responded with a report of its own concluding that the attack was inevitable, as it was a highly

orchestrated ambush, and even if the contractors had had armoured vehicles and been more

heavily armed the result, i.e. the deaths of the contractors, would have been the same

(Blackwater Report, 2007).

Negligent or not the Fallujah incident "put [Blackwater a] little-known North Carolina-

based security company into the American lexicon and on the world stage" (BBC News, 2004).

The Fallujah incident also marked the beginning of Blackwater's popular image problem; an

image problem which diffused and coalesced into broader consideration of PMSCs as a

problematic actor in Afghanistan and Iraq. The deaths also spurred much greater investigative

attention by journalists, politicians and academics into the operations of PMSCs in Afghanistan

and Iraq and the commercial military and security services industry more broadly. Although

dead contractors, deceased fathers, sons and brothers and disassembled and incinerated corpses

played an unfortunately pivotal role in expanding popular awareness of PMSCs, the dead

constitute only a small fraction of the analysis of the commercial military and security services

industry.

PMSCs AND THE DEAD

Discussion of the dead may be sparse, but it is not completely absent from the textual

terrain of PMSCs. [35] Where the dead do tend to appear is in examinations of the political,

financial and emotional effects of conducting military, diplomatic and development operations in

Afghanistan and Iraq with PMSCs. For more partisan commentators such as Jeremy Scahill

(2007b) the reliance on contractors in the first decade of the 21st Century provided political cover

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[35] It is at least bitterly ironic that dead contractors do not garner as much attention as dead enlisted soldiers when considering the Pentagon has contracted UPS, Federal Express and the now defunct Evergreen International Airlines Inc. to airlift the corpses of enlisted personnel for repatriation purposes (Dreazen and Fields, 2010).

for war-mongering American politicians. Noting that because contractor casualties were not included in the official death tolls (Sachill, 2007c) from Afghanistan and Iraq, the Bush Administration was able to gain "political cover" (Sachill, 2007b) for their misadventures in these countries.[36] Singer (2007) affirms Scahill's position by noting that the usage of PMSCs allowed politicians, bureaucrats and military brass to conserve "political capital"; "private losses were looked at by policymakers as almost a "positive externality" […] The public usually didn't even hear about contractor losses, and when they did, they had far less blowback on our government" (p.4). Carmola (2010) refers to this type of war-fighting as risk transfer warfare where the potential for bodily harm is shifted from enlisted personnel "onto civilians, PMSCs, and robots (or other types of military technology) (p.84)." In less accusatory terms, Schooner (2008) writes "The total number of casualties is important, because the public and Congress not only care deeply about these fatalities, they routinely rely on body count as a measure of success or failure" (pp. 78-9).

Rather than blaming contemptuous politicians or career minded generals, Schooner cites bureaucratic barriers that impede easy access to contractor casualties[37] (p. 86) and "The media's failure to bring contractor deaths more clearly into the public consciousness" (p.89).[38] Isenberg (2009, p. 52) buttresses Schooner's position on media attention by suggesting that the deaths of contractors are typically only publically recognized in obituaries published in hometown newspapers. Schooner also laments that because contractors are popularly perceived as "expendable profiteers, adventure-seekers, cowboys, or rogue elements" (p.81) the public does

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[36] Prior to 2008, numbers for contractor casualties for American contracted PMSCs were only complied by the Department of Labour (DOL). Likewise to obtain these numbers a Freedom of Information Act request had to be made (Schooner, 2008).

[37] A 2012 report released by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, the US agency responsible for overseeing all financial issues related to the reconstruction of Iraq, notes that the DOD, DOS, USAID and the DOL kept individual databases on contractor casualties (cited in Isenberg, 2012).

[38] A Pew Research Study found that only 93 of 441 mainstream media sources "ever mentioned private military contractors beyond a brief account of a death or injury (Pew Research Staff, 2007)."

not extend the same reverence for the "sacrifice" of contractors[39] as it does for enlisted military

personnel. Reaffirming this notion that contractors are expendable and not worthy of militarized

memorializing is Young Pelton's (2006) claim,

> There are no "heroes" in the private security world, just dead employees adding
> to a company's tragic attrition statistic [...] A contractor's death does not dictate
> any formality other than repatriation of the remains and the filing of forms for
> insurance purposes. (p. 218)

This stark and somewhat cynical assessment of the technocratic management of death, i.e. an

apolitical and unemotional approach to death, in the commercial military and security services

industry is also entangled with accusations that when it came to the lives of their employees,

PMSCs operating in Afghanistan and Iraq worried more about accruing profit.

This is certainly what the families of the Blackwater contractors slain in Fallujah claim.

In the documentary film *Iraq for Sale* (2006), a mother of one contractor asserts "it was the

mighty dollar, that is all that [Blackwater] cared about". Another portion of this film documents

how contractors employed by KBR to drive trucks were regularly instructed to drive on roads

where the threat of ambush was known to be exceedingly high. A *New York Times* article

reports that "Over just two days during the height of the [Iraqi] insurgency in April [2004], 211

of [KBRs] trucks were damaged or destroyed in attacks, seven of its truckers were killed"

(Glanz, 2004). The palpable disgust and anger expressed by former contractors and family

members of contractors who were killed in ambushes is summed up by one contractor when he

renames Kellogg, Brown & Root as "Kill, Bag & Replace" (quoted in Iraq for Sale, 2006).

The relations amongst PMSCs, their employees and the dead are not entirely captured by

pernicious political-economic practices and articulations. Although still foregrounding

"[i]nconsistent corporate responses and murky government procedures" regarding the

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[39] For example, the following is a portion of an internet comment written in response to a story about the death of a
contractor who worked for Crescent Security: "A drunken, poor student decided to go for the big bucks, hired on
with a sorry company and went to Iraq […] this guy is paying the price for his greed" (cited in Fainaru, 2008).

repatriation of the corpses of contractors killed in Iraq, a *Washington Post* (Merle, 2004) article does provide a glimpse into a different form of relations amongst the dead and the living. For example, delays in repatriating the corpses of two Dyncorp contractors meant one family had to request a DNA test to ensure they had received the correct corpse and another was forced to have a closed-casket ceremony; "There is no closure that way. It's like a bad dream" (quoted in Ibid.). In a story focusing on the mothers of two of the contractors killed in the Fallujah incident, Simakis (2008a) reports that a portion of the corpse of one of the contractors was only returned to his family in February 2005; "Another part of [him] was coming home, packaged like freight." In these two instances the materiality of the dead, specifically disassembled and decomposing materiality, affects an alternate articulation of dead contractors. The affective upheaval caused by DNA testing, a closed-casket and the shipping of a body part like freight are demonstrative of relations amongst the dead and the living that are entangled in expressions of solace, reverence, nostalgia, dignity and empathy, rather than political-economic concerns regarding the accumulation of capital and/or the management of (post-)conflict spaces.

In her *Washington Post* article, Merle (2004) refers to the grieving relatives, friends and community supporters of deceased contractors as a sub-culture of loss. Unlike the public and militarized culture of loss which envelops the deaths of enlisted personnel and valourizes the family of the deceased for bearing the weight of the sacrifice of their loved one(s), the service and sacrifice of contractors is primarily exalted in private. As the wife of a contractor killed in Mosul, Iraq says, "[Contractors] don't come home to funerals with full military honors or flag-draped coffins or bugles playing taps. Their families don't get letters from the president" (quoted in Scharnberg, 2005). Expressions of disappointment with this sequestering of grief for dead contractors are readily offered by family and friends; "It kind of irks me a little bit, that he was

working with the military and not being recognized for it" (Ibid.). Fainaru (2008) dedicates the epilogue of his auto-ethnographic book on armed security contractors working in Iraq to a recounting of the funeral proceedings of a contractor killed after being taken hostage. Expressions of angst, anger, regret, sorrow, pride, deflection and love are duly attributed to the family, friends and community supporters who observed the funeral proceedings.

A particularly interesting aspect of this recounting is the decision of the father of the contractor to prohibit his son from viewing the corpse because it had been decapitated; "[The father] thought it might permanently scar him; he wanted the family to remember [the contractor] as he was" (Ibid., p. 208). Similarly, Simakis (2008a) cites the burning and disassembling of the corpses of the Blackwater contractors as an impediment to proper mourning for the families as "[they] couldn't have an open casket. No kiss on the forehead, no tactile goodbye." Preferences for (reasonably) whole corpses and the distress caused by (the sight of) disassembled corpses will be engaged more thoroughly further on in this chapter.

From the above discussion it is evident that the dead do many things through the textual terrain of PMSCs. By not being accounted for, the dead artificially enhance the vitality of the Anglosphere occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq. By not commanding any militarized formalities the dead become a disturbing residue of necrocapitalist (Banerjee, 2008) labour exploitation. By decaying, decomposing and being disassembled the dead impede rituals of mourning thereby exacerbating the grief, sorrow and pain of loss experienced by the living. Taken as a whole these doings of the dead also centralize dignity as a preeminent method through which the dead and living intra-act. In familial and personal contexts dignity not only preserves the humanness of the previously sentient and locomotive, it also assuages the

emotional turmoil of those survived by the dead.[40] In militarized and securing contexts, such as those involving PMSCs, dignity, or lack thereof, both sustains and disrupts practices that (will) require the further production of the dead. The purported indignity, i.e. the desecration and mutilation (see BBC 2004; Coorey, 2004), experienced by the corpses of the four Blackwater contractors in Fallujah had the potential to severely curtail American military operations in Iraq (Kaplan, 2004) – as noted this potential was soundly rebuffed with the subsequent incursions by Marines in April and November of 2004. Despite being only one incident amongst the hundreds, if not thousands, in which PMSCs operations in Afghanistan and Iraq produced dead contractors, deceased fathers, mothers, daughters, sons and corpses the Fallujah incident is the most meaningful. Quantitatively, a Pew Research Journalism Project found that between March 20, 2003 and April 1, 2007 coverage of the Fallujah incident accounted for twenty-seven percent of all media stories on PMSCs (Pew Research Staff, 2007). Qualitatively, the textual reactions to and interpretations of the Fallujah incident, some of which I have already cited, read as an extensive documentation of how the dead and the living can, are expected to and are made to relate.

Similar to the re-assembling of public and private competencies over global relations of security brought on by the emergence of PMSCs, relations amongst the living and the dead have undergone some significant rearranging during the first decade of the Twenty-First Century. The advancement of bio, genetic, molecular, and nanotechnologies means that humans can intra-act with the 'foundational material' of life and can effectively alter how life and death are materially realized (Dean, 2004; Braidotti, 2010). Socio-legally, studies of end-of-life debates in

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[40] As Posel and Gupta (2009, p. 301) write, "The ritualisation and spectacle typically associated with the disposal of the dead human body surely draw attention to a powerful impulse to rescue a human corpse from the same fate as other animals: redeeming symbolic meaning and dignity in death, and retrospectively making sense of the individual life that preceded it, along with its place in a social collective."

Anglosphere contexts also demonstrate fluidity amongst who and what is living and who and what is dead – not to mention the political and legal battles that accompany determinations of the living and the dead (Cadman, 2009). Pop-culturally, the proliferation of zombie and vampire movies, television series and novels ensure easy accessibility to the pleasurable horrors of the undead, the living dead and animated corpses. Cobbled together these scientific, technological, socio-legal and pop-cultural processes, philosophies and practices are both cause and consequence of new and alternate methods of the bio-political regulation of humans. While analysis of thanatopolitics (Murray, 2006) and *The Politics of Life Itself* (Rose, 2001) are indispensable for understanding the contemporary management of life and through death, these bio-political readings offer little when it comes to the dead (Posel & Gupta, 2009; Young and Light, 2013).

Given the dead's lack of sentience and locomotion, relations among the living and the dead are predominantly conceptualized as occurring in one direction: the actions of the living prescribe how the dead matter. In this chapter, rather than simply being a passive piece of inert matter, the dead, particularly in corpse form, are understood as an animated entanglement of pleasure, prohibition, mourning, celebration, fitness, decay, security, threat and power (Posel & Gupta, 2009; Young & Light, 2013). The politics of memorializing, forgetting, glorifying and disparaging the ethereal subjectivity of the previously sentient and locomotive injects a further element of liveliness to the dead and deceased. Such activity of the dead, deceased and corpses has led some scholars to proclaim, that "Dead people *do* act" (Sørensen, 2009, p. 131, emphasis in original).

That the dead are agential, insofar as these subject-objects 'make' the living intra-act with and through them, also means that the materiality of the dead and how that materiality is

articulated is of paramount import. From the above discussion of where and how the dead

appear in the textual terrain of PMSCs it is clear that material integrity, i.e. a whole and

identifiable corpse, is an central determinate of how the living relate to the dead. The spectacular

confrontation with burned and battered corpses that dominates the visuality, both as image and

text, of the Fallujah incident makes this incident a particularly exceptional empirical case

through which to study how the materiality of the dead effects relations amongst the living and

the dead.

To more thoroughly account for the raw, unabashed, visceral and repetitive reactions to

and interpretations of the Fallujah incident requires an investigation that is not beholden to socio-

cultural presumptions of how the dead should be spoken of/written. If I am to achieve a reading

of the Fallujah incident that foregrounds the performativity[41] of the dead, which in turn

demonstrates how the dead are put to work by and through privatizing, militarizing, securing and

commercializing processes at times I must be a little profane. Burial, grief and nostalgia are the

common, accepted and expected Anglosphere practices of how the living and the dead intra-act.

Enacting Halberstam's (2008) desire to arrange "other possibilities" (p. 153) my analysis of the

textual interpretations of and reactions to the Fallujah incident will not be encumbered by the

common and acceptable. Furthermore, by foregrounding the activeness of the dead this chapter

also advances the "need to understand [the dead] as the exposed [matter] that faces, subverts and

otherwise thwarts attempts at assimilating [the dead] into imperatives associated with security

and survival" (Masters, 2007, p.46). The dead do act and the unease, dislocation and even horror

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[41] For Butler (1993, p.2) performativity is "not a singular or deliberate "act", but rather, as the reiterative and
citational practice by which discourse produces the effects it names". While my reiterative usage of performativity
in this chapter owes a conceptual debt to Butler's notion, it differs inasmuch as I use it as a discursive method of
intra-activity with the dead. The performativity of the dead is thus an "iterative intra-activity" (Barad, 2007, p. 184)
between matter and meaning, which determines how the dead can be made to matter and what that means for, in this
case, the work that PMSCs do for privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes.

of this acting should not be taken as a moment to re-inscribe and reproduce material-discursive practices, which readily turn the living into the dead as well as making the dead work for processes that readily turn the living into the dead.

DEADLY CONTEXTS

On the same day that saw the deaths of five enlisted US personnel by a roadside bomb, Simakis (2008a) asserts that the Fallujah incident "rose above the daily, anonymous casualties of war" because the so-called brutality of the incident was captured whilst "camcorders whirred". Unlike the daily deaths of enlisted personnel, and civilians for that matter, the deaths and decomposition of the four Blackwater contractors was visually documented. Buttressing this position is the usage of "shocking" (Freeman, 2004), "unimaginable" (Shapiro, 2004) and "packed a huge, visceral punch, a wallop" (Leroux, 2004) to describe the affectivity of viewing disassembled and incinerated corpses. To be purposely coy, if as Mirzeoff (2005) contends the overabundance of media coverage/constant circulation of images of the invasion/occupation of Iraq ironically produced "nothing to see" (p.67), how was Fallujah able to "wallop" the viewing audience? In his breakdown of what occurred on March 31, 2004, Young Pelton (2006, p. 136) maintains that the "American public [is] squeamish at the sight of death." Young Pelton adds that the American viewing audience was both "riveted and horrified, unable to watch but unable to look away" (Ibid.). Like articulations of the shocking and unimaginable character of the images of the dead contractors, Young Pelton's claim of repulsion and attraction is offered without context.[42] This lack of context is significant. It may seem obvious that the sight of dissembled and incarnated corpses would be shocking, repulsive or even alluring. However, the obviousness of shock, repulsion and/or allure of visual encounters with the dead does require

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[42] The story which cites the visceral character of the Fallujah images is titled, *In history of violent images, where will Fallujah fit in?*, and the author interviews a series of scholars who provide an interesting socio-cultural contextualization of reactions to violent imagery throughout American history (Leroux, 2004).

contextualizing. Contextualizing is required not because these articulations are empirically

unverifiable or because I necessarily disagree with them. Rather contextualization is necessary

because it will demonstrate how the dead, in their visuality, become shocking, repulsive and

alluring to Anglosphere audiences. Delving into and developing this context also serves as the

empirical and conceptual basis through which the other assertions of this chapter are pursued.

If the images of burnt and broken corpses causes discomfort, through what socio-cultural,

political-economic and/or psychosomatic processes and practices does this purported unsettling

affectivity flow? One potential explanation can be found in Sørensen's (2009) elucidation of

Kristeva's concept of the abject. According to Sørensen,

> Kristeva argues that the abject refers to the human reaction to that loss of continuity which is experienced
> when subject and object cannot be distinguished; that is, when self and other cannot be separated.
> Emotionally, the reaction articulates as profound horror, the most powerful cause of which is the corpse,
> because it traumatically reminds us of our own materiality. The corpse is death unsignified, because
> signified death – the casket, the cenotaph, the burial plot – masks the true nature of what we strive to avoid
> in order to stay alive (Kristeva, 1982: 3). In other words, when confronted with the corpse, we effectively
> reflect on our own future materiality; we see ourselves in the dead body – decayed, ruined and corrupted.
> (p. 127)

In short, Fallujah is a confrontation with abjection. Moreover, the imagery is unsettling, anxiety

inducing and tumultuous because the abject is not properly screened[43] by accepted Anglosphere

funerary practices. Without proper screens upon which images of comfort and calm can be

projected, the exposed corpses of the Blackwater contractors perform not only their own material

decay, but also that of the audience. Acting without the proper screens, the exposed materiality

of the dead contractors shatters the ease with which "We live as if *we* were not going to die"

(Buaman, 1992, p. 21). While convincing and perhaps even psychologically accurate, attributing

the dead's abilities to dislocate individual/personal relations with life and death without situating

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[43] In Weber's (1999) concept of the screen the surface of projection is never so flat, passive or receptive as the
projector desires it to be.

that dislocation in a broader social, political and economic milieu has the effect of universalizing and naturalizing a fear of death.

An assumption that the fear of death is a natural, universal and/or commonsensical feeling for living humans can certainly be ideo-emotionally convincing, however it is by no means empirically valid. The recent emergence of a dying better industry (see Samuel 2013) in Anglosphere societies, which is an 'industry' that seeks to expunge anxiety from the relations amongst the living and the dead, is a useful counterpoint to an apparent naturalness of fearing death. Indeed the dying better industry serves as a counter socio-cultural and politico-commercial force to those processes and practices which continue to peddle (McIlwian, 2005, p. 9-10) death and the dead as unsettling. Even with the increasing prominence of the dying better industry privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes continue to seize and sustain death and the performativity of the dead as an unsettling, fear inducing phenomenon.

For instance, in modern, Western and/or Anglosphere societies Foucault (2003) argues the dead and the decomposing have been removed from the public realm and everyday experience: "[Death] has become the most private and shameful thing of all (and ultimately, it is now not so much sex as death that is the object of a taboo)" (p. 247). Over the past century and a half increased life expectancy, reduced infant mortality, localized rather than universal death penalty statues and expansive geriatric care spaces and hospitalization[44] all contributed to pushing the dead out of the home and public space. This sequestering of the (soon to be) dead (Sutton, 2007) in sterile, clean and monitored spaces was also accompanied by politico-consumerist processes that effectively demonized and disparaged the bio-physical and chemical breakdown of corpses. The delaying of decomposition through embalming, "Bodies Embalmed

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[44] That seventy-three percent of Americans over the age of sixty-five die in hospitals or nursing homes (Morell, 2013, p. 204) demonstrates a removal of the dead from the public realm and everyday experience.

by Us NEVER TURN BLACK" (Troyer, 2007, p. 32), is the source of Gorer's (1955, p. 51) admonishing, "The natural processes of corruption and decay have become disgusting". According to Laderman (2003) funeral industry publications cite the American Civil War as the "dramatic turning point in the history of embalming" (p.14). Laderman continues, "It was the first American war to make provision for return of the dead to families" and the ready supply of corpses allowed embalmers to both hone and promote the craft (Ibid.). During the socio-political upheaval caused by the Vietnam War, the American funeral industry proffered the embalmed body, particularly of the war dead, as an important stabilizing element in an otherwise tumultuous time (Ibid., p. 128).

Militarized entanglements and profit motivated pretenses of the Anglosphere funeral industry are not the sole sources of denying the "visibility and inevitability of death" (Leiboff, 2005, p. 465) and/or the "ugliness of dying" (Aries, 1976, p. 87). Advancing secularization, medicalization and techno-scientific intervention produced broader knowledge of aging, dying and decomposing, which as Emerick (2000, p. 36) claims "made American society even more fearful of and repulsed by the tainted" bodies of the dead. Sørensen (2009) adds that this knowledge of and over the dead effectively privatized the productive apparatus of the dead, whereby "Death […] can be avoided, and should be prevented by the individual as s/he is responsible for her or his own health" (p. 113). Historically, death was understood to be an "inescapable fact of life", but secular, medical and techno-scientific knowledge now make it a "defect of the body, a fault in the individual's life strategy" (Ibid.). Liberal-consumerist impetuses for maintaining "a happy life" (Aries, 1976) and a Protestant-capitalist association of "rest" with "inertia or waste" (de Certeau, 1988, p. 192) also coalesce with these privatizing,

militarizing and commercializing processes to privilege practices that veil, mask and entomb the dead in contemporary Anglosphere societies.

Returning to issues of the visuality of the dead, Campbell (2004) asserts that media decency standards and government message management have resulted in the disappearance of images of the dead from newspaper pages and television screens. Whether deemed tasteless, a violation of privacy or politically detrimental, the sanitizing of the visual documentation of the dead both insinuates and expressly manifests the sight of corpses as an unsettling, unhappy and unwanted experience. Consequently, Samuel (2013, p. ix-x) boldly proclaims the isolation, privatization and politico-commercial manicuring of the dead has ensured that death is so "unmentionable" that it has become a "profoundly "Un-American" experience.

Situating the Fallujah incident in this socio-cultural and political-commercial context of unease with the sight of the dead means two acknowledgements must be made. As just discussed, the first acknowledgement is that death is denied and delayed in Anglosphere contexts. The shock and repulsion of the Fallujah incident is thereby traceable in part to a violation of the spatial, material and patriotic denial and delay of the performativity of the dead. Transmitted through newspapers and television and computer screens the images and articulations of the burnt and broken corpses invade the safe, happy spaces of home and office, wrench control away from sanctioned politico-consumerist institutions and challenge hierarchies of us and them. The second acknowledgement is that denial and delay (re)produce the dead and corpses as something alien and other and thus frightening and dangerous. Translated into terms more familiar to security studies scholars, the denial of death and deferral of decomposition array the dead as the ultimate existential threats; they are insecurity. Denial and deferral are thus securitizing measures enacted to prevent the self, society and nation from experiencing "the

image of [its] own destiny. [The corpse] bears witness to a violence which destroys not one [person] alone but all [people] in the end (Bataille, 1986, p.44)."

Understood as such, the visually spectacular confrontation with the dead that is experienced through the Fallujah incident reads as a moment in which securing processes fail to quell violence and danger, not of Iraqi insurgents, but of the dead. Furthermore, the visuality of burned and dissembled corpses means that denial and deferral cannot effectively be enacted to re-secure the dead. The public visuality of the deaths advances the unsettling character of the Fallujah incident insofar as the politico-emotional response cannot evade or shroud the danger of the dead. Nor can the politico-emotional response be privately sequestered, which is further unsettling. As Aries (1976) contends an unacceptable death is one which "embarrasses the survivors because it causes too strong an emotion to burst forth" (p. 89). The potential for irrational reactions, i.e. the masculinist understanding of emotion, to the sight of the dead only enhances the failure of securing processes.

The Anglosphere securing of the dead and death through denial and the potential to disjoint this arrangement through a spectacular confrontation with corpses is an effective method of contextualizing reactions to the Fallujah incident. However, denial and deferral are by no means complete understandings of the context through which the dead can act. Medicalization, consumerism and racialized and sexualized urban development have definitely kept the tactile and olfactory "ugliness" of death out-of-the lives of Americans who are financially, racially and sexually privileged. As a visual and audible experience however, the dead, the decomposing and corpses are easily and increasingly accessed on the same screens that broadcast the scenes of the Fallujah incident; "Death is visible when it exists in a state of unreality. (Leiboff , 2005, p. 465)" For instance, between March 21- 28, 2004, Americans spent over US$44 million in order to

experience the grotesque carnage of a zombie apocalypse as depicted in the film *Dawn of the Dead* (IMDB, 2013). Foltyn (2008, p. 154) further notes, "the depictions of dead bodies on prime time [American television] more than doubled between 2004 and 2005". Anglosphere audiences may have found the images of the Fallujah incident unsettling, but this was not because of a lack of visual familiarity with the dead and corpses.

Images of non-fictive decaying and disassembled corpses may be deemed (too) graphic or disturbing by journalistic media, but entertainment media relishes in the exhilaration, pleasure, desire and profitability of these relations with the dead. Bogard (2008) contends, Americans "have grown accustomed to detailed, gruesome, and repeated images of the dead body's degradation in the mass media, scenes of dismemberment, injury, murder, torture, starvation, and genocide (p. 191)." Unlike the Anglosphere "death professionals" lambasted in Mitford's (2000) *The American Way of Death Revisited* who excise the visual wrought, discolouration, rigour and pain of death through embalming, cremation, ornate coffins and ostentatious mausoleums, the death professionals who ply their trade through Anglosphere popular culture foreground the visual ugliness of death by simultaneously obfuscating and eviscerating it.

White sheets, black body bags, chalk outlines, pools of blood and stainless steel drawers are common methods of fomenting dread without having a corpse present. Zooming in, out and through burnt, bloated, stiff, infested and disassembled corpses are also common ways of enhancing the visual performances of the dead and decomposing.   Foreboding and grim accompanying music, the crackle of burnt flesh, the zip of body bag zippers, the metallic clang of morgue drawers, the snap of starched white sheets and the cracking tear of rigoured limbs constitute the audio sound track of popular culture death and decomposition. Anglosphere audiences were/are very much familiar with the shock value of the dead's popular cultural

performativity and judging by the commercial success of horror, crime, action and war movies and television series many viewers activity seek out the pleasures of being shocked. Young Pelton's claim of repulsion and attraction can thereby be located in a context where the dead are simultaneously denied and spectacular, avoided and entertaining, feared and exhilarating. These seemingly contradictory affectations of the dead are neither perplexing nor analytically stifling.

Visual, spatial and affective entanglements of denial, avoidance and fear and spectacle, entertainment and exhilaration may read as binary entanglements, but are readily realized through similar social, political and economic processes and practices. Sutton Baglow (2007) suggests that the denial of death "has done for death what it did for sex […] namely generate a proliferation of death discourses […] Death imbues [Anglosphere] culture. Far from denying it, we imbibe it" (p.227). Rather than the dead performing the inescapable materiality for all of 'us', medicalization, profit-seeking, socio-political management and entertainment practices allow, promote and force the dead to be good, bad, acceptable, unacceptable, peaceful, gruesome, desired, resisted, etc. (Ibid.). Similarly, McIlwian (2005) asserts, "At one and the same time we fear it, but nevertheless we crave it. We do not crave death itself, but death's attention – our giving it attention (p. 13)." Denial, avoidance, fear, spectacle, entertainment and exhilaration are consequently contemporaneous instances of an Anglosphere infatuation with the dead and the decomposing. Like the gothic monsters of Stoker, Shelly and Stevenson (Halberstam, 1995) fear and desire are constituent, not contradictory, components of Anglosphere relations amongst the dead and the living. Fear and desire, attraction and repulsion also do not necessitate that the dead and decomposition be construed as anything other than ugly, revolting and unsettling. Denial and spectacle can be seen to operate in different spaces, e.g. the

hospital, funeral home, movie theatre, and operate through different practices, e.g. embalming, close-ups and time lapse, but can similarly allow the dead to be unsettling.

For Foltyn (2008), spectacular, entertaining and exhilarating performances of the dead are actually borne of the corporeal interventions of medical sciences, geriatric care and the funeral industry over the past century and a half. The void left by the removal of tactile and olfactory experiences of the dead from the everyday experience is filled by the audio-visual experience of spectacular images of the dead. Moreover, "while not contributing to an obvious group denial of death" a pop-cultural spectacle of death and decomposition "may contribute to it in a more subtle way, by desensitizing and normalizing death through mass exposure to dead bodies (Ibid., p. 164)." Popular culture productions that promote spectacular, entertaining and exhilarating performances are actually complimentary to corporeal interventions that deny, avoid and fear as they both privilege a stylization, a fashionable experience with the dead. Fictive and non-fictive styles and fashions do change, but these changes do not necessitate a corresponding altering of underlying presumptions. As Aries (1976, p. 100) writes, "Americans are very willing to transform death, to put make-up on it, to sublimate it, but they do not want it to disappear." The performativity of the dead may be unsettling, but it is also useful.

The performativity of the dead is a contextually (over)determined contingent relational enactment. Put simply, there is nothing natural or essential to how the dead act. Intra-action with the dead has no pre-determined affectations. Nor is the materiality of the dead constituted by any intrinsic and/or transhistorical characteristics. Rather the affective and sensuous experiences and the political-economics of the dead are mutually entangled in how the dead are and can be determined to perform. The materiality of the dead, the performativity of the dead and the discursive articulation of that materiality and performativity are all implicated in privileging,

97

constraining and excluding certain matter, performances and discourses (Barad, 2007).

Privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes array deadly enactments

through the work of PMSCs. These processes very much contextualize unsettling enactments as

useful enactments. The two military incursions into Fallujah following the deaths of the four

Blackwater contractors sufficiently demonstrate this claim. Recalling that one purpose of this

dissertation is to confront and repurpose the work of PMSCs, I also find unsettling enactments to

be useful. Articulating how I find unsettling enactments useful constitutes the remainder of this

chapter.

STUBBORN INTRANSIGENCE

Unsettling performativity takes centre stage in the articulations of what happened on

March 31, 2004. The most common, yet intriguing terms and phrasings used by journalists and

academics include: "mutilated bodies" (Agence France Presse, 2004b), "bodies mutilated"

(BBC, 2004), "mutilated" (Avant, 2006, p. 2), "the mutilation" (Witter, 2004), "mutilated the

bodies" (Chan, 2004; Fainaru, 2008, p. 137), "hideously […] mutilated" (Sampson, 2004),

"desecration of their bodies" (Coorey, 2004) "celebratory desecration" (Young Pelton, 2006, p.

135), "It is offensive, it is despicable the way these individuals have been treated" (Bremer

quoted in Sisk & Siemaszko, 2004) and "Iraqi mob degrades U.S. dead" (Koring, 2004). On the

surface these terms and phrasings actually locate unsettling performativity in the actions of the

Iraqi men who participated in the so-called mutilation, desecration and degradation.

By attaching unsettling performances to the actions of the living, mutilation, desecration

and degradation become arrayed as enactments that violate an intricate web of norms, values and

statutes regulating the materiality of the dead. Although corporeal integrity, sacredness and

dignity are the motivating presumptions of these norms, values and statues, it needs to be said

that religious, legal, commercial and personal beliefs and codes do not completely bar the burning and breaking of corpses. Embalming, autopsies and plasticizing for the purposes of exhibition are common, profitable, tolerated and monitored practices of eviscerating, rearranging and altering the materiality of corpses. Increasing rates of cremation in Anglosphere societies in the second half of the Twentieth Century also signal that incineration is not an inherently despicable method of dealing with the dead. Mutilation, desecration and degradation should therefore be read as violations of who can affect the materiality of the dead, e.g. pathologists, morticians, crematorium officers, as much as violations of religious, legal, commercial and personal norms, values and statutes. Likewise, the breaking and burning of corpses is sanctioned to occur in the sterile and restricted access spaces of morgues, labs and funeral homes not the dusty, bustling public space of the street.

Beyond common, tolerated and monitored methods of burning and breaking corpses, accusing the Iraqi men of mutilation, desecration and degradation, intentionally or otherwise, advances narratives of Iraq as a place that is infested with uncivilized, ruthless and evil people (see Schaill, 2007a, p. 107). This actualizing of "foreign policy" (Campbell, 1998) is put on prominent display through the unabashed usage of "barbarians" (Sisk and Siemaszko, 2004), "barbaric" (Witter, 2004) and "barbarism" (quoted in Scahill, 2007a, p. 109) by American media and government commentators in response to Fallujah. Beyond being a highly problematic attempt to justify intensifying the corporeal violence of militarizing and securing processes in Iraq, "Those are the people we [sic] have to capture or kill" (quoted in Scahill, 2007a, p. 106), the bluster and bombast of this civilizational/oriental discourse locates the heinousness of the Fallujah incident within the actions of the living – or as will be suggested further on in this chapter the living-dead. It is preposterous to suggest that the corpses burned, battered and

lynched themselves or that these corpses somehow deserved to be burned, battered or lynched. It is however not preposterous to suggest that the burning, battering and lynching of the corpses has just as much to say about the performativity of the dead as it does about the intentions and actions of the living.

Reading mutilation, desecration and degradation as implications of the performativity of the dead rather than as actions of the living means that these terms materialize the dead as vulnerable and dependent. Lacking the sentient, autonomic and locomotive capacities to resist or relocate the stillness and receptiveness of a corpse manifests its matter as enacting a corporeal susceptibility – a susceptibility that needs protecting (Foltyn, 2008). When the dead perform this vulnerability in close proximity to hospitals, coroner's offices and funeral homes, protection or more appropriately securing procedures can be swiftly mobilized thereby guarding the dead from unnecessary decay. In (post-)conflict spaces such as Fallujah where the high energy environs of gunshots and bomb explosions reduce the securing capacities of sanctioned interlocutors almost to nil, the only 'reasonable' method of limiting the weakness of the corpse is the incorporation of preventative corpse producing measures. As alleged in the negligence suit against Blackwater, the four contractors were underequipped and unappreciative of the threat level in Fallujah. By not properly securing the living, Blackwater's alleged negligence not only contributed to the production of four corpses, but also unduly exacerbated the vulnerability of these corpses. In other words, mutilation, desecration and degradation would have been less probable had the living materiality of the contractors been better secured, i.e. had they been better armed and informed. While the families of the deceased contractors should not be begrudged for wanting PMSCs to incorporate more effective securing measures in order to reduce the probability of the dead's vulnerability, it is difficult not to question the enactment of securing measures that simply

100

deflect or project weakness and dependence through the bodies/corpse of others. It needs to be consistently asserted that vulnerability is only one method of performativity for the dead. The dead through their material enactments are also stubbornly intransigent[45].

In a sanctioned crematorium it typically takes about ninety minutes to incinerate a corpse, however, size, tissue composition, adornments and prior decay all affect the duration of incineration (Insley, 2011). Crematoriums may also have what is a called a cremulator, which is a machine that pulverises residual materiality when the dead stubbornly refuse to be completely consumed by fire. In unsanctioned crematoriums, i.e. the streets of Fallujah, where the intense heat needed to incinerate a corpse cannot possibly be reached the stubbornness of the dead is on full display. The dead's material stubbornness is rightfully unsettling inasmuch as these performances refuse to make the dead and corpses expeditiously invisible. Such intransigence to go quietly needs to be appreciated as a key problematic of and for privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes. Flag draped coffins are both a cover and a reminder of the stubborn materiality of a nation-state's war dead contained within. As discussed above, deploying PMSC employees to (post-)conflict spaces is an effective method of circumventing this intransigence. In the Fallujah incident however, the dead put on a spectacularly unsettling performance of stubbornness. Mutilation, desecration and degradation discourses attempted to constrain this stubbornness either by translating it into vulnerability or shifting agency onto oriental others. Nevertheless, the broken and burnt corpses of the four contractors stubbornly remained. It is imperative that that stubbornness remain in order to unsettle the deadly

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[45] My use of the phrase, stubborn intransigence does resemble Bennett's (2004) concept of "material recalcitrance". As Hawkins and Porter (p.105) pithily articulate "For Bennett 'material recalcitrance' refers to the force or vitality of things that resists or exists beyond their imbrication with human subjectivity. This is matter, organic or inorganic, human or non-human, as an agent in its own right, as possessed of its own beingness or thingness, its own life and status."

productive apparatuses that govern (post-)conflict spaces. Stubborn intransigence is not the only

usefully unsettling performance of the dead. The dead can also act like zombies.

ZOMBIES???

The emerging popularity and prominence of zombies and PMSCs during the first decade

of the Twenty First Century makes them temporal cohorts – but they are much more meaningful

linked than that. The work that PMSCs do makes them (in part) responsible for preventing a

zombie outbreak. Reading the work of PMSCs through Mbembe's (2003) notions of "death-

worlds" and "necropower"[46] and Banjeree's (2008) concept of "necrocapitialism"[47] opens the

conceptual space through which to substantiate my claim that PMSCs are responsible for

preventing a zombie outbreak. PMSCs have become increasingly responsible for ensuring that

the 'hordes'[48] who (are forced to) reside in contemporary death-worlds, i.e. the financially,

racially, sexually, spatially and politically oppressed, harassed and marginalized, do not

invade/occupy the spaces, consume the financial, political and potable resources and, worse,

infect the living world of the financially, racially, sexually, spatially and politically privileged.

The armed guarding of for-export energy extraction, transport and refining facilities, hard-

currency transfers and governmental and commercial VIPs, global hiring and trafficking of the

financially depressed and disposed (Banergee, 2008) and the training of state/public security

forces make PMSCs an indispensable feature of determining who and what is living, living-dead

or dead. Determining who and what is living, living-dead or dead also works to secure against

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[46] According Mbembe (2003) necropower, i.e. the power to subjugated life through death, creates death-worlds which are "new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of the *living dead*" (p. 40, emphasis in original).

[47] As Banjeree (2008) notes processes of exploitation and accumulation through death are most egregiously embodied through the cooking, cleaning, maintenance and driving work conducted primarily by men and women from the global South in Afghanistan and Iraq (p.1552).

[48] Mbembe (2003) refers to the residents of the death worlds as the living-dead, to which I would also include the dead. To be clear the living-dead and the dead are not zombies. They are not mindless, carnivorous corpses, nor are they are metaphors for such embodiment. Rather as will be reiterated the living-dead and the dead are zombie-like insofar as they are made to embody an invasive, consumptive and infectious threat to living.

the zombie threat, i.e. the threat of invasion, consumption and infection, posed by the living-dead and the dead.

In the context of Fallujah, the dead become zombie-like. It is crucial to maintain the zombie-like notation and status for the dead, especially when those dead were formerly the embodied enforcement of the boundaries between living and death worlds. The dead are neither literal nor metaphorical zombies. The labourious and consumptive capacities of the dead, as will be explicated shortly, do constitute the dead as zombie-like, as a simile. The zombie-like potentials of the dead do however motivate practices, often corporally violent practices, that work to secure the dead from becoming zombies, from becoming active matter and meaning that feasts upon and infects the lively, happy, influential and ostentatious. Unlike most popular zombie narratives, the lively do not want to eradicate the living-dead and/or the dead, just contain and pacify them. Reading zombie-like performativity through the Fallujah incident therefore works to at least repurpose the textual terrain through which the living-dead and the dead are contained and pacified.

Zombies!!!

It is not all that difficult to see how the Fallujah incident can be construed as the non-fictive iteration of *Dawn of the Dead* - the zombie movie released two-weeks prior to the Fallujah incident. Terms and phrases such as "ghoulish" (Shaprio, 2004), "ghouls" (Bremer quoted in Scahill, 2007a, p. 109), "grotesque" (Witter, 2004), "barbaric orgy" (Hider, 2004), "mob rampage" (Ibid.), "mayhem" and "frenzied crowd" (Gettleman, 2004) conjure images of shambling, groaning, decaying hordes of zombies as much as it 'accurately' describes the Fallujah incident. Zombified, the residents of Fallujah or at least those responsible for the "savage attack" (Freeman, 2004), become unreasonable, relentless, carnivorous automatons,

103

whose mere existence, let alone any "bestial act" (Hider, 2004) they may perform, threatens the livelihoods of reasonable, rational, decent humans. In conjunction with the blatant orientalist reactions to Fallujah, a zombie narrative further reinforces Puar and Rai (2002) and Rai's (2004) mapping of the constitution of monstrosity through American counter-terrorism discourses. These discourses assemble the terrorist-monster as a sexually, racially, psychologically and physiologically abnormal subject-object that requires "quarantining" (Puar and Rai, 2002, p. 117). Zombification of this terrorist-monster only deepens the need for and expansion of methods of containment/extermination; "We will kill them or we will capture them, and we will pacify Fallujah (Kimmitt quoted in Young Pelton, 2006, p. 139).

One issue with arraying zombies with terrorist-monsters is that even though the visual embodied performativity of zombies is monstrous, the 'monster' that contemporary popular culture zombies have been interpreted to embody/perform is not the abnormal/orientalist other, but the self. For instance, the original George Romero version of *Dawn of Dead*, which was released in 1978, is commonly interpreted as a horrifically incisive critique of Anglosphere consumerism. Zombies are the metaphorical embodiment of the supposedly mindless desire of Americans to consume, not the existential threat posed by abnormal/oriental others; "Even in death, [Romero's zombies] continue to enact the rituals of a rapacious, yet basically aimless, consumerism (Shaviro 2002, p. 289)." Writing in *The New York Times*, Chuck Klosterman (2010) proposes that zombie killing is actually a metaphorical life strategy of contemporary Anglosphere society; "zombie killing is philosophically similar to reading and deleting 400 work e-mails on a Monday morning […] or performing tedious tasks in which the only true risk is being consumed by the avalanche." Klosterman is not being cynical, nor is this satire, although he is being coy. He finishes his column by urging "Keep your finger on the trigger. Continue the

termination. Don't stop believing […] This is the zombies' world, and we just live in it. But we can live better" (Ibid.).

Whether embodied as terrorist/insurgent-monsters or made metaphor for mindless consumerism or the tedious onslaught of contemporary life, zombies are routinely made to matter only as a screen for the living. Affectations of fear, horror and anxiety are properly performances of the living who find themselves face-to-face with zombies. Even though the dead regain the capacity for locomotion, consumption and association as zombies, their primary material performativity is to become a target. Likewise, the consequent breakdown of socio-cultural and politico-economic life brought on by the zombie apocalypse tends to be responded to by redoubling the meaningfulness of practicing life and death through pre-apocalypse methods of gendered, sexed, racialized and classed governance and organization (see Brooks, 2006). Accordingly, zombie performativity is not a metaphor for the performativity of the dead, but it is a simile. The dead and zombies are like each other because they consume the living. For zombies this consumption has been cast as an instinctual carnivorousness. While the dead do need the living in order to replenish their materiality, the dead through the unsettling sight and stench of decomposition enact a consumptiveness that depends, if not requires, significant allotments of space, effort and resources – allotments that are only increased when the dead also become stubborn. The space, effort and resources that go into to producing and maintaining urns, coffins, body-bags/transfer tubes (Masters, 2007), cemeteries, cenotaphs, refrigeration, intense heat and chemical preservatives are all rapaciously consumed by the dead. Mitford (2000) would contend that the space, effort and resources consumed by the dead are actually the fetishized commodities of a funeral industry that is only concerned with expanding profit margins. I would counter by asserting that the materiality of the dead performs in concert with

105

commercializing practices, but like Mitford's promotion of not-for-profit funerary proceedings, the dead need not have to perform with commercialization.

Unlike zombies whose consumptive drives must be stopped because they threaten the living status of humans, the dead's consumptive enactments are eagerly satiated by the living. This eager satisfaction can be attributed to a number of sources, not the least of which is rooted in "reclaiming our humanity as distinct from animals" (Posel & Gupta, 2009, p. 303). Humanized intra-actions variously satisfy narcissistic, socio-cultural or politico-economic desires to uphold the integrity, sacredness and dignity of the materiality of the formerly living and the eventually to be dead. Humanized intra-actions with the consumptive enactments of the dead must also be appreciated as motivations to prevent the zombificiation of the dead, to prevent non-human processes from seizing control over the dead. In a zombified world, control, authority and power are no longer the exclusive preserve of living humans. The material, the (super)natural, the decomposing threaten to unseat living humans as the prime agents of determining how life and death can and may be practiced.

In (post-)conflict spaces privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes affirm and unsettle humanizing intra-actions with the dead. As contended by Scahill, Singer and Caramola above, PMSC usage allows nation-states to continue to conduct militarizing and securing operations in (post-)conflict spaces, whilst alleviating the burden of satisfying the consumptive enactments of the dead. Spatially the dead can be moved outside of national cemeteries. Resource wise, handling and disposal costs can be predominantly shifted onto families, the PMSCs and/or insurance companies. Mourning efforts can be minimal at best. As such, PMSCs do not deny humanized intra-actions with the dead, but they do alter how and where such intra-actions can and may proceed.

Even though the Fallujah incident is only a fleeting moment of upheaval, it is illustrative of the difficulties of consistently humanizing the dead through privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes in (post-)conflict spaces. Similar to stubborn enactments, space, time and tactics collude to impede effective and sanctioned humanizing practices from asserting prominence. Such impediments mean that the dead will begin to consume the space, efforts and resources of non-human centric processes. Consequently the dead become unsettlingly inhumane and potentially threatening to the stability of processes which a/effect bifurcations amongst human-animal, culture-nature and mind-body. The dead do not need to be reanimated to act like zombies. Stubborn intransigence means that the dead cannot easily be obfuscated. Consumptive performativity means that the dead cannot be left alone in order to prevent this performativity from becoming zombie-like.

NECRO-LABOUR

To this point in my analysis I have focused on articulations that privilege the unsettling performativity of the dead. However, it is mistaken to assume that all reactions to and interpretations of the Fallujah incident are only focused on how the dead unsettle the living. For *Globe and Mail* columnist Heather Mallick (2004) it is clear that little to no emotional, conceptual or political attention should be paid to these deaths; "[I] think I shall no longer give a damn about the fate of mercenaries. Their deaths are predictable workplace accidents […] they sold their bodies to the highest bidder." Posting on the blog *The Daily Kos*, a popular American blogger, whose screen name is Kos, is even more to the point "… I feel nothing over the death of merceneries [sic] …" (quoted n Lai, 2010, p. 82). Although not as widespread as articulations of unease, dismissive and cynical articulations especially the two quotations just cited are fascinating. For instance, in both citations 'mercenary' is used to rationalize not feeling empathy

for the dead Blackwater contractors, which recalling the discussion of mercenary discourses in chapter two of this dissertation, only further establishes the term as derogatory and demonizing. Mallick further reduces the meaningfulness of the deaths of contractors with her assertion that they should only be conceived of as "predictable workplace accidents." She is not alone in this belief as Schumacher (2006, p. 21) maintains that "[contractor] deaths are looked upon by most of the world as a natural consequence of the job." Demonstrating Schumacher's claim is the following comment offered in response to a *YouTube* post about PMSC PSDs working in Afghanistan, "I'm happy the US doesnt [sic] even count [contractors] deaths, they are worthless […] contractors can rot in hell" (Barak Zai, 2013). What makes this comment worth citing is that it was written in November 2013, almost ten years after the Fallujah incident and at least three years after any major coverage of a scandal involving PMSCs. Whether reiterating general sentiments or voicing personal convictions, Mallick's and Kos' reaction to the Fallujah incident unintentionally reinforces the value of using PMSCs in (post-)conflict spaces. Despite Mallick's claim that the Fallujah incident distracts from the suffering of Iraqi citizens, her and Kos' phrasings can become easily entangled in the problematic politics cited by Scahill, Singer and Schooner. These phrasings also read as buttressing Sørensen's (2009) above cited assertion that death is now the sign of an individualized failure to properly manage one's life. As Montel Williams apparently shouted at a mother of one of the dead Blackwater contractors, "Your son made a choice!" (quoted in Simakis, 2008b), implying that he was at least partially at fault for his own death. In a few words and sentences Mallick and Kos reaffirm the logics proffered to support risk-transfer warfare as well the bio-political management of life – be that the life of an individual or how life is practiced through (post-)conflict spaces.

Dismissive and cynical sentiments are also entangled in the perniciousness of Butler's

(2009) (un)grievable life. As Butler (2009) writes "We might think of war as dividing

populations into those who are grievable and those who are not. An ungreivable life is one that

cannot be mourned because it never lived […] it has never counted as a life at all" (p.38). To

refuse to mourn the dead Blackwater contractors may be emotionally callous, but the critical

responses to Kos' statement point out it is also dehumanizing (see Lai 2010). The not so subtle

disparagement of contractors as mercenaries also functions "to show how the less than human

disguises itself, and threatens to deceive those of us who might think we recognize" humanness

(Butler, 2004, p. 146). Made ungrievable the corpses of the contractors take on a similar

material status as the ungreivable living-dead occupants of death-worlds. I say "a similar

material status" because arraying contractors with the historically oppressed is a tenuous

proposition. Not in the least because PMSCs are, as asserted above, readily tasked with

managing the planet's death-worlds including making the tactical and strategic decisions that

transform the living-dead into just the dead. Suffice it to say that refusing to grieve/making dead

contractors ungrievable does not unsettle this management of death-worlds.

In the Fallujah incident, the dead are not all that bothered by dismissive and cynical

refusals to grieve. The stubborn and consumptive performances short-circuit efforts to void

meaningfulness. Even when the dead are made ungrievable, they cannot be obliterated. The

dead remain and decompose with or without the acknowledgement of living humans. Stubborn

and consumptive performativity does not secure the dead however. The work that PMSCS do

makes the performativity of dead contractors an imperceptible feature of contemporary (post-)

conflict spaces (Banergee, 2008). Not because the work necessarily or intentionally impedes

capacities to mourn – the family members of deceased contractors would and should beg to

differ on this point. The performativity of dead contractors is made imperceptible by rendering it as necro-labour. If contractor deaths are a "natural consequence of the job" it is because they are the paid labour force that sustains death-worlds – the labour, i.e. life, performed by living-dead occupants of death-worlds is most certainly un(der)paid. As waged necro-labourers, death is not what contractors do, it is what they work for and not even their own death ceases this labour. Dead contractors become like the living-dead, un(der)paid and forced to continue labouring, but because this labour is not widely acknowledged as a sacrifice, statistically recorded as a war casualty and cynically dismissed as ungreivable it becomes indistinguishable from the labour of the living-dead. Stubborn and consumptive performances, such as those witnessed in the Fallujah incident, expose the exploitative labour conditions of the dead and living-dead. As cited in the previous two sections the rapid articulation of deathly discourses of mutilation and zombification work to appropriate necro-labor, thereby sustaining, if not enhancing, the exploitative labour conditions of the dead and the living-dead through the death-worlds produced by Anglosphere manifestations of necropower.

Appreciating the stubbornness, consumptiveness and labour of the dead through the Fallujah incident is not to deny the heinousness of this incident. The Fallujah incident is heinous, not because of its "savagery" or because of corporate negligence. It is heinous because in spite of its spectacularly visible exposure of the unsettling inadequacies of privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing intra-actions with the dead, the production of Iraqi and Anglosphere dead continued unabated. There is no doubt that the capacities of the Anglosphere death industries, of which PMSCs must be considered an integral feature, to use unsettling encounters, including ones they produced, for private, military, security and commercial advantages is a prime source of this unabated deadening. Reading the textual terrain

110

of the Fallujah incident so as to foreground the performativity of the dead, rather than just the

living, is one method of counteracting the deadening effects of the work that PMSCs do.

CHAPTER SIX: SHOOT FIRST … WHAT'S THE POINT OF ASKING QUESTOINS?

Guns have been a consistent feature of my life. I have shot toy, water, BB, pellet, paintball, laser and semi-automatic[49] 9mm, .45 and 5.56mm calibre guns. My parents are fond of reminding me that despite their best efforts, and potentially better judgement, I immediately relinquished diapers and a soother upon receiving my first toy gun – even though I was almost three I have no recollection of this occurrence. Pop-culturally, only sports topped my interest in gun-play. First-person-shooters were my favourite videogames to play as a teenager/young adult and I'll give any movie or TV show a chance once guns drawn. My emotional register towards guns and shooting experiences is therefore distortedly skewed towards pleasure. I like to think I balance this out through my research interest in and political commitment to understanding, critiquing and altering the contemporary politico-economics of guns and shooting. Through these secondary experiences I can confidently make two assertions: 1) guns must be considered as only one constituent component of the practice of shooting and 2) shooting cannot be reduced to an act that is good, bad, pleasurable, despicable, mundane, extraordinary, securing, a right (of passage) or a privilege (in need of regulation). It is however inequitable. Shooting manifests inequity by enacting a corporeal and kinetic political-economics, which is entangled amongst a privatized, militarized securing and commercialized political-economics, that sediments the meaningfulness of the disproportionate distribution of pain/ strain[50], pleasure and preservation.

To engage shooting as an act of inequity, is to engage shooting as a complex practice that impedes easy reductions of what happens when a gun is fired. Even though the production/performance of inequity may seem like the 'obvious point' of shooting, the political-

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[49] Specifically these guns were the civilianized versions of an UZI, UMP45 and M16 – historically three of the more popular weapons used by global securing and militarizing personnel.
[50] I include strain, along with pain and trauma in order to more thoroughly account for the post-human affects produced/performed through shooting. Where pain and trauma capture the humanized deleterious or catastrophic a/effects of shooting, strain captures the tensions, exertions and excitations of bone, flesh, metal, plastic etc. that are performed through the constituent components of shooting.

economic processes which motivate when, where and why shooting occurs also de-thorn the more prickly aspects of this obvious point. As anecdotally articulated in the previous paragraph, when shooters are young privileged boys and men shooting becomes a performance of pleasure, wherein the pain, strain and trauma experienced by and through the environment and target is superseded by the desire for joy, excitement and strain of the shooter. Foregrounding inequitable a/effects means foregrounding an account of shooting that does not allow shooters and 'their' entanglement with guns and bullets to simply divorce themselves, or worse romanticize and take pleasure, from the relational arrangements that shooting produces. Shooting can become a pleasurable performance. It can also become a preserving performance. It is a painful/stressful performance. It cannot become pleasurable or preserving or painful without becoming entangled amongst inequitable relations that determine that certain matters and meanings will be pained, preserved or pleasured more than others.

Conceptualizing shooting as an act of inequity is not significant because shooting produces any specific pains, strains and traumas that are more pernicious than automobile collisions, famine or ecological pollution for instance. Rather the relations of inequity enacted through shooting are significant because shooting is an integral, if not indispensable, activity for privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes. In (post-)conflict spaces shooting very regularly puts in overtime to determine when, where and how these political-economic processes affect who and what becomes painful, preserved and pleasured. In working to determine who and what is advantaged/disadvantaged through relations of inequity, shooting becomes central to producing circumstances where the painful lament, "Why is the blood of Iraqis so free for everyone to spill?" (Raghavan, 2007) can go unanswered because it is presumed to be a rhetorical question.

113

This question is sincerely offered by the father of a child who was shot and killed by Blackwater contractors in Baghdad's Nisour Square on September 16, 2007. I have included it here because in this chapter I examine the textual reactions to and interpretations of the Nisour Square incident.[51] I have also included it because it is the driving emotional and intellectual force of this chapter. While I hold no pretense of sufficiently answering this question and truthfully I do not intend to provide a direct answer to it, in twelve words this question reads as a poignant query of the world-making/reaffirming capacities of shooting. As will be detailed shortly, the primary concern amongst investigators (both criminal and journalistic), regulators (both governmental and civil-society), Blackwater and to a lesser extent witnesses and enlisted US military personnel is how could this carnage have been perpetrated by PMSCs and how could similar incidents be prevented in the future. Through the articulations of journalists, government and Blackwater officials and witnesses, Blackwater, PMSCs and poor-to-no regulation become the targets of scorn, reform and redemption. A problem with these articulations is that they also reiterate the quagmire producing articulations of gun politics practiced in the United States.

As will be seen, gun politics in the US is not meaningful to the analysis because it provides a generalizable case. The thick morass that is gun politics in the US is unique and not often witnessed the UK, Australia or Canada. Rather American gun politics becomes important to this chapter because of the (inconsistent) onto-political similarities amongst globalized articulations/codifications of the legitimacy of armed self-defence and the articulations/industriousness of American self-defence enthusiasm. Accordingly I undertake an analysis that: 1) dislocates the spatiality of Nisour Square by placing the violent corporeal conflict in Iraq within the onto-political conflicts of American gun enthusiasts and controllers

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[51] Nisour Square is arguably the most infamous incident involving PMSCs operating in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Fallujah incident greatly increased awareness of PMSCs, but Nisour Square is the metaphorical foundation upon which popular opinions of PMSCs as more trouble than they worth is built.

and 2) foregrounds how shooting (re)makes a world of inequity. Put argumentatively, guns are

not the great equalizer and it is time to demonstrate the absurdity of claims like this: "[The State

Department wants] to make sure that [American diplomats] are protected, but they are protected

in such a way that we are not undermining what we're trying to achieve with our larger efforts in

Iraq, as well as elsewhere around the world" (Harper, 2007).

The NISOUR SQUARE INCIDENT

Dispatched to the scene of a car bombing, which occurred in close proximity to a

Blackwater PSD tasked with the protection of a State Department (DOS) employee, Blackwater

Tactical Support Team (TST) 23, constituted as a convoy of four Bearcat armoured vehicles,

entered Nisour Square midday on September 16, 2007 (Archer, 2011). Driving against traffic,

the four vehicles came to a stop in the southwest quadrant of the Square. At this point accounts

of what followed differ. According to the members of TST 23, upon entering the Square the

TST began taking small arms fire from multiple locations; "Estimated 8-10 persons fired from

multiple nearby locations, with some aggressors dressed in civilian apparel and others in Iraqi

Police uniforms" (Hanner, 2007). In response to this "ambush" five members of TST 23 opened

fire with M4 and M240B automatic weapons, a M203 grenade launcher and began to throw stun

and smoke grenades (Glanz, 2007). According to the eye-witness accounts of two Iraqi Police

Officers, "There were zero armed men in that area" (quoted in Ross et. al., 2008) and "They just

started to shoot; nobody shot at them" (quoted in Ibid.). The *New York Times* reports that

another witness alleges that TST 23 "kept firing long after it was clear that there was no

resistance" (Glanz, 2007). What is known for certain is that Ahmed and Mahassin Al Rubia'y

were the first people killed by TST 23's shooting (Raghavan, 2007) – the white sedan Ahmed

and Mahassin were travelling in also exploded, burning their bodies. Over the next fifteen

minutes, fifteen more Iraqis were killed and twenty-four wounded; no members of TST 23 sustained any injuries. The youngest casualty was nine year old Ali Mohammed Hafedh Kinani who travelling with his father, aunt, siblings and cousins was shot in the head; "I was standing in shock looking at him as the door opened, and his brain fell on the ground between my feet" (quoted in The Nation, 2010). Other casualties included "college students, day laborers and professionals" (Raghavan, 2007).

Responding to the shooting, US military personnel arrived in the Square shortly after the departure of TST 23. Initial impressions and investigations by these personnel buttress Iraqi assertions that TST 23 was unprovoked and indiscriminate with their application of lethal and injurious force. Raghavan and White (2007) cite Lt. Col. Mike Tarsa's[52] impression that "It appeared to me [that Iraqi driven vehicles] were fleeing the scene, when they were engaged. It had every indication of an excessive shooting." Speaking on the condition of anonymity a US military official told the *New York Times* (Glanz, 2007) that "The cartridges and casings we found were all associated with coalition forces and contractors […] The only brass we found where somebody fired weapons were ones from contractors." Capt. Don Cherry is also quoted as saying "I was surprised at the caliber of weapon being used" (Raghavan & White, 2007). And a US Army Lieutenant Colonel referred to the Blackwater contractors as "immature shooters"[53] (quoted in Raghavan & Ricks, 2007). Motivated by the accusations that TST 23 acted without

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[52] Tarsa arrived at Nisour Square 25 minutes after the shooting had ceased.
[53] "Immature shooters" is an interesting choice of words because it infantilizes the Blackwater contractors, which is a sentiment that can also be inferred from other quotations of ridicule. For instance, a Brigadier General with the US military is quoted as remarking that Blackwater "[does] stupid stuff […] someone else has to deal with the aftermath" (quoted in Finer, 2005; also quoted by Human Rights First, 2008) and a representative for the PSCAI notes that the DOS "will support" Blackwater "no matter what they do" (quoted in Fainaru, 2007). Concerns with the maturity levels of PMSC employees are more thoroughly addressed in the next chapter, but suffice it to say infantilizing the Blackwater contractors is also an emasculating maneuver. Referring to the Blackwater contractors as immature shooters also reads as a concern that the contractors are failing to appreciate how the proper handling and usage of firearms is a sign of manliness because it demonstrates the ability and willingness to fulfill a man's role as protector (see Kohn, 2004). Infantilization is thus a particularly contemptuous method of ridiculing PMSC employees insofar as it transforms a poor job performance into poor man performance.

116

provocation, the Iraqi Interior Ministry[54] immediately cancelled the operating license of

Blackwater (Kralev, 2007) and moved to expel Blackwater from Iraq.[55] 'Informed' by the DOS

that an immediate expulsion of Blackwater would create a "security gap because most of the

embassies and most of the foreign organizations that [were] working in Iraq" relied on

Blackwater PSDs, the Iraqi government quietly backed away from an immediate expulsion

(Rubin and Kramer, 2007).[56]

In an effort to sooth tensions between Washington and Baghdad, US Secretary of State

Condeleza Rice called Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki to apologize for the actions of Blackwater

and both agreed to pursue a "fair and transparent investigation" (MacAskill, 2007). The Iraqi

investigation led by the Interior Ministry concluded that the TST 23 members "were not

provoked when they opened 'deliberate'" (Hobart Mercury, 2007) fire and thus could not have

been acting in self-defence. Iraq's Minister of Defence Abdul Qader Mohammed Jassim made it

patently clear that the actions of TST 23 were unprovoked: "Not even a brick was thrown at [the

Blackwater contractors]" (quoted in Glanz & Rubin, 2007). Released almost two months after

the Iraqi investigation, findings from a FBI investigation concluded that fourteen of the

seventeen Iraqis shot and killed by TST 23 were "unjustified" and were therefore in violation of

DOS rules regarding the application of lethal force (Johnston & Broder, 2007). Whereas CPA

Order 17 protected the members of TST 23 from facing criminal prosecution for their actions in

Iraqi courts, the findings of the FBI investigation permitted the US Justice Department (DOJ) to

begin criminal proceedings against the Blackwater contractors in US District Court.

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[54] The Interior Ministry is responsible for issuing licenses that allow PMSCs to operate in Iraq.
[55] Despite the cancellation of their license Blackwater personnel continued to operate in Iraq until 2009. In January 2009 the Iraqi Interior Ministry once again barred Blackwater, contending "[it] is because of the shooting incident in 2007 ... [Blackwater] came to us and applied and we refused them. They tried by all means to stay here and we said 'no'" (General Abdel Karim Khalaf quoted in Al Jazeera, 2009).
[56] As reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* "Iraqi authorities" also requested compensation totaling $US 136 million for the victims and their families noting that the amount "was so high "because Blackwater uses employees who disrespect the rights of Iraqi citizens even though they are guests in this country." (Davies, 2007)

In December 2008, six members of TST 23 were indicted on charges of voluntary manslaughter, attempting to commit manslaughter and discharging a firearm while committing a crime of violence. Five of the contractors subsequently pleaded not-guilty with the sixth pleading guilty to lesser charges in exchange for testimony against the other five (Ramstack, 2009). The case against the five contractors was dismissed in December 2010 with US District Judge Ricardo Urbina noting that the DOJ "improperly used evidence to build the case" (Appuzzo, 2010). Judge Urbina did not comment on the appropriateness or lack thereof of the actions of the contractors. The case against four contractors was reopened in October 2013, a trail commenced in June 2014 and a jury found the contractors guilty of "murder, manslaughter and gun charges" on October 22, 2014 (Hsu et. al., 2004). Separately, victims and their relatives filed a series of lawsuits against Blackwater in US courts. Adding another layer of ignominy it was reported that Blackwater attempted to bribe Iraqi officials in the immediate aftermath of the Nisour Square incident (Al Jazeera, 2010).

Politically, the US Congressional Committee for Oversight and Government Reform held a hearing on October 2, 2007 entitled *Blackwater USA: Private Military Contractor Activity in Iraq and Afghanistan*. Erik Prince testified at this hearing, asserting, "I stress to the committee and to the American public […] that I believe we acted appropriately at all times (quoted in CNN, 2007)." In a subsequent interview with the television news program *60 minutes*, Prince emphatically attested that he had "not seen any evidence to support any kind of egregious, malicious, intentional wrong behavior" (quoted in Goldiner, 2007). Bureaucratically, the DOS assembled a panel in October 2007 entitled *The Secretary of State's Panel on Personal Protective Services in Iraq*. This panel had the authority to determine the necessary steps that the DOS would implement in order to restore confidence in the operations of PMSC PSDs.

After extensive research the panel released a report containing nineteen recommendations which included developing a clear legal basis for holding contractors accountable under US law, tightening the ground rules for the use of deadly force, enhancing contractor awareness of Iraqi culture, installing video and audio recording equipment in all PSD vehicles and establishing an investigative "Go-Team" that could respond immediately to any incident in which a weapon was discharged (Boswell et. al., 2007).

In terms of commercial effects, in 2009 the DOS did not renew Blackwater's *Worldwide Personal Protective Services* contract for Iraq (Lee & Baker, 2009). Following the announcement of their imminent expulsion from Iraq, Blackwater changed it is name to Xe. Speaking on behalf of the newly renamed company Anne Tyrell asserted, "We've taken the company to a place where it is no longer accurately described as Blackwater" (Hedgpeth, 2009). The company formerly known as Blackwater also renamed its non-PSD entities: Blackwater Airships became Guardian Flight Systems, Blackwater Target Systems became GSD Manufacturing and the Blackwater Lodge and Training Centre was rebranded as the U.S. Training Centre (Ibid.). This rebranding was soon followed by the March 2009 announcement of Erik Prince's resignation as President and CEO of Xe/Blackwater.

REGULATING FORCE

For critics of the commercial military and security services industry the "confusion, defensiveness, a multiplicity of uncoordinated *ad hoc* investigations, and inter-agency finger pointing" (Human Rights First, 2008, p.1, emphasis in original) demonstrated by the US response to Nisour Square was proof that regulatory and oversight agencies permitted a "shoot-first, ask questions later—or *never*" (Ibid., p.3, emphasis in original) attitude to fester amongst PMSC PSDs operating in Iraq. The suggestion that Blackwater in particular, and PMSCs more

generally, were only concerned with getting "their convoys or VIPs safely to their destinations" (Boot, 2007) is empirically substantiated by numerous "escalation of force incidents". A memorandum distributed to members of the *House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform* on October 1, 2007 provides precise detail of escalation of force incidents involving Blackwater contractors. According to the memorandum, between January 2005 and September 2007 Blackwater contractors discharged their weapons 195 times during escalation of force incidents (Majority Staff, 2007, p.1). In over 80 percent of these escalation of force incidents Blackwater contractors fired first, typically firing from a moving vehicle, which resulted in 162 incidents of property damage and 16 Iraqi casualties including the deaths of unarmed people (Ibid., p. 2). The memorandum also contains numerous reasons why Blackwater personnel had their contracts terminated including weapons related incidents, aggressive or violent behaviour and failure to report or lying about an incident (Ibid., p. 13). As noted in the memorandum, "The most common cause for termination was weapons-related incidents, which included two terminations for inappropriately firing at Iraqis, one termination for threatening Iraqis with a firearm, twelve terminations for negligent or accidental weapons discharges, and one termination for proposing to sell weapons to the Iraqi government" (Ibid.). In short, contractors working for Blackwater had issues with escalating force.

This disturbingly long list of escalation of force incidents is evidence enough of a problem of regulation. However, it is unhelpful to conceive of this regulatory problem as an issue with unprovoked shootings caused by malicious contractors or poor-to-no DOS oversight. It is rather an issue of regulating intensities of inequity. Blackwater personnel did not have issues with shooting; they shot very well and very frequently. The issue with this proficiency[57]

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[57] In an Op-Ed piece in the *Washington Post* Robinson (2008) boldly asserts that "Proper training and supervision -- which was the Blackwater firm's responsibility -- would have made it more likely for the guards to make the right

and frequency of shooting is that it resulted in the Iraqi populace experiencing a disproportionate amount of lethal and injurious force. Nonetheless, as only one component of the performative arrangements of shooting, Blackwater personnel, particularly the men of TST 23, are not solely culpable[58] for the inequitable allocation of pain/strain and preservation. Indiscriminate, targeted, malicious or sanctioned shooting do realize different intensities of inequity. Beyond discrete and localized effects, which can be and routinely are catastrophically terminal, locating fault with shooters does little to mitigate how privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes foster the possibilities for indiscriminate, targeted, malicious or sanctioned shooting.

As detailed in an interim report from the *Commission on Wartime Contracting* (2009, p. 66), the DOS' implementation of tight oversight mechanisms following Nisour Square resulted in a dramatic decline of lethal escalation of force incidents perpetrated by PMSC personnel. Such statistical validation of the need for strong regulatory mechanisms demonstrates that by controlling shooters, intensities of inequity can be managed. Despite this undeniably positive effect of reducing the number of escalation of force incidents, greater oversight does not actually alter what shooting does. It may and does restrict the probability that certain people, places and things will become targets, but it does not alter that inequity is made manifest through shooting. Moreover, regulation that concentrates exclusively on the shooter, rather than shooting, becomes easily entangled in an instrumentalist conception of shooting.

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split-second decisions amid the chaos of Nisoor [sic] Square." While the general implication that PMSC PSDs should be properly trained is admirable, the TST 23 contractors were not Bubba Tier. In 2007 one contractor "received a certificate of appreciation […] from the U.S. Embassy in Iraq for his 'outstanding professionalism'" as well as recognition from "a U.S. reconstruction official" for his role in protecting the official (Wilber and Tate, 2008). Another member of TST 23 received Navy and Marine Corps medals for his composure on a mission that saw "numerous improvised explosive devices and small arm attacks" (quoted in Ibid.). Finally three other TST 23 members "received good conduct medals, among other citations" (Ibid.). Lack of proficiency, comprehension and composure with and while shooting in combat-like situations is therefore not a verifiable element of the Nisour Square incident.

[58] This is not to say that the men who opened fire on in Nisour Square should not be held accountable for their performances on September 16.

Instrumentalist conceptualizations manifest guns/arms as "neutral tools" of the social-political performances of the shooters who use them (Bourne, 2012, p. 142-3). It is the human agents who do the shooting who are the problem. Some of the more hyperbolic examples of instrumental articulations directed at TST 23 include their vilification as "the terrorists" (quoted in Karadsheh & Duke, 2007) by an Iraqi citizen and disparaged as "out of control […] cowboys" (quoted in Raghavan & Ricks, 2007) by a senior US Military Officer. Beyond TST 23, PMSC personnel are a noteworthy source of instrumentalism. As discussed in chapter two, anecdotal evidence suggests that British contractors regularly ridiculed their American colleagues for their gung-ho, fuck-you aggressiveness, whilst lauding themselves for stoic reservation. Therefore, incidents of 'excessive' application of force are rooted in the personality traits of contractors and not other matters that can motivate enactments of force.

Specifically relating to their weapons, the Brits conceived of their weapons as tools and mocked Americans for being embarrassingly infatuated with the macho and pop-cultural symbolism of their guns. These accusations directed at the Americans expose a second conceptual configuring of relations amongst shooter and gun. Bourne (2012) terms this second configuring of the relations amongst shooter and gun as substantivist conceptualization. Unlike instrumentalist concepts which concentrate on the shooter, subtantivist concepts configure weapons as "determining social and political relations" (Ibid., p. 142-3). The above cited concern expressed by an US Military official with the calibre of weapons used by TST 23 signals a substantivist apprehension. Allegations that Blackwater and other PMSCs operating in Iraq equipped their contractors with unregistered, unlawful or offensively-purposed weaponry including automatic rifles, silencers, fragmentation grenades and rocket propelled grenade launchers are also demonstrative of substantivist strategies (see Ross & Ryan, 2008; Fainaru,

2008). The popular monikers "guns-for-hire" and "hired guns" (see Carter, 2004; Scahill, 2005;

Singer, 2005; Ashcroft, 2006, Cotton et. al, 2010; Franke & Von Boemcken, 2011) are a dual

substantivist slight against contractors insofar as the guns, the hiring of commercially sourced

human weapons platforms and the combination of the two is presumed to be unethical, immoral

and wrong.

In the above cited examples the articulation of instrumentalist and substantivist

conceptualizations is done for the admirable purposes of alleviating the painful/strenuous

experiences of the target. Laudable goals however do not alleviate the problems of

instrumentalist and substantivist conceptualizations. The problems of articulating instrumentalist

and substantivist concepts are threefold. Firstly, as Latour (1999) argues "The twin mistake of

the [substantivists] and the [instrumentalists] is to start with essences, those of subjects or those

of objects" (p.180). Consequently articulations of "bad" people or "bad" weapons "assert a

priori deterministic relationships between" human and guns (Bourne, 2012, p. 153), when what

should be understood is how enactments of shooting realize the troubling meaningfulness of

inequity. Secondly, instrumentalist and substantivist concepts isolate the constituent components

of shooting. By concentrating on shooter or gun and/or bullet, political-economic processes are

routinely left unquestioned. Guns and bullets are still manufactured, targets are still acquired,

environments are still architecturally, spatially, temporally and sensuously altered and shooters

still shoot regardless of the normative status of shooter, gun or bullet. Lastly, and the most

troubling is the normative mobility of instrumentalist and substantivist concepts. Indeed the

most infamous actuators of instrumentalism are Anglosphere gun-enthusiasts whose abhorrently

clichéd refrains of "Guns don't kill people, people do" and "The only thing that stops a bad guy

with a gun is a good guy with a gun" (quoted in *The Telegraph*, 2012) demonstrate little concern

for targets that are not themselves. Having now raised the specter of National Rifle Association (NRA)-style instrumentalism, it is time to delve into the various iterations of this particular brand of instrumentalism in the reactions to and interpretations of the Nisour Square incident. Through this textual analysis it will become evident that NRA-style instrumentalism easily flows through privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes thereby increasing the capacities of shooting to realize a world of inequity.

DEFENDING THE SELF

The usage and legitimation of violence on the basis of an inherent and immutable right to defend oneself is thoroughly instantiated in the moral, philosophical,[59] politico-organizational and legal regimes, customs and codes of global security relations. Liberal and Christian Just Wars require it. *Article 51* of the *UN Charter* guarantees it. The maintenance of standing armies and the global trade of military equipment depend on it. Perhaps most importantly, people and States regularly claim their inherent right to (violently) defend themselves against the aggression of other people and States.

In specific relation to PMSCs, numerous codes, policies and memoranda reaffirm the right of contractors to defend themselves, as well as third parties, violently. For instance, sections 18a and 43a of *The Montreux Document* (ICRC, 2008) read, "using force and firearms only when necessary in self-defence or defence of third persons". Section 43 of the *ICoC* (ICoC, 2010) reads, "Signatory Companies will require that their Personnel not use firearms against persons except in self-defence or defence of others against the imminent threat of death or

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[59] Particularly, Hobbesian inspired philosophies. Appearing in paragraph 8, Chapter XIV of the *Leviathan*, Hobbes (1994) writes, "For it is a voluntary act, and of the voluntary acts of every man the object is some *good to himself*. And therefore there be some rights which no man can be understood by any words or other signs to have abandoned or transferred. As, first, a man cannot lay down the right of resisting them that assault him by force, to take away his life, because he cannot be understood to aim thereby at any good to himself" (emphasis in original).

serious injury, or to prevent the perpetration of a particularly serious crime involving grave threat to life."

For PMSC contractors providing security services to Anglosphere forces in Iraq from 2003 to 2012 the inherent right to self-defence is codified in three key documents. The first of these documents is the Coalitional Provisional Authority (CPA) *Memorandum 17 Annex A: Use of Force* (2004) which most clearly articulates that "NOTHING IN THESE RULES LIMITS YOUR INHERENT RIGHT TO TAKE ACTION NECESSARY TO DEFEND YOURSELF" (emphasis in original). Subsection two of Annex A further elaborates, "You may use NECESSARY FORCE, up to and including deadly force against persons in the following circumstances" self-defence, the defence of principals and to protect civilians. The second document is the *DOS Mission Firearms Policy for Iraq* which contains the provision that the employ of deadly force "is permissible when there is no safe alternative to using such force and without the use of deadly force, the individual or others would face imminent and grave danger" (United States Department of Justice, 2008, p.3). The third document is the *Memorandum of Agreement between the DOD and the DOS on USG Private Security Contractors* (2007), which affirms, "[contractors] always retain the inherent right to exercise self-defense [sic] in response to a hostile act or demonstrated hostile intent. [Contractors] are permitted to use deadly force in defense [sic] of others when there is a reasonable belief of imminent risk of death or serious bodily harm."

Put simply, morally, legally, politically and ontologically the application of lethal and injurious force in order to defend oneself, one's comrades and charges as well as bystanders was never going to be called in question as a result of the TST 23's shooting of thirty-one people in Nisour Square. What was questioned was whether the enactment of shooting could be deemed

125

self-defence; "There is a huge difference between self-defense [sic] and the kind of indiscriminate fusillade that the Blackwater team allegedly unleashed" (Robinson, 2008).

Determining whether TST 23 "opened fire because of a perceived threat and continued in response to incoming fire" (Hanson, 2010) or "intended to kill or seriously injure the Iraqi civilians" (Risen, 2009) is not only key for the Iraqi and FBI investigators, DOJ prosecutors and journalistic and academic documentarians of the Nisour Square incident. It is also key for sustaining the viability of shooting in self-defence. Regardless of the moral, legal, political and ontological codes, concepts and regimes that pronounce it as such, actualization of lethal and/or injurious force in order to defend the self is not an inherent, immutable capacity of humans. Shooting in self-defence is not a "human-right" (Students for Concealed Carry, 2014). It is an enactment of inequitable determination of who/what/where matters through pain/strain, pleasure and preservation.

In the Nisour Square incident determining whether Blackwater contractors shot in self-defence does not simply matter as an individual or isolated act of shooting, it also matters because shooting in self-defence is entangled in broader political-economic processes. This was intimately understood by both Erik Prince and the DOS inasmuch as the maintenance of the immutable and codified rights of PMSC personnel to defend themselves was of the utmost importance to the continued Anglosphere occupation of Iraq; "[Blackwater's] abrupt departure would far more hurt the reconstruction team and the diplomats trying to rebuild the country than it would hurt […] business" (quoted in Al Jazeera, 2009). If PMSC PSDs could not 'return fire' than state-building efforts would either have ceased or required military PSDs. This would have hampered counter-insurgency operations as enlisted personnel would be required to escort VIPs thereby diverting their attention away from suppressing insurgent violence.

Construing PMSC PSDs as prophylactic appendages also makes it necessary to uphold the inherency of self-defence. That is to say, by virtue of being human, the politicians, diplomats, engineers, executives, journalists and humanitarians moving around Afghanistan and Iraq following the Anglosphere invasions also had a right to self-defence. Given the varying magnitudes of lethal and injurious force being realized by insurgent and Anglosphere forces, it would have been improbable, if not impossible, for these VIPs to take personal responsibility for defending themselves. The assumption of this defensive role by PMSC PSDs thereby constituted the contractors of Blackwater, Dyncorp and Triple Canopy as the prophylactic appendages of the inherent right of these VIPs to defend themselves. Ascertaining the truth of what occurred in Nisour Square is therefore a dually necessary process for the militarized and security goals of the Anglosphere occupation of Iraq. The actual determination only alters the intensities of inequity realized through shooting. By validating or vilifying the TST 23 shooters, the privileged position of shooting is not dislodged as a centralized practice of militarizing and securing processes. As such, practices of determining whether a shooting is a justified performance of self-defence must be appreciated as practices that also impel the immutability of shooting to defend the self.

Another demonstrative aspect of the iterability, rather than immutability, of shooting in self-defence is locatable in Ferzan's (2005, p. 715) assertion that "Defending oneself is inherently predictive. Self-defenders cannot wait until an aggressor takes action before employing defensive force. Rather, they must evaluate the circumstances and make a determination about whether defensive force is necessary." Presenting a spirited defence of TST 23, Hanson (2010) makes a similar statement, "The team involved in the incident had been ambushed on three of the previous four days, and their threat perception was understandably heightened. In determining whether deadly force is authorized, that perception of a threat is what

matters, not whether it actually was." If self-defence is "inherently predictive", then justifiable self-defence shootings are bound by perceptive capacities, not concerns with exacerbating inequity. Also, in an apparently threat saturated environment such as Iraq, perceptive capacities are so taxed almost any act can justifiably be perceived as a threat.

There are two deadly serious problems with making perception and prediction primary tenants of self-defence. First, as already discussed, anecdotal and empirical evidence suggests that Blackwater PSDs had itchy trigger fingers. To repeat, "[Blackwater's] tendency is shoot first and ask questions later" (quoted in Raghavan & Ricks, 2007). If threat perception is primarily ascertained through the targeting mechanisms of a gun, as alleged with Blackwater PSDs, then shooting becomes the preferred method of predictively enacting self-defence. More significantly, prior to any actual targeting taking place, threat prediction becomes welded to the performativity of PMSC PSDs inasmuch as the PSDs act as prophylactic appendages of the right to self-defence for VIPs. In other words, the contracting of PMSC PSDs already presumes the existence of a threat or threatening conditions in which VIPs will be required to defend themselves. Prediction becomes a carrier of commercialization as those entities, either individual people and/or (non-)governmental organizations, that perceive a threat or predict the need of self-defence and can muster the necessary financial resources turn to the market in order to purchase the appropriate prophylactic appendages. Predictively realized, self-defence commodifies shooting and privileges the value of highly trained, ice-veined shooters over the problems of gun and ammunition acquisition in (post-)conflict spaces and the detrimental effects on targets and the architectural, ecological and socio-political environments of (post-)conflict spaces. Shooting need not be the primary method of actualizing the right of self-defence. Evasive and aggressive driving, armoured vehicles and body armour were all common methods

employed by PMSC PSDs to 'defend' against threats to bodily integrity and sentience posed by gunfire and explosions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Regardless of these other defensive techniques, shooting did/does remain at the core of self-defence methods in (post-)conflict spaces and if the shooters are performing as prophylactic appendages shooting becomes the already accepted and excepted response to perceived threats. Consequently, predictively realized self-defence only expands the stage through which shooting becomes an expected and accepted performance.

Secondly, in Campbell's (1998, p. 1) pithy prose "Danger is not an objective condition. It (sic) is not a thing that exists independently of those to whom it may become a threat." Like self-defence, danger and threat are not an a priori quality of that which becomes a danger or threat, it is an enactment of matters and meanings that manifests the danger or threat. Broadly speaking, the perception of 'human' dangers and threats is routinely obtained through knowledges of difference, which variously assemble physiology, psychology, sexuality, fashion, language, religion and ideology as reliable and intuitive markers of threatening behaviour and/or embodiment. The monster-terrorist manifestation of Iraqi, Arab, Muslim and brown men discussed in the previous chapter is a most relevant example of the production of danger and threat through knowledges of difference. In circumstances that are already highly militarized and insecure, such as TST 23's daily operations in Iraq in 2007, tactical perception, i.e. keen awareness of the threat environment, is definitely the primary method through which threats are made real. Danger and threat perception are never only tactical or strategic however. In their daily operations, PMSC personnel performed and intra-acted amongst numerous social, political, ideo-emotional and historical practices and processes of threat and danger determination. Such practices include: 1) entanglements of historical-orientalist apprehensions of Iraqis, Arabs, Muslims, 2) securitized-orientalist fears of the bloodlust and cruelty of Islamic insurgents/Jihadi

terrorists, 3) privatized-militarized-securitized desires to personally assist in the pacification, liberalization and democratization of Iraq, 4) militarized attentiveness to suspicious behaviour, 5) militarized fraternal bounds, and 6) militarized notions of reciprocity (see Ashcroft, 2006; Schumacher, 2006; Young Pelton, 2006; Fainaru, 2008). It is pertinent to recognize that the realization of a danger or threat is not a common-sense practice, regardless of how much it masquerades as one, because if threats are objectively everywhere, it only makes common-sense to neutralize them. And if prediction and perception are paramount tenants of self-defence, in an oversaturated environment of danger such as that perceived/experienced by/through PMSC PSDs, all shooting incidents are enactments of self-defence. Anything less than shooting in self-defence is an irrational abrogation of one's inherent rights.

Relaying concerns by British contractors towards their American counterparts, Durkin (2004) offers another troubling possibility: "Treating everyone as hostile […] helps make people hostile." Successful self-defence shootings will neutralize an immediate threat, but in enacting self-defence through shooting such an enactment also becomes a meaningful component of the productive processes of threat. Accordingly, threat perception is not a linear process and enactments of self-defences are, to reiterate, not isolatable occurrences. US Military officials worried that the Nisour Square incident would intensify Iraqi "hate" for PMSC PSDs and Blackwater (Raghavan & Ricks, 2007) and such loathing would manifest itself as increased violence. In other words, shooting in self-defence can actually proliferate the number of potential threats. Resentment, anger and hatred need not necessarily lead to violence in order to proliferate/ratchet up threat potentials. Simple acts such as failing to give a PSD convoy space or the right of way can be enacted as protestations against PMSC PSDs, or may be simple mistakes. Regardless of the motivation, PMSC PSDs consistently perceived failures to give the

130

right of way, driving too close to a convoy, driving with a cell phone and driving too fast as

provocations and thus as threats (Finer, 2005; Cook, 2011). Indeed TST 23's perceptions that the

white sedan of Ahmed and Mahassin Al Rubia'y was not going to stop, arguably precipitated the

barrage of bullets.[60] Actualizing self-defensive shooting on the basis of prediction and

perception is discriminatory, unreliable, self-replicating and further sediments shooting as act of

inequity. It is also not localizable to Iraq, Afghanistan or PMSCs.

THE SELF-DFENCE INDUSTRY

In the US, self-defence is an industry. Amongst the grandstanding assertions of a

constitutional right to bear (any) arms, self-defence comes to matter through an entanglement of

product manufacturers, service providers, media and celebrity and political advocacy. For

example, gun manufacturers including Mossberg (Johnson, 2013), Remington (Cabela's, 2014)

and Smith & Wesson (2012) and ammunition manufacturers Hornady (2011) and Winchester

(Cadle, 2014) produce and market handguns, shotguns and bullets for the specific purpose of self

and home-defence. Dozens and dozens of firing-ranges and training-centres offer a wide variety

of introductory, intermediate and advanced courses and training opportunities for private citizens

to become more familiar with their weapons as well as developing and honing specific skills

related to self and home-defence. Two of the more notable training-centres are the ones operated

by Academi, formerly Blackwater/Xe, and Craft International. Academi's (2014a) Moyock,

North Carolina centre and Craft's (2014) Glen Rose, Texas centre offer thousands of acres of

training space, hotel/resort like accommodation and numerous expertly instructed courses that

allow private citizens to learn and/or upgrade their skills with handguns, shotguns and carbines.

Specific courses include a two-day course titled *Craft Home Invasion Course* which costs US

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[60] As Hanson (2010) smugly notes, "The initial assessment that the white sedan represented a threat was wrong, but made in good faith and consequently, the decision to fire when it failed to stop was justified."

$1000 (Ibid.) and a two-day course titled *Women's Defensive Handgun* which costs US $480 (Academi, 2014b). In terms of media and marketing material, publications such as *Soldier of Fortune*, *Guns & Ammo* and *The Armed Citizen,* television shows such as the now cancelled *American Guns* and *Sons of Guns*, social media celebrity Colion Noir and the annual *SHOT Show® and Conference* disseminate the gospel, and the attendant weaponry and accessories, of the immutable right of self-defence. Politically and intellectually, and I use that term loosely, the financial and electoral capital of the NRA ensures that politicians, academics and civil-society groups that have no interest in questioning a person's right to self-defence achieve little if any legislative progress towards controlling access to certain guns, ammunition and accessories. It is appropriate to refer to this diverse array of lobbyists, lawyers, loud-mouths, companies and conglomerates as an industry because in order to accrue profits, political sway and YouTube views the social and onto-political value of shooting in self-defence requires constant production (see Neocleous, 2007).

The foremost method of production is the instrumental bifurcation of society into the good, the protectors, the victims versus the evil, the predators, the vicious. This bifurcated instrumentalism not only attempts a simple sorting of legitimate shooters and targets, but also installs an ontological permanence in the existence of guns and bullets; "As long as humans exist there will be weapons in this world" (Raso, 2013). NRA/self-defence industry parrots, as will be demonstrated Erik Prince must be counted as one, do not hold exclusive providence over bifurcated instrumentalism. PMSCs critics are also fond of vilifying Blackwater, especially in the aftermath of Nisour Square. Nonetheless, the self-defence industry is the most vigorously staunch performative source of the good self-defence shooter and the evil aggressive target. This performance also arrays an entanglement of too many inequitable relations of pain/strain,

pleasure and preservation that it becomes untenable, if not ridiculous, to claim self-defence is an immutable and inalienable human-right.

Erik Prince actualizes this method testifying before the aforementioned Congressional hearing when he asserts that the "convoy was violently attacked by armed insurgents, not civilians […] Blackwater regrets any loss of life […], and our people did their job to defend human life" (Baghdad Correspondent, 2007). In the same testimony, Prince (2007, p.5) proclaims, "To the extent there was a loss of innocent life, let me be clear that I consider that tragic […] but [it is unfair to] attack the very brave men and women who voluntarily risk their lives on the front-lines each day […] in defense [sic] of human life." Also during an interview with *60 Minutes* Prince insists, "It is absolutely not our wish that any innocent civilians should ever die" (quoted in Goldiner, 2007). Maintaining that Blackwater was defending human life, by taking human life is an intriguing statement to make. Although Prince would recoil at the thought of being deemed a liberal, the consistency with which the loss of life is justified by the need to protect life arranges such articulations with the biopolitics of the "liberal way of war": "Making life live becomes the criterion against which the liberal way of rule and war must seek to say how much killing is enough" (Dillon and Reid, 2009, p. 32).

Elucidating Foucault's understanding of the biopolitical imperative to enhance species life through death Whitehall (2013, p. 191) explains that "in order for […] killing to occur it must become racist […] When biopolitics becomes racist it is in order to divide the species against itself." Although the defenders of TST 23 and Blackwater do not rationalize the killings that occurred on September 16 through obviously racialized/racist language, the usage of "innocent", "civilian" and "armed insurgents" to qualify the onto-political meaningfulness of certain Iraqi lives does invoke intertextual racial linkages of innocence with whiteness and

133

insurgence with blackness/darkness. Framed as such, TST 23's actions do not demonstrate a complete lack of value for human life, rather the enactment of lethal and injurious violence demonstrates the everyday ranking of lives based upon hierarchies which value arrangements of whiteness (innocence, benign, civil, ordered, reasoned) over arrangements of darkness (malicious, malignant, barbaric, chaotic, emotional).

The qualification of what lives are worth living and what killing is necessary to make such lives live is also sedimented in the codes and standards regulating PMSC enactments of lethal and injurious force cited above. The ICoC permits violent action in order to forestall the perpetration of a violent crime; whereas CPA *Memorandum 17* permits the enactment of lethal force in order to protect the lives of civilians. These provisions are not obviously racial, nonetheless, they further whiteness-darkness hierarchies by linking law-abiding versus criminality and passivity versus aggression to the array of racialized qualifications and valuations of life. Prince's valourization of Blackwater/PMSC contractors as "brave" and "voluntarily" risking their lives adds a further valuation of life, wherein life that is courageous, strong, independent and free can be sacrificed in order to exterminate life which is cowardly, weak, dependent and oppressed.

Referencing the general battlespace circumstances in Iraq, Carafano (2008) similarly divides the protagonists-antagonists into "soldiers [fighting] terrorists and insurgents [hunting] contractors" (p.107). Concerns that PMSC PSDs actually make the battlespace protagonists-antagonists less clear (Bjork & Jones, 2005) notwithstanding, self-defence work not only guarantees bodily integrity and continued sentience, but 'effectively' and 'correctly' sorts who and whom can legitimately shoot and legitimately be shot. For the self-defence industry, of which PMSCs are an integral component, clear distinctions between good and evil are not simply

cynically easy to tweet and sound-bite concepts, but onto-politically necessary manifestations of who can justifiably shoot in self-defence. Such distinctions are also spectacularly demonstrative of the performativity of self-defence. Through the articulations of instrumentalist concepts the self-defence industry is perplexingly successful at maintaining and marketing the inherent right of self-defence, while simultaneously exclusively bonding inherency to particular embodied performances.

Phrased in the idyllic language of NRA-style instrumentalism, law-abiding, hard-working, personally responsible and self-sacrificing humans have the inherent right to shoot to defend themselves, their families and their property against the depredations of the criminal, lazy, irresponsible and selfish. Clear enough. The actual difficulty with this method of distinction is that inherency becomes contingent rather than immutable thereby opening the possibility that what is inherent is actually performed. More importantly, determining who is good and who is bad flows through the same knowledges of difference that determine threat and danger. Like shooting, the inter-personal and structural iterations of raced, classed, sexed and gendered discriminations make relations of inequity a troublingly meaningful matter of the world. Contrary to the black and white pronouncements of the self-defence industry, shooting in self-defence does not and cannot rectify the constraining possibilities of personal and structural discrimination. Shooting can alter relations of inequity, but it cannot redress them. The self-defence industry provides the weapons, the training and the onto-politics that retrench, not resolve inequity.

The entanglement of self-defence (and) shooting in privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes only spreads and enhances the bifurcated instrumentalism of the self-defence industry. In the American context, enacting bifurcated instrumentalism is both a

135

justification for shooting in self-defence, whether that shooting occurs in Iraq or Idaho, and demonstrative of an entanglement of white-masculinized-colonial privilege[61] (Kohn, 2004; Rinehart, 2007; Stroud, 2012). Onto-politically, shooting in self-defence, particularly the matters and meanings produced through the self-defence industry, is not a protection of the bodily integrity and continued sentience of the self, but is an abundantly reiterated/reiterating performance of inequitable relations of pain/strain, pleasure and preservation. Shooting in self-defence cannot be meaningful without (making) inequity.

For the TST 23 contractors and Erik Prince to claim that the shooting in Nisour Square constituted self-defence amounts to an implicit awareness of the ease with which Iraqi blood can be split. Furthermore, continuing to claim self-defence even in the face of anecdotal and empirical evidence that suggests otherwise should not be recognized as willful or callous ignorance of the truth of what happened on September 16, 2007. Statements such as, "To those who were familiar with the situation surrounding security contractors in Baghdad, few of the excuses offered up by Blackwater and the State Department rang true" (Horton, 2007) are correct in their assessment of Blackwater and the DOS, but they are not overly useful for questioning the meaningfulness of shooting. When multiple corpses and leaky bodies are produced, claims of self-defence must certainly be engaged skeptically – if only because the commercial viability of the self-defence industry and PMSCs rely upon the unquestioned enactments of the right to self-defence. Skepticism can meaningfully assuage inordinate exposure to lethal and injurious force, such as that sought by the DOS in the aftermath of Nisour Square. Skepticism should also meaningfully question how it is that certain people/bodies/enacted embodiments are more readily made to suffer the inequities of pain/strain and others can enjoy pleasure and preservation

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[61] Although I have not specifically discussed the imbrications of whiteness, masculinity and colonialism and guns Kohn (2004), Rinehart (2007) and Stroud (2012) offer insightful studies of how white American males intra-act with guns so as to achieve, solidify or seize the privileges granted through whiteness, masculinity and colonialism.

through shooting. However, if meaningful skepticism turns towards methods of bifurcated instrumentalism in order to explain inequities, than I am completely confident that shooting will have dodged another bullet.

A PLEASURABLE CONCLUSION

Unlike chapters four and six where I take a more divorced approach to the matters and meanings being analyzed, the themes and issues discussed in this chapter do not permit me the same conceptual and affective distance. I commenced this chapter with a brief recounting of the ways that shooting has been enacted in my life. Thanks in large part to a host of socio-political-economic inequities, my performativity as a shooter and my enactments of the meaningfulness of shooting are experienced entirely as pleasure. The strains are muted by ear protection, highly regulated environments, imaginary and paper targets as well as innocuous projectiles, i.e. water. Pleasure or leisure shooting tends to be isolated from shooting that is enacted to neutralize a threat (to the self). Even though the trainers and training centres, guns, ammunition and accessories, paper target analogues (e.g. a knife or gun wielding criminal avatar) and the shooters themselves regularly overlap amongst pleasure, privatized self-defence and militarized self-defence shooting, pleasure shooting is for fun and self-defence shooting is for serious. As a discrete 'practical' practice this makes sense. Pleasure shooting, even when it mimics militarized shooting, is by no means the same as the shooting practiced through (post-)conflict spaces.

Yet this practical separation is really actualized through differences in intensity. Pleasurable and self-defence shooting realize varying intensities of the meaningfulness of shooting. Bullet holes in paper or fleshy bodies do not determine whether one form of shooting is fun and another is serious. Bullet holes determine intensities (of inequity). I raise this rather abstract perspective because one of the most detrimental accusations levelled against PMSC

shooters, especially those employed by Blackwater, is that their enactments of shooting were done so for pleasure. In a highly circulated video of Blackwater contractors engaging in a fire-fight in Najaf in 2004, one contractor in the midst of firing, exclaims, "Jesus Christ, it's like a fuckin turkey shoot" (quoted in Yeager, 2013). While it is debatable as to whether this contractor was enjoying himself or whether other contractors opened fire on targets in Afghanistan and Iraq for fun, this exclamation poignantly collapses, at least the onto-political if not the practical distance amongst pleasure and (militarized) self-defence shooting. Implicit in this exclamation is not that the targets are animal-like,[62] but the ease with which the targets are acquired and neutralized – plus turkeys do not shoot back. By pulling the trigger and using his vocal cords this contractor simultaneously becomes the prime performer of shooting as meaningful realization of inequity.

Pleasure and self-defence shooting manifest different intensities of inequity. Determining whether the shootings in Nisour Square spilt Iraqi blood for fun or for serious matters to the extent that either pleasure or self-defence shooting direct such intensities at easy targets. That is to say, pleasure shooting should be considered no less serious and self-defence shooting should not be evacuated of pleasure when the things and agencies being targeted are made easy to shoot. Paper is made very easy to shoot, which in part, explains why it is a common target of pleasure shooters. Humans (and other animals) also become easy targets through inequitable distributions of pleasure, pain and preservation. PMSCs must be appreciated for the work that they do to create easy targets. Pleasure, maliciousness and/or self-defence make this work noticeable. Inequity is what makes this work matter!

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[62] Fainaru (2007) does quote an Iraqi official who is very much convinced that American contractors do not see Iraqis as humans; "Blackwater has no respect for the Iraqi people. They consider Iraqis like animals, although actually I think they may have more respect for animals".

CHAPTER SEVEN: PERFORMANCE ANXEITY

Whether it is crotch shots (BuzzFeedVideo, 2014), groin shots (AFV, 2013), nut shots (CH Staff, 2011) or simply "Man Getting Hit by Football" (Hulu, 2008), the visuality of countless objects (un)intentionally colliding with penises and testicles is a most popular comedic trope in Anglosphere societies. The unexpectedness of and the bodily reaction to these "shots" is the primary source of laughter. In other words, crotch/groin/nut shot videos invite the viewer to laugh at boys and men who have little to no idea that they are about to be keeled over and winching in pain – or worse. Crotch/groin/nut shot videos are thus about politico-corporeal vulnerability, a politico-corporeal vulnerability that masculinized heteronormal practices exploit[63] and cannot completely assuage. Colloquially, in many of these videos, boys and men are trying to prove that they have "balls" and what they ironically end up proving is the corporeal susceptibility of the symbolic source of being "ballsy". As such there is an uneasy relationship amongst the balls and becoming ballsy. It is this uneasy relationship amongst masculinized heteronormal meaning and the vulnerabilities, failings and dysfunctions of male enacted matters that constitutes the focus of this chapter.

Unease is analyzed through reactions to and interpretations of the publication of text and images of PMSC employees, some through coercion, performing a variety of (suggestively) intimate acts. Given that these intimate acts occurred in a (post-)conflict space, humour was not the only form of expressive reaction. Through an engagement with a variety of articulations and expressions of unease I situate the vulnerabilities, failings and dysfunctions of men/penises acting in (post-)conflict zones amongst broader politico-economic processes. The paramount assertion of this chapter is that an injurious and violent politico-economics is sustained through

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[63] Far too many of the videos feature men purposefully causing collisions for other men.

incongruous determinations amongst masculinized heteronormal meanings and contingent materialization.

The KABUL INCIDENT

On September 1, 2009 the DOS contract with ArmorGroup North America, a contract signed in March 2007 to provide static security services for the US Embassy in Kabul, became scandalous. Prior to this date, the DOS had on at least three occasions expressed concern to ArmorGroup regarding deficiencies with their provision of security services (see Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight, 2009). Primary among these concerns was ArmorGroup's continued failure to provide a properly prepared and staffed guard force, which "gravely [endangered] performance of guard services in a high-threat environment such as Afghanistan" (James, 2008 quoted in Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight, 2009, p. 3). On the first of September 2009 such staffing deficiencies became starkly apparent through a press conference conducted by Danielle Brian, Executive Director of the Project on Government Oversight (POGO) and a subsequent digital media story published by Gawker. In the POGO press conference, Danielle Brian presented a letter addressed to then Secretary of State Hilary Clinton detailing a litany of problems with the ArmorGroup contract. Beyond reiterating the DOS' prior acknowledge of staffing issues, the letter also detailed allegations, corroborated by eyewitness testimonials and visual documentation, of "Supervisors Engaging in Deviant Hazing and Humiliation" (Brian, 2009, p.6). As text from the letter to Secretary Clinton reads,

> Numerous emails, photographs, and videos portray a Lord of the Flies environment. One email from a current guard describes scenes in which guards and supervisors are "peeing on people, eating potato chips out of [buttock] cracks, vodka shots out of [buttock] cracks (there is video of that one), broken doors after drnken (sic) brawls, threats and intimidation from those leaders participating in this activity…." […] Photograph after photograph shows guards—including supervisors—at parties in various stages of nudity, sometimes fondling each other. These parties take place just a few yards from the housing of other supervisors. (Ibid.)

Although numerous issues with understaffing, overwork, language barriers, unauthorized armed excursions into Kabul are also detailed in this letter/press-conference, the textual, photo and audio-visual evidence of alcohol fuelled contractors in various stages of undress and cross-dress performing simulated sex acts, proved to be to titillating for Gawker to pass up. At 4:18pm, over six hours after the POGO press-conference (Cook, 2009b), Gawker published a story with the title "Our Embassy in Afghanistan Is Guarded by Sexually Confused Frat Boys". The accompanying article contained eight photos of men with all identifying markers blocked out consuming alcohol (some which was being poured across and down an orifice), standing around a fire naked, simulating anal penetration and slapping and biting exposed nipples and buttocks (Cook, 2009a).[64] Glynnis MacNicol (2009), writing at the time for Mediaite,[65] claims that "Someone at POGO knows their new media stuff: Gawker is the online tastemaker and is capable of immediately getting a story out to a large, connected audience, who will pay attention and quickly pass it on". With digital media breaking and making the story, mainstream print and television media coverage ensured that ArmorGroup's staffing issues transformed from a discourse of a problematic contract to one of scandal and embarrassment. Dubbed "Embassygate" by Dan Schulman of Mother Jones, the media maelstrom prompted a DOS and Congressional investigation, the firing of fourteen contractors, the replacement of the senior management staff and the decision to not renew ArmorGroup's contract[66] (CNN.com/asia, 2009; Schulman, 2011).

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[64] According to another Gawker article, publishers at Gawker became aware of the ArmorGroup photos through a story published on Mother Jones at 10:19am of September 1 (Cook, 2009b).
[65] Mediaite, like Gawker, is a digital media platform and publisher.
[66] Aegis was awarded the contract to guard the Embassy in 2011. In January 2013 POGO released another report detailing continuing issues with the guard force (ABC News, 2013).

Like my exploration of the Fallujah and Nisour Square incidents in the preceding two chapters, the textual terrain of the Kabul incident needs to be read differently. Specifically, it needs to be perverted. As MacCormack (2004) asserts perversion "combats the normative force of dominant paradigms with the force of deliberate resistance through thinking and doing desire differently". Perversion "is not a repudiation or celebration of certain acts but ways of thinking such acts" (Ibid.). The actualization of male-centric, masculinized and/ or misogynistic intimacy through violent conflict/war is well established in feminist studies of global security relations (see Cohn, 1987; Enloe, 2000b; Hansen, 2000; Whitworth 2004). Drawing inspiration and insight from feminist and queer security studies scholars, my perversion of the textual terrain of the Kabul incident proceeds through an engagement of two distinct, but not exclusive intra-actions of unease with overt, implied and ridiculously inferred performances of intimacy amongst the ArmorGroup contractors. The first intra-action of unease flows through heteronormal articulations that work to assemble appropriate spaces of practice for public, private and marginal intimacies – I will expound on these categories in the course of this analysis. The second intra-action of unease flows through insinuation, double entendre and inter-text regarding the roles and expectations that penises, both fleshy and symbolic, (fail to) perform in (post-)conflict spaces. Taken as whole these two investigations are not only demonstrative of how privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes require heteronormal space and functioning penises in order to manifest proper and useful male bodies in (post-)conflict spaces, but simultaneously manifest conditions that undoubtedly lead to the failure of male bodies to uphold heteronormal space and functional penises. Similar to chapter four where the unsettling performativity of the dead is useful to and for a variety politico-normative purposes, articulations of unease, such as those expressed in response to the Kabul

incident are exceedingly useful for purposes of foregrounding how heteronormativity is

assembled and unsettled by and through (post-)conflict spaces.

Before proceeding to the analysis of heteronormal space, one caveat must first be

addressed. First, it is empirically misleading to suggest that interpretations of the Kabul incident

are universally manifested through intra-actions of unease or disapproval. Even a limited, but

definitely excruciating, perusal of online comments sections produces a variety of articulations

that undercut my assertions that the Kabul incident needs to be read through discourses of

unease. For instance, online commenters use homosexual[67] and homosocial jests,[68] militarized

justifications,[69] privatized party justifications[70] and associations to the (apparently) harmless

rituals of frat-boys[71] to express acceptance of or nonchalance towards the Kabul incident.

Although serving as counter-examples these articulations do not counter the import of

heteronormativity and symbolic and fleshy penises. Indeed these forms of acceptance and

nonchalance rely on an assumed preference for the ordering authority of masculine

heterosexuality and phallocentrism. Through the jokes and justifications these articulations

reaffirm the material-discursive limits of how the Kabul incident can and should be read.

Superficially justificatory interpretations may differ from articulations of unease, but the

normative assumptions of how men, penises and/or intimacies are to be performed in (post-

)conflict zones do not. To focus on unease rather than acceptance is to focus on the negative; to

focus on that which makes people "a little less happy". Engaging with the negative, with the

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[67] "Absolutely hot arse on guy in photo number 5." (LetMeGetThiStraight, 2009)
[68] "Apparently ArmorGuard North America is run by Fordham's rugby team from the late 80s.
These were merely team building exercises, you pansies." (Mean_Ol_Liberal, 2009)
[69] "These soldiers are under a tremendous amount of pressure. There's nothing here that looks as bad as most frat-house parties!" (OTerr, 2009)
[70] "Lol they are partying it up. But they aren't even at work it's off duty horseplay at his own house. Who cares!!" (Anonymous, 2009c)
[71] "The article hints at plenty of things to be shocked and outraged by but does not deliver. I see a bunch of grown men acting like frat boys. Nobody's been teabagged or even sharpied." (Sydney Carton, 2009)

uneasy, creates the conceptual space to formulate 'new' and alternative determinations of matter and meaning. Likewise, privileging the negative/uneasy means not pursuing a rehabilitation of matters and meanings, in this instance the contractors working for PMSCs, heteronormativity and phallocentrism, that need to be held accountable for manifesting the conditions of negativity in the first place. It is not arbitrary because as I have just explicated unease and acceptance of PMSCs are bound by similar normative sexual expectations of how men and penises are produced and expected to perform in and through spaces of (post-)conflict.

UNEASY INTIMACY

The clearest way to establish the extent of the heteronormal unease with the Kabul incident is by slotting differing articulations into three categories of affective intent and inference. The first of these categories is articulations and expressions that exude visceral disgust and revulsion. Such expressions are often exceedingly direct: "the very disgusting photos" (quoted in Harper, 2009), "This is the sickest thing I have ever seen" (dogeater99, 2010), "Men's behavior in this country is really getting disgusting" (dsnj1-2009, 2009) and "faggots" (Theflex21, 2010). Acknowledging the exceedingly disconcerting, but banal ease with which netizens use bigoted and specifically homophobic language in order to express disapproval with a story, post or video, or a fellow commenter, it should come as no surprise that the coverage of the Kabul incident would elicit similarly bigoted and homophobic reactions. My reasons for classifying these reactions as visceral rather than bigoted or hateful are: 1) embodying revulsion allows for understandings of personal unease that are not simply traceable to the mental faculties of commenters, i.e. ignorance or stupidity and 2) using visceral over bigoted or homophobic[72]

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[72] It would not be surprising if a survey of the people who expressed disgust did not also harbour some serious homophobic conceptions. However, it should be noted that at least one commentator wrote, "Some of that was disturbing and I'm gay" (JordanGold, 2009), which suggests that the source of visceral unease is not wholly motivated by bigotry, hate or moral disapproval.

gestures toward conceptualizing this form of unease as only one method of the ways that sex, sexuality, intimacy and pleasure are regulated. As Chambers (2007, p.664) notes "Homophobia connotes both an individual act (something done by a person who is 'homophobic') and a psychological disturbance (a problem located in someone's head)." Accordingly, not labelling strong, aggressive or guttural interpretations as bigoted or homophobic avoids isolating this form of unease in the individual commentators thereby opening the possibility to read visceral unease through conceptions of heteronormativity. This is not to condone visceral unease, but rather to recognize the heteronormalizing of sex, sexuality, pleasure and intimacy is a multifaceted, contradictory and hierarchical entanglement of sexualized, gendered, raced and classed practices and phenomenon (Seidman, 2005; Jackson, 2006; Hubbard 2008).

As Berlant and Warner (1998) write, heteronormative arrangements are "more than ideology, or prejudice, or phobia against gays and lesbians" (p.554), they are "a constellation of practices that everywhere disperses heterosexual privilege as a tacit but central organizing index of social membership." (p.555) Heteronormalizing most readily flows through the structural and everyday actualizations of familial and kinship architectures, modes of consumption, popular culture and geography (Hubbard, 2000; Berlant & Warner, 1998). In particular, sexualized or intimate practices and expressions are heteronormalized through the assignment of public, private or marginal value. Or in Warner's (2005, p.24) words, "not all sexualities are public or private [or marginal] in the same way". Intimate or sexual practices which have a public value are those which reaffirm, or reify or commodify, the public space of the state, community or street as a space of reproductive futurity (Edelman, 2004), citizenship (Johnson, 2002) and civility . Sexualized public intimacies can include practices like hand-holding, hugging and non-erotic kissing (i.e. no tongue) amongst couples, friends or family. Private value intimacies need

145

not bolster reproductive futurity, citizenship and civility as private space better accommodates personal or self-expression and exploration,[73] so long as such expression and exploration is not deemed harmful to the self. This means that both vanilla and more adventurous intimate practices can be assigned private value. For intimacies such as the viewing of pornography, the usage of sex toys and other apparatus or role-playing to hold private value, their actualization must only occur in the privatized space of the bedroom, home or in a legally regulated commercial site. Marginal value intimacies are not wholly harmful or threatening to heteronormativity, but rather exceed or slip through the bounds of public and private space and therefore must exist on the peripheries. As such, marginal value intimacies can simultaneously be enacted or co-opted as threats and pillars of heteronormative ordering. Historically, marginal value intimacies have included promiscuity, prostitution, masturbation, homosexuality and sadomasochism (see Foucault, 1990).

Public, private and marginal value intimacies are contextually actualized, meaning that heteronormative arrangements of intimacy are not the exclusive preserve of binary-sexed couplings that only enact procreative coitus. The slow, but advancing acceptance of homosexual coupling is the most obvious sign of the contextual actualizing of heteronormative intimacies – which for some academics is translated into homonormative ordering (Puar 2006). Reactions of visceral unease must therefore be recognized as functioning through a complexity of potential transgressions of heteronormative ordering. Hence, it is not sufficient to contend that bigoted expressions or expressions of disgust are only manifestations of the unease with encountering marginal value intimacies.

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[73] To be sure self-expression and exploration are highly affected by gendered, raced and classed expectations that permit certain embodied expressions and explorations over others.

146

The specific intimacies encountered through the Kabul incident are certainly marginalized, but the unease is more appropriately recognized as unease with encountering a spatial transgression rather than a specifically sexualized violation of the public and private value of heteronormative intimacies. The visceral reactions as represented above are expressions of unease with both a confusion of heteronormative and militarized spacing of intimacy. The overtly sexualized articulations demonstrate unease with confronting marginal value fraternal rituals (Higate, 2012a) being performed in (proximity to) the public space of the US Embassy – which is itself located in a (post-)conflict zone. Interestingly (heteronormal) militarized spacing of intimacy leaves very little space for public value expressions of heteronormal intimacy save for non-sexualized fraternal intimacies of brotherhood such as hugging, high-fiving, fist-bumping and hand-shaking. That the Kabul incident can be read as a performance of sexualized fraternal rituals that create bonds and cohesion amongst men living and working in male only spaces (Ibid, p. 455) seems not to apply to visceral reactions of unease and thus visceral reactions, even hateful and bigoted articulations, are better understood as expressions of unease with a violation of the heteronormal militarized spacing of (post-)conflict zones.

Appearing predominantly in the headlines and titles of articles and videos of mainstream media coverage of the Kabul incident is what can be termed staid expressions of unease. Like visceral reactions, staid expressions are forthright in their disapproval and unease with the (space of) intimacies enacted by the ArmorGroup contractors. Unlike visceral expressions, staid articulations are more measured in their affective intents and phrasing, thereby allowing a wider dissemination and avoiding an obvious stigma as bigoted or hateful. The most common manifestations of staid references are to the offensive, deviant, lewd, vulgar and/or obscene character of the sexualized activities of the ArmorGroup contractors. The POGO letter to Hilary

Clinton is the original source of staid referencing by subtitling the section addressing the sexualized activities as "Supervisors Engaging in Deviant Hazing and Humiliation" (Brian, 2009, p.6). Similar examples of staid articulations include, "Embassy Guards Fired for Lewd Behavior" (CBS News, 2009a), "Embassy fires security guards over appearance in vulgar photos" (Brodsky, 2009), "US Guards 'Drunk At Obscene Kabul Parties'" (SkyNews, 2009), "Kabul U.S. Embassy Guard: Sexual Deviancy Required for Promotion" (Ross et. al., 2009) and "Embassy at risk as 'deviant' guards let their hair down" (Whittell, 2009). Reporting on the reactions of the DOS, CBS News (2009) cites Hilary Clinton as being "genuinely offended" and quotes a DOS spokesperson as saying "This violated our values". Fox News (2009) also quotes Secretary of Defence Robert Gates as saying "Those activities […] They're offensive to us".

The contentiousness of deeming sexual practices and intimacies as acceptable, legitimate, healthy and moral or inappropriate, dangerous and disorderly means that staid interpretations need to be read as unreflexively, i.e. not necessarily intentionally, reconstituting historically pernicious hierarchies of appropriate sexualized behaviour – hierarchies that have gravely disadvantaged and punished peoples deemed incapable or unworthy of reproductive futurity, citizenship and civility. Moreover, articulated without explication of what is actually offensive and vulgar, the unease of staid reactions can be presumed to be attributed to a violation of: 1) the heteronormal militarizing of space, and 2) the attendant values attributed to the intimacies permitted to be actualized in and through heteronormal militarized spaces. Framed as such, staid interpretations are more authoritative than visceral ones inasmuch as the determination of deviancy, lewdness, obscenity and vulgarity has historically been the providence of reputable and indispensable practices and institutions such as law, medicine, education and the military. As numerous (queer) social theorists have argued, the deployment of sexuality (Foucault, 1990),

invention of gender (Butler, 1990) and normalizing of heterosexuality (Warner, 1999) are intimately linked to Anglosphere 'advances in' and the 'modernizing' and institutionalization of law, medicine, education and the military. The social and historical links to reputable practices and institutions along with emotionally and politically tame(d) terms and phrasings have the effect of mainstreaming or more appropriately normalizing staid unease. That this form of unease is articulated predominantly by and through mainstream media sources and government officials only enhances its status as normal unease.

It is arguable that what is deviant, vulgar, obscene, offence, lewd and thus a transgression of values is more appropriately connected to the coercion and intimidation that is said to have occurred to get certain contractors to participate. In short, it is the accusations of hazing that make the Kabul incident deviant and offensive. There are some significant difficulties with maintaining this argument however. The first and a most flimsy counter is that the visual evidence does not depict any of the contractors in states of duress. To parrot the sentiments of a variety of commenters, in the photos and videos the contractors appear to be enjoying themselves as many contractors are wearing smiles and enacting celebratory body-language. While there is an aesthetic of celebration[74] to the photo and audio-visual documentation, that no visual evidence of duress is seen in these documents does not rule out the possibility that coercion or intimidation were integral features of the sexualized activities of the contractors.

A second and more nuanced point of contention is offered by Danielle Brian's response to the question, "And the lewd and deviant behaviour, why does that matter?"

> It is devastating to these people, many of whom have a law enforcement and military background [...] to show up in an environment that is so [...] debaucherous (sic) [...] and the fact that supervisors are using participation in these parties as kind of a weapon [...] so it's being used as weapon. (quoted from MoxNewsDotCom, 2009)

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[74] The aesthetics of celebration and enjoyment captured in the visual documentation can also buttress assertions that visceral and staid expressions of unease are actualizations of unease with the violation of heteronormal intimacies and spaces.

Leaving aside the presumption of lewdness and deviance demonstrated by Danielle Brian's questioner, Brian's acknowledgement of the "law enforcement and military background" of the contractors provides a key, yet troubling, inferred qualification to the coercive character of the hazing. What can be inferred from Brain's referencing of the law or military background of the contractors is a presumption that former police officers and soldiers are conservative, innocent or reserved in character and thus the debauchery of the Kabul incident will be particularly disheartening or unsettling to these individuals. Taking these character traits into consideration when analyzing the effects of the coerced debauchery is a puzzling qualification if the coercion is what is actually deviant. Sexualized coercion and intimidation are certainly applied to make specific people as embodied entities do specific things, e.g. satisfy interrogators in Abu Ghraib. The problem with labelling targeted coercion deviant is that it opens the political possibility that not all coerced sexual encounters are problematic – or 'deviant' for that matter. In short, it should matter little who experienced coercion or intimation and only that someone or some people did.

The meaningful materialization of coercion or intimation through sexualized practices is certainly unsettling, but what should be primarily problematic is that sex and intimacy are again deployed through expressions of (non-consensual) domination and force. In a different interview Brian does state "this is not about guys in parties being naked, this is about a total breakdown of command structure" (quoted from baracine, 2009a). This phrase rings hollow however because it is the guys partying naked and the coercive participation of some of these guys that contributes to the breakdown of the command structure. As is put in an email sent to POGO by one of the contractors, it is the "gay shit" (Attachment 2, 2009) that is the problem. Coercion needs to be taken seriously whatever the situation. However, attaching lewdness or deviance to a coerced

150

sexual situation signals more insidious forms of unease. In this case, it signals that unease is traceable to a failure of the ArmorGroup contractors to uphold the heteronormal militarized space of (post)conflict zones.

My third category of unease is termed, deflective. Deflective unease is articulated through irreverence, sophomoric humour and pop-culture referencing. Deflective unease strips away the guttural righteousness of visceral readings and the intellectual disciplining of staid expressions by wrapping unease in playful wink-wink, nudge-nudge terms and phrasings. Notable examples include, "Animal House in Afghanistan" (Schulman, 2009) "U.S. Kabul Security Gone Wild" (CBSNews, 2009b), "Homoerotic 'Hazing' Turns U.S. Kabul Embassy into 'Animal House'" (Edge, 2009) and the headline that launched the scandal "Our Embassy in Afghanistan Is Guarded by Sexually Confused Frat Boys" (Cook, 2009b). The privatized and marginal heteronormative value accorded to frat-boy intimacies, including homoerotic ones, and the pop-cultural institutionalizing of these intimacies in the 1980s film *Animal House* and the pornographic series of videos entitled *Girls Gone Wild* does not immediately signal uneasiness with a deflective interpretation of the Kabul incident. The pop-culture references do however link the Kabul incident to a genre of films, which characterize male protagonist(s) as late twenty-early thirty somethings who are unable to grow-up/mature. Embodied through the performances of Vince Vaughan, Will Farrell, Adam Sandler and Seth Rogan, the boy-man character is a very profitable movie trope. The proliferation of the drunk, lazy, stupid, onanistic, still lives with his parents male has however been cited, mainly by conservative critics, as the popular instantiation of a broader crises of modern male immaturity (Crouse, 2011). The core of this concern is encapsulated in the book *Men to Boys: The Making of Modern Immaturity*, which makes the case that the rise of the boy-man (in pop-culture) is causing a detrimental stunting of American

151

masculinity.[75] While likely unintentional the foregrounding of the immature, sophomoric and childish antics of the Kabul incident links a deflective reaction to concerns with the general dumbing down of (Americanized) men and masculinity. The deflective unease cited above is not so much manifested through unease with transgression as it is with the unease which accompanies a re-valuation of masculine preferences and the subsequent effects on heteronormative ordering of space and intimacies. Frat-boy and spring-break antics and consumption of male-gaze pornography are not overly valued publically, but they are privately and marginally valued as rites of passage from boyhood to manhood. The operative word here is "passage" and the unease contained in the above cited deflective articulations is an expression of a sign that the ArmorGroup contractors are failing to complete this passage. In failing to pass from boyhood to manhood the ArmorGroup contractors are also failing to manifest a heteronormal male body that is capable of disciplining urges for lesser pleasures derived from lesser intimacies, i.e. non-reproductive intimacies.

With that said, Gawker and Mother Jones do use deflective articulations as a method of criticizing the intimacies enacted by the ArmorGroup guards. Jokingly, the concluding line from Gawker's initial post reads, "Are these guys asking, or telling?" (Cook, 2009a). Along with playing off social and institutional unease with uncloseted gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people serving in the US military, this 'joke' invokes heteronormal-masculinist unease with penetration and reception, i.e. "who's the pitcher and who's the catcher?". The images of alcohol being consumed off an anus further unsettle penetrator-receiver intimacies as it is unclear who or what is performing penetration and who or what is the receiver. From

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[75] Halbertsam (2011) makes a more convincing case that "Male stupidity masks the will to power that lies just behind the goofy grin, and it masquerades as some kind of internalized feminist critiques […] masks the gender inequality" (p.57).

another Gawker post which explains how Gawker came to obtain the "photos of [the contractors] acting out a gay porn version of Animal House",

1. [...] POGO's executive director, Danielle Brian, assembled that work into a letter to Hillary Clinton, which she sent along with attachments, photos and videos. Then she posted the letter on the internet.
2. We read it. It mentioned a whole bunch of pictures of gross stuff. We wanted to see the pictures!
3. We called POGO. They are lovely people. Could we see the pictures?
4. Yes! They e-mailed us the pictures.
5. They were gross, so we put them on the internet. (Cook, 2009b)

In a similar expression of ick, Mother Jones captions one of the more scrutinized photos with, "And here's the infamous butt-shot shot—wrong on so many levels" (Schluman, 2009). Ironically, compared to the offhandedness of writing "Are these guys asking, or telling?" these more direct expressions of distaste are not all that clear in explicating what it is that is distasteful about the images. Employing a deflective method of my own, is it the aesthetics of the photos, e.g. lighting, angles, clarity, fore/background, that make the images and videos gross and wrong? Is it the varied aesthetics of male bodies, which cannot be said to conform to popular heteronormal and phallocentric prescriptions for taught and hairless bodies? Is literal distaste generated by the thought of drinking alcohol which has sanitized the anus of human? Before I get carried away, the wrongness and grossness of the images of the ArmorGroup contractors are traceable to numerous aspects and assumptions. Nevertheless, the meaningfulness of wrongness and grossness combined with the presumption that what is wrong and gross is obvious does rely upon a deeper presumption of the proper conduct/usage of male bodies to experience pleasure. Or as I have consistently reiterated throughout this section, the meaningfulness of wrongness and grossness rests upon presumptions and manifestations of male bodies as heteronormalizing entities/vessels.

Visceral, staid and deflective methods of expressing unease do use differing terms, phrasings and inflections and a potential for contention amongst what terms, phrasings and inflections are hateful, proper or stupid must be acknowledged. Heteronormal unease need not

153

be unilateral in scope, nor need it be linguistically exclusive. As both queer and feminist scholars maintain heterosexed and gendered expectations, performances, embodiments and institutions are produced "as open-ended, multiple, and multidimensional processes" (Hooper, 2001, p. 39). This means that the existence and actualization of multiple heterosexed performances and embodiments only become problematic or uneasy when such performances and embodiments are perceived to transgress, violate or re-evaluate heteronormativity – or more specifically heteronormal militarization. Construing visceral, staid and deflective methods as differing methods of expressing heteronormal unease is not only an appropriate reading of the sources of sexualized unease with the Kabul incident, but it also creates the conceptual space to appreciate the intra-actions amongst privatized, securing, militarized and commercialized processes and heteronormativity. In the examples discussed above, I privilege an analysis of overtly sexualized expressions and save for an analysis of militarizing processes, connections to privatized, securing and commercialized processes are not explicitly discussed. Rather than further investigating visceral, staid or deflective expressions of heteronormal unease I now turn to a discussion of penile unease as a way of more concretely demonstrating that uneasiness with the Kabul incident is: 1) assembled through uneasiness with how men should live and work in (post-)conflict spaces and 2) how privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes fail to produce or govern men and male bodies capable of performing heteronormal-penile expectations.

OF PENISES AND PHALLUSES

It may seem ridiculous to pursue an analysis of penises when the presence of this appendage is nowhere to be seen in the visual documentation of the intimacies enacted by the

154

ArmorGroup contractors. Considering that (white, bourgeois, 'civilized'[76]) penises have not

until the 1990s been seen publically (Del Rosso, 2011) it may actually have been more shocking

if the fleshy penises of the ArmorGroup contractors were visible in the visual documentation of

the Kabul incident – especially if those penises had also been erect. Conversely, even if the

contractors had not covered their penises with circular black material, censorship codes would

have forced at least the mainstream media coverage to blur out any visible genitalia. The socio-

political, cultural and economic ordering and sorting of power manifested through fleshy penises

and its metonym the phallus[77] (Potts, 2001) ensures that invisibility should not be construed as

absence or irrelevance. Militarizing and securing processes, particularly the waging of war, are

often justified by their need to protect/defend ways of life of which heteronormal spaces and

intimacies must be considered a significant fixture. More specifically, as national militaries and

security forces are tasked with protecting the nation, one feature that undoubtedly needs

protecting is the need of citizens of a nation to reproduce and thus heteronormal intimacies,

intimacies which, for the most part still require functional penises, are regularly upheld as

practices/functions worth protecting.

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[76] Spongberg (1997) contends that although the hegemonic penis has been publically invisible, the subaltern penis has played a crucially visible role in European colonial practices. In particular the invisibility or visibility of penises and genitalia was used to differentiate between civilized and uncivilized people; "Size was not, however, the only consideration. Length of prepuce, number of testicles and methods of circumcision were all seen as markers of difference" (Ibid., p. 23).

[77] For the purposes of this chapter I understand the phallus to be the symbolic manifestation of masculine privilege whereby masculine privilege is manifested through performances and reifications of strength, rigidity, visibility, virility, vigorousness and penetration. Understood as such, the phallus can be easily recognized as the symbolic stand-in of/for fleshy penises, however, the phallus is more importantly the sign of masculine superiority over femininity and thus phallic performances are entangled in the often contradictory sorting, ordering and privileging of culture over nature, ideology over matter, reason over emotion, male over female, universal over particular and hetero over homo (Bordo, 1999; Potts, 2000; Brubaker & Johnson 2008). It should be acknowledged that masculinized male bodies are not the only bodies capable of wielding phallic power. According to Bordo (1999, p. 101) "The phallus, remember, is not a real body part. Having one or not requires permission of culture and/or the exercise of attitude more than the possession of a particular kind of body […] not having a penis – although it has historically been a monumental impediment – is not an insuperable obstacle to projecting phallic authority."

Specific to the military as an institution, the US military's concern with providing genital protection to enlisted male personnel serving in Afghanistan and Iraq demonstrates a militarized structural need to keep soldiers genitalia functional. Maintaining functional genitalia ensures that soldiers can fulfill their desires to reproduce. Keeping soldiers endowed with operative apparatus also avoids the trauma of emasculation which can be experienced through the loss of a functional penis as a result of a battle injury (Netter, 2010; Sigal, 2011).

Symbolically, militarized and securing discourses are laden with penile double entendre, euphemism and innuendo.   Cohn (1987) sums this up nicely in her ethnography of American defence intellectuals,

> American military dependence on nuclear weapons was explained as "irresistible, because you get more bang for the buck." Another lecturer solemnly and scientifically announced "to disarm is to get rid of all your stuff." (This may, in turn, explain why they see serious talk of nuclear disarmament as perfectly resistible, not to mention foolish. If disarmament is emasculation, how could any real man even consider it?) A professor's explanation of why the MX missile is to be placed in the silos of the newest Minuteman missiles, instead of replacing the older, less accurate ones, was "because they're in the nicest hole—you're not going to take the nicest missile you have and put it in a crummy hole." Other lectures were filled with discussion of vertical erector launchers, thrust-to-weight ratios, soft lay downs, deep penetration, and the comparative advantages of pro-tracted versus spasm attacks-or what one military adviser to the National Security Council has called "releasing 70 to 80 percent of our megatonnage in one orgasmic whump. There was serious concern about the need to harden our missiles and the need to "face it, the Russians are a little harder than we are."

Whether "patting the missile" (Ibid.), assessing threats to soft targets or "rolling hard" with the contractors of Crescent Security, penises and their abilities to penetrate, engorge and entice are even if not visible, ever present in militarized and securing processes.

With regard to privatizing and commercializing processes, until the turn of the Twenty First Century consideration of the actual functionality of penises was a rather private affair. Masculinized anxiety about disrobing in the bedroom, locker-room or doctor's office signals that the failure to achieve and maintain an erection, premature ejaculation and issues with size are certainly not new issues (Del Rosso, 2011). With the astronomical commercial success of erectile dysfunction medication and the sustainable profitability of pseudo-scientific measures to

both get and go longer, the dysfunctional or faltering penis is no longer a private matter. In a study of erectile enhancement discourse Brubaker and Johnson (2008) demonstrate how (digital) advertising for erectile enhancements forthrightly, if not aggressively, articulates the (masculinized) problems of a smaller and weaker penis. By openly precipitating a "crisis" of poor or shameful penises erectile enhancement discourse not only publicizes penis issues but also commercializes them by offering a solution – through the consumption of pills (Ibid.). Similarly, and as mentioned above, until very recently penises adorning white, bourgeois, civilized and/or heteronormal, i.e. hegemonic, male bodies have only been publically visible through renaissance art and fascist sculpture (Bordo, 1994). The marginal and sometimes private value of male-gaze pornography did mean fleshy penises adorning various male bodies could be glimpsed and enjoyed albeit in socio-culturally scorned, politically monitored and economically precarious establishments and neighbourhoods. The proliferation of digital media, relaxing puritanical censorship standards and the consistent profitability of disseminating male-gaze pornography have coalesced over the past twenty years to significantly lower the barriers to encountering visuals of fleshy penises. The rise of erotic, sensual or artistic pornography also signals the movement and re-valuation of pornography from the margins to privatized spaces where heteronormal couples can 'mutually' experience the pleasures of viewing penetrative sex.

Unlike fleshy penises, phallic processes of marketing Anglosphere consumer goods have thoroughly produced the phallus as a desirable spectacle of the good-life (Bordo, 1994; 1999). Advertisements for automobiles, alcohol (especially beer), cigarettes, firearms, tools, fashion, sports and sporting events, film and music are only the most egregiously clichéd propagators of phallocentric consumption and commercialism. Continued cultural acceptance as well as

commercial deployment of phallocentric marketing is also metaphorically demonstrative of the pleasure/desire derived from spectacular visibility and penetration.

Selling cars, protecting genitals and comprehending nuclear war are not the only ways that penises and the phallus matter. For example, Cynthia Weber (1999) makes a convincing case for a phallic reading of America's hegemonic relations with the Caribbean since 1959. Weber's (1999) re-reading/re-writing of the dephallusization, rephallusization and queering of the American Body Politic[78] not only provides a cheeky analysis of American imperial relations, but also demonstrates how international actors and nation-states, in particular, wield phallic power. Like phallocentric advertising, wielding phallic power internationally need not require making fleshy penises visible. In Weber's (1999, p.134) estimation, a nation-state need not actually possess the phallus in order to exercise phallic power and authority. A nation-state's efforts to demonstrate rigidity, potency and virility are regularly and rightly interpreted as a sign that that nation-state is not to be "fucked with". The size, strength and global reach of a military are not only a practical demonstration of the ability to defend the heteronormal space of the nation-state, but also a symbolic demonstration of phallic potential. Likewise, discourses of "unflinching", "unwavering", "standing strong" ideologically array a nation-state's ability to withstand adversity/resist penetration. Phallic prowess, or lack thereof, can also be claimed, exhibited or flaunted through economic and financial measures of the health, wealth, stability, independence, productivity, activity and attractiveness of a nation-state. GDP, debt-to-GDP ratios, export-import gaps and competitiveness are not readily apparent phallocentric figures, measures and statistics. Nor are they obvious phallic/penile double entendre or innuendo.

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[78] As Weber (1999, p. 134) writes, "This is the story the American body politic tells itself, a story that tells us both what the American body politic falsely knows (that it had the phallus, lost the phallus and regained the phallus) and what the American body politic necessarily must not know (that it never "had" the phallus and that the phallus it now wears is queer.) This is what is in America's retelling of its hegemonic tale."

Nonetheless, as ostensive interpretations and demonstrations of a nation-state's health, wealth and vitality GDP and competitiveness are easily actualized as phallic performances.[79]

The invisibility of actual fleshy penises in the documentation of the intimacies enacted by the ArmorGroup contractors should not be read as a means to dismiss the import of penises to understanding unease with the Kabul incident or understanding the unease with PMSCs more generally. Be they symbolic, fleshy, ideational and/or material, penises and phalluses are routinely assembled by and through (global) privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes for purposes of claiming, exhibiting and flaunting power, domination and superiority. Penile performativity and phallic privilege are not unidirectional or everlasting. Politico-economic processes also expose penises as vulnerable, faulty and dysfunctional and to vulnerabilities, failings and dysfunctions. The aforementioned concern of the US military with genital protection for male personnel evidences the anxiety of upholding phallic standards whilst engaging in practices, e.g. armed conflict, that can be literally castrating. Regardless of the apparent prowess, virility or potency of phallic performances, be they interpersonal or international, there is a constant unease amongst these performances – an uneven, differed and sometimes foregrounded unease.

PENILE UNEASE

Abstractly, penile unease is an unavoidable consequence of manifesting a metonymic relation amongst penises and the phallus. For as Bordo (1999, p.95) writes, "The phallus […] haunts the penis [and] at the same time the penis […] also haunts phallic authority, threatens its

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[79] International phallic performativity is also fraught with vulnerabilities, failings and dysfunctions. For hegemonic or superpower states, economic and financial turmoil, military blunders and defeats and diplomatic strife signal waning strength, shrinking influence, reduced virility and subsequent dephallusization. Conversely, nation-states that "can't" achieve global military reach, greater export-to-import ratios or are wholly dependent on FDI are consistently confronted with the inability to measure-up.

undoing." To say that the phallus and penises haunt each other is to assert that while the phallus is certainly symbolic of penises, for fleshy penises to uphold phallic standards "the blood would have to be drained from it and replaced by an enduring artificial substance" (Bernheimer, 1992 quoted in Weber, 199 p. 132). Furthermore, "Nature doesn't deal out the same pickle size to every man, and no exercise routine will enlarge or tone it if the owner feels he's been shortchanged. There is also the issue of shrinkage" (Wolcott, 2012). As fleshy penises are "perhaps the most visibly mutable of body parts" (Bordo, 1994, p. 206) the metonymic relation amongst penises and phallus is ontologically unsettled. Fleshy penises may "get hard", be able to penetrate and expend for purposes of progeny. However, the majority of the time fleshy penises are flaccid appendages, hanging about requiring constant attentiveness in order to guard against injury. As a historically, materially and morphologically contingent adornment, fleshy penises cannot be nor readily become the universal, ahistorical and immaterial phallus. Phallic providence, power and privilege are therefore unsettled insofar as providence, power and privilege cannot be consistently derived from the thing that makes the idea of the phallus meaningful.

The unyielding straightness of the phallus also creates an unrealistic standard for fleshy penises to embody (Bordo, 1999, p. 95). Construing the penis as phallus produces an unrealistic set of performance measures that no fleshy penis can consistently attain. Phallusized bedrooms, locker-rooms, boardrooms and battlefields add to the unease of performance anxiety, exposure and/or castration, which only further dampens the phallic potentials of fleshy penises. Inability to uphold phallic standards and expectations are not just penile, personal or personal penile failings, but are also examples that masculinized male bodies are not the exclusive preserve of

phallic authority. "Other" bodies[80] whether adorned with a penis or not can, with exceeding difficulty, claim phallic authority. Proximity to a fleshy penis strongly correlates to phallic privilege, but actually being adorned with a fleshy penis also means consistent unease with never actually being able to fulfil phallic demands. Construed as such, male phallic performativity is always also an uneasy performance. For masculinized bodies, institutions and practices going harder, longer and more vigorously is the primary method of claiming, exhibiting, flaunting and maintaining phallic power and privilege. Going harder, longer and more vigorously also risks exposure that what is hard, long and vigorous is likely less so and to risk exposure to the failings and dysfunctions caused by going harder, longer and more vigorously.

In more practical and less euphemistic terms, penile unease is often made real and meaningful by the very practices and processes that desire and demand phallic prowess and privilege. As evidenced above, consumer goods, foreign policies and security measures can all be assembled as phallic performances. However, alcohol and cigarette consumption, familial and social stress, battlefield injury and full-body scanners are also meaningful causes of penile dysfunction, damage and exposure and subsequent unease. It is at this juncture of penile prowess and unease where interrogating unease with the Kabul incident becomes most interesting. For the Kabul incident penile unease takes on two forms: 1) as a sign of unreliable tumescence and 2) as a cipher for concerns that (post-)conflict spaces arrange and assemble male bodies in emasculating ways.

Commenting on a MSNBC story Robtice (2009) writes "The use of mercenaries by a nation has always, 100%, been a sign that the nation is crashing socially, economically and psychologically. And, it's always ment [sic] the end of the nation as a power in the world".

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[80] The queering and transitioning necessary to claim phallic authority may readily disqualify the ability of "other" bodies to become phallusized, but if the lack of a penis can be properly sheathed or privatized it is possible for "others" to accrue the privileges of phallic performativity.

161

Although the historical inaccuracy of this comment is thoroughly rebuked by other commenters, the sentiment of declining American power is a common theme amongst pundits, politicians and academics (Cox, 2007). A conclusive determination of whether American power is or is not waning is not my concern (see Spearin, 2004b). Rather to suggest that PMSC usage is a sign of declining or waning American power offers an enticing phallic analogizing of unease with the Kabul incident.

Construed as phallic wielding exercises the Anglosphere wars on Al Qaeda, the AfPak Taliban and Ba'athists are better read as demonstrative of the quality of Anglosphere tumescence, i.e. strength and hardness, rather than a reaffirmation of phallic possession. By this I mean to say that the 'threat' posed by the aforementioned groups is not the threat of castration or phallic usurpation, but the threat of putting too much strain and pressure on the Anglosphere phallus. Too much strain and pressure may result in a failure to rise to the occasion. The invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq are thus demonstrations that despite the discomfort or lack of confidence caused by the brashness of Al Qaeda, the US and UK and to a lesser extent Canada and Australia are willing and able to get hard and stay hard whenever and wherever. The reliance on PMSCs as force-multipliers to conduct these erectile presenting endevours belies some difficulty with the actualizing of Anglosphere tumescence.

The Blackwater aesthetic of muscular aggressiveness certainly lends credence to understanding PMSCs as phallic appendages[81] or derogatorily as 'dicks'. Yet, the immense dependence of the Anglosphere defence, diplomatic, development and intelligence apparatus in Afghanistan and Iraq on the logistical, training and protection work of PMSCs suggests that PMSCs are more appropriately metaphorical prophylactics. Although ArmorGroup was

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[81] As discussed in chapter two Leander (2005a) does make a strong case that PMSCs play an important role in the decision making process for when and how the Anglo-American security, defence and intelligence apparatus gets hard.

contracted to protect the US Embassy, the temporal coincidence of the Anglosphere turn to a commercialized solution for militarized phallic practices with the millions of Anglosphere men who turned to a commercialized solution for erectile dysfunction (ED) is a much more fruitful cipher. One source of general unease with PMSCs is thus traceable to the discomfort with the public exposure that the Anglosphere militarized phallic apparatus requires circulatory assistance to actualize and sustain its phallic capabilities. The public exposure of a need for an erectile enhancer, be it for individual men, the military or nation-states, is a direct confrontation with the inabilities of matter, male bodies or fleshy penises, to uphold symbolic pretenses of masculinity/phallocentrism. The meaningfulness of this sort of penile unease is lessened when considering that both ED mediation and PMSCs were thoroughly instantiated in private and public phallic practices by the time the Kabul incident occurred in 2009. Accordingly, the Kabul incident signals a waning in Anglosphere tumescence because it demonstrates that the erectile aids used to achieve and sustain the necessary tumescence are at best faulty and at worst inhibiting erection altogether. As such, concerns that "the management of the contract to protect the U.S. Embassy Kabul is grossly deficient" (Brian, 2009, p.2) cannot be simply read through gender and sex neutral managerial or oversight discourses. Breakdowns in command structure, lack of discipline and poor morale (Ibid.) all signal an uneasiness with the failure, if not deflation, of masculinized/phallusized processes in (post-)conflict spaces. In phallocentric penile parlance, breakdowns, lack and poor are exceedingly troubling conditions and adjectives that require immediate redress or privatization in order to prevent (further) erosion of masculinized privileging.

Recalling the military's role as both appendage and enhancer, the repeated assertion from online commenters that US Marines should be guarding the US Embassy further buttresses the

163

assertion that the Kabul incident induces phallic unease. It does so by construing PMSCs as a source of erectile deflation and the subsequent problems this causes for Anglosphere expressions of spectacular tumescence. Translated through discourses of phallic unease the concerns of POGO, the DOS, media and netizens would be written as follows: The distraction and stress generated by the alcohol fueled parties made the ArmorGroup contractors flaccid in their duties to secure the US Embassy thereby jeopardizing the "the diplomatic mission in Afghanistan" (Ibid.) along with NATO efforts to remain resilient in the face of continued threats from the Taliban and Al Qaeda.

Writing "flaccid in their duties" succinctly captures the second form of penile unease generated by the Kabul incident. Discomfort with ArmorGroup's inability to aid Anglosphere tumescence in Afghanistan can be linked to broader concerns with the roles that PMSCs do and should have as erectile aids/force-multipliers. More importantly, the cornucopia of problems with ArmorGroup's securing of the US Embassy also demonstrate the emasculating/deflating effects on male bodies in (post-)conflict spaces. As the Kabul incident demonstrates corporeal emasculation/deflation need not be limited to injuries sustained to fleshy penises. In a letter obtained by POGO, Werner Illic, Guard Force Commander US Embassy, (2009) described how understaffing, work-shifts and the hostile environment of Kabul pushed the ArmorGroup contractors to the "Threshold" of sleep deprivation; "When we have to work guys overtime or ramp up extra manpower (during scheduled off days) due to increased threat conditions etc…etc…; we further compound the issue of sleep deprivation. This ultimately diminishes the [contractors] ability to provide security." The lack of sleep combined with the stresses of working in a hostile space/place literally exhausted the bodies of the ArmorGroup contractors. Exhausted bodies are not hard bodies, not strong bodies. They are frail and weak bodies, prone

to failure, prone to exposing the (onto-political) unease of actualizing the phallus and/or phallic security through the contingencies of flesh. With stress, lack of sleep and exhaustion also noted to be contributing factors of ED, the working conditions of the ArmorGroup guards are further arranged as sources of penile unease with the inabilities of masculinized male bodies to perform the phallus and/or phallic security in (post-)conflict spaces.

The desire to perform properly as expressed by those contractors who exposed the "unprofessional" activities (Attachment 2, 2009; Attachment 3, 2009) of their colleagues and superiors signals a further strain on achieving phallic security. The expressed discomfort with the "deviance," "intimidation" and unaccountability of their colleagues and superiors and its subsequent effects on the securing performances of the ArmorGroup contractors forms a circular chain of stress: desire-to-perform/inability to perform/stress of unfulfilled desire/furthers inability to perform. Or in short, the interpersonal working conditions experienced by the ArmorGroup contractors readily produced performance anxiety thereby further dampening the vigorousness of the contractors.

The particular physical and inter-personal inabilities of the ArmorGroup contractors to uphold the phallic securing standards expected of them, as evidenced by the reactions of the contractors themselves, POGO, DOS, major media outlets and netizens, demonstrates the irony of assembling masculinized male bodies/fleshy penises through spaces, places and processes that will also disassemble or reassemble the meaning and matter of those bodies. For the Kabul incident this irony is articulated through discourses of penile unease. Admittedly, this discourse of penile unease must be read through metaphor, innuendo and double entendre. That concerns with the dysfunction of the ArmorGroup contract are spectacularly visualized through performances of non-procreative and non-penetrative male intimacies make it methodologically

165

appropriate to read unease with the Kabul incident as penile unease. Reading dysfunction as an analog for ED also exposes the unease with how (post-)conflict spaces distort masculinized male bodies and subsequently masculinized privilege. The Kabul incident demonstrates that rather than being a receptive space for men to be(come) men or where nation-states can operationalize masculinized proxies in order to demonstrate spectacular tumescence a (post-)conflict space can, surprisingly, be rather disruptive. Specifically, the 'mundane' practices of male bodies labouring in (post-)conflict spaces actually expose the onto-politically shakiness of locating and actualizing phallic authority in and through men's proximity to fleshy penises.

While PMSCs continue to be contracted by Anglosphere Embassies for security services, the overtly sexualized character of the Kabul incident exposes the heteronormal and penile standards and practices that PMSCs and the men in their employ are expected to uphold and perform. Whether reacting viscerally, reservedly or defectively or variously expressing concerns with the dysfunctions of ArmorGroup's contract the unease of policy-makers, media and netizens exposes the pertinence of the governance of sexualized practices and precepts in and through (post-)conflict spaces. In transgressing and re-evaluating the heteronormal ordering of space and male bodies as well as demonstrating the ironies and conundrums of requiring contingent matter to substantiate universalized ideologies the Kabul incident becomes strategically, tactically and socio-politically relevant. The Kabul incident demonstrates that the tactical, strategic and socio-political processes that make (post-)conflict spaces real and meaningful are affected by gendered and sexualized expectations of how men and their bodies are to perform. Such affects are not uniform as heteronormative and penile processes are not ahistorical – contrary to the demands of phallocentrism. Hence, as argued in the previous section, heteronormative and penile unease is a constant feature of privatizing, militarizing,

166

securing and commercializing processes that use/produce masculinized male bodies. What the Kabul incident does is spectacularly expose the ever presence of unease and a subsequent tactical, strategic and socio-political need to assuage concerns with the inabilities of masculinized male bodies to consistently perform heteronomally and phallically. Moreover, the Kabul incident demonstrates that heteronormative and penile unease is constituted through the mundane labouring of masculinized male bodies in (post-)conflict spaces. Literal castration as a result of a battlefield injury is only just receiving public/popular attention and primary attention is paid to personnel enlisted in Anglosphere militaries. The Kabul incident, however, serves as a reminder/example of the daily challenges of sustaining heteronormativity and phallocentrism through male bodies, especially when political-economic processes create spaces which simultaneously assemble and distort how male bodies can perform heteronormally and phallically.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCULSION

Over the course of the previous three chapters I have gotten lost amongst the possibility that PMSC work comes to matter through corpses, decomposition, guns, shooting, self-defence, pleasure, heteronormativity, intimacy and penises. In getting lost amongst these entanglements of words, things, agencies and processes that do the work of and for PMSCs I have (purposely) forgotten that I am writing a dissertation that will be read and adjudicated through the disciplining criteria of Political Science, IR and (Critical) Security Studies. In forgetting, what I have actually done is avoided an overt discussion of how and why my reading and writing should be considered amongst Political Science, IR and Critical Security Studies. To redress my forgetting/avoidance of relevant disciplinary issues with PMSCs I conclude this dissertation with a discussion of public-private governance and the possibilities of holding PMSCs accountable.

THE GREAT DIVIDE?

One does not have to conduct an in depth search before encountering concerns with how PMSCs affect the public-private governance of violence, particularly the commonsensical presumption that the public sector, i.e. the state, exercises a monopoly over the usage of violence (Avant, 2005). As Kingsey (2006) writes, "Controlling the increasing impact [PMSCs] are having on international security will be a primary responsibility for governments, especially given the possibility that governments could find their monopoly on violence seriously eroded " (p.4). Alexandra et. al. (2008) note that, "PMCS appear to [be in] conflict with the norms which have long been at the heart of moral theorizing about, and legal regulation of, organized [violence] such as the monopoly of the state over such [violence]" (p.1). Chesterman and Lehnardt (2009) assert "The appropriate balance between private and public interests is a key question […] Achieving this balance is imperative in situations where [private] interests affect

fundamental state functions such as national defence, warfare and the claim to legitimate

violence" (p.7). In a more rhetorical phrasing, Singer (2003) asserts, "the public-private

dichotomy […] which was once solidly fixed, is now under siege" (p.8).

Given the so-called common sense in assuming that states are/should be exercising a

monopoly over the governance of violence, it is not surprising that discussion of how the

emergence of PMSCs effects public-private governance predominates amongst the textual terrain

of PMSCs. A more academic appreciation of this predominance is that the divide between

public and private governance is so important because this is the "dichotomy [that] structures

virtually the entire tradition of western political thought and practice" (Owens, 2008 p. 979). For

disciplinary scholars of Political Science and IR the public-private divide is paramount because

"the public nature of protection – of equality before the law and equal protection by officers of

the law – is (in theory) among the most important constitutive principles of the modern state and

conceptions of sovereignty, and one of the key markers and tests of legitimacy in modern

politics" (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2011, p.11). Abrahamsen and Williams (2011) also argue

that because the public-private divide is foundational to the study of IR and the subfield of

Security Studies, "the relationship between the public, private and security can be seen as

constitutive elements of both modern sovereignty and the international system" (p.6).   In other

words, the modern or Westphalian state and the contemporary study of the relations between

modern states (also known as IR) does not exist without the ideological-legal-material

transference of the ability to legitimately enact violence from individual/private persons and

institutions to collective/public bureaucracies and legislatures. The emergence of PMSCs as a

globally significant phenomenon is therefore not just a practical challenge, but also a conceptual

one. The rise of PMSCs contests the conceptual basis of the modern state-system and its

academic study as at least superficially it appears as though the power and authority of states is (willfully) being transferred or seized by non-state and thus private actors.

Maintaining a meaningful distinction between public and private governance may be an historically or ethically convincing commitment to the state's exclusive and legitimate actualization of violence, but it is meta-theoretically limiting. Most generally, opposing public against private is problematic because it is symptomatic of positivist meta-theoretical commitments and the attendant limitations positivism has placed on the academic study of Political Science, IR and Security Studies; "positivism's ...empiricist epistemology has determined what could be studied because it has determined what kinds of things existed in international relations" (Smith, 1996, p. 11). Considering that "binary oppositions are not easily dislodged" (Beier, 2005, p.18) means that presumptions of the objective and/or immutable existence of the public and private actually work to lessen the significance of PMSCs because this significance can only be considered meaningful through the determinations of dichotomous thinking. The emergence of PMSCs in the first decade of the Twenty-First Century unquestionably altered the relations amongst states and for-profit organizations when determining how, when, where, and why violence would be performed. Nonetheless, bounding these altered relations between opposing/competing poles instantiates a mistaken 'reality' in what states and for-profit organizations are and do. States and for-profit organizations do not meaningfully exist and act because of a pre-determined dichotomous relationship between public and private. States and for-profit organizations do matter because their enacted existences regularly (over)determine how certain performances of violence, especially globally actuated performances such as warfare, become meaningful. The emergence of PMSCs does not signal an onto-political tension in the public-private divide. Rather, the rise of PMSCs is a meaningful

170

alteration of how, when, where and why violence is performed. As chapters four, five and six demonstrate the how, when, where and why cannot be contained by and through either objective or normative pretentions towards a public-private structuring of global relations.

Speaking directly to the effects that the public-private divide has had upon security thinking, Williams (2010, p. 624) makes it abundantly clear that "there is nothing natural about the public/private distinction, nor is this a neutral or purely technical/managerial division. Instead, it is historically constructed, reflecting particular social interests and power relations at particular points in time". Furthermore, "we do not have a 'state' pole that stands self-sufficiently in contrast to a 'private' pole" (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2011, p.116). Accordingly the theoretical and practical arrangement of what is public and what is private is an "an effect of political power" (Owens, 2008, p. 988), not an immutable political reality. Appreciating the historically particular political, economic and social matters and meanings of the public-private governance of violence means that although the emergence of PMSCs in the first decade of the Twenty-First Century is significant, it is more (empirically accurate and conceptually) important to recognize how "The history of the [governance] of violence shows cyclical movement: sometimes more private, sometimes more public, always a mixture, rarely the exclusive provenance of one or the other" (Brauer, 2008, p. 111). For Abrahamsen and Williams (2011) the intensification and proliferation of commercialized agents, i.e. the emergence of PMSCs, amongst the governing institutions and processes of violence is thus significant because it alters how violence is governed through the creation of new or at least different networks, pathways or entanglements of power. Accordingly, the emergence of PMSCs is significant because it "demand[s] an investigation of the production of new modalities of

power through which the very categories of public-private […] are reconstituted and reconfigured" (Ibid. p. 217).

Where Abrahamsen and Williams concentrate on how PMSCs determine "new modalities of power", I have focused on alternative agencies of work and how this laborious activity conducted by and through PMSCs becomes overdetermined by privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes. To this end, for the necro-labour of corpses, the inequities of shooting, the heteronormalizing of militarized male bodies and the phallic, or lack thereof, workings of fleshy penises to matter does not require a conceptual or textual privileging of notions of public-private governance of global relations (of violence). Concentration on the agents of alternation, the states and for-profit entities most readily involved in intensifying and proliferating how PMSCs matter misses how it is agencies not agents that actually matter. The agentive capacities of states, for-profit entities, contractors, citizens and civilians are undoubtedly integral to how PMSC work comes to matter. As demonstrated in chapters four, five and six however, the agencies of these institutions, organizations, entities and embodiments cannot be meaningfully considered to matter without the (not altogether human) agencies of corpses/decomposition, guns/shooting and penises/functionality. States, corporations and contractors can and do overdetermine when, where, how and why the agencies of corpses/decomposition, guns/shooting and penises/functionality become meaningful, particularly when these institutions, organizations, entities and embodiments do (or expect) privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing work (to be done). However, these stalwart agents of Political Science, IR and Security Studies thinking and knowing do not wholly obliterate nor incarnate the agencies of corpses/decomposition, guns/shooting and penises/functionality . As Doty (1997) asserts "Agency is not understood as an inherent quality of individual human beings

qua human beings" (p.383-4). Agency, or more appropriately agencies, is thus intra-activity

performed through matters and meanings that are not altogether human (Barard, 2007). Agential

enactments of PMSCs cannot exclusively be attributed to the intentions and ideologies of the

humanized embodiments that populate the textual terrain of PMSCs as well as the (post-)conflict

spaces of recent history.

Understood as such, PMSCs become significant entanglements of agencies through their

privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing work. That this work is performed and

motivated through agencies that are not altogether human also means that PMSCs become

significant through the re-determining of how corpses, guns and penises and

decomposition/dismemberment, inequity and functionality and intimacy come to matter. Even if

corpses, guns, penises, decomposition/dismemberment, inequity, functionality and intimacy have

not also always figured prominently in the textualization of violent enactments, the corporal

manifestation of violence is thoroughly entangled amongst the agentive capacities of these

words, things, agencies and processes. By my ignoring the more prominent analysis of the

governance of violence I demonstrate the deadly serious methods through which PMSC work

comes to matter through uncommon entanglements. By getting lost amongst the material of the

Fallujah, Nisour Square and Kabul incidents I also demonstrate how these events are more

meaningful than just infamous scandals. That not altogether human agencies figure prominently

in the corporeal and textual manifestation of these incidents also means that a thorough

accounting of PMSCs work requires an understanding of the import of not altogether human

agencies. Post-human, feminist and queer theorizations are thus an indispensable source of re-

determining how PMSC work comes to matter.

ACCOUNTABILITY?

Another prominent aspect of the textual terrain of PMSCs that I have left reasonably undiscussed is the concern with the regulatory accountability of PMSCs (see Kingsey 2005; Human Rights First 2008; Chesterman & Lehnardt 2009). Similar to the definitions of PMSCs discussed in chapter two, analysis of accountability issues can be easily, if not lazily, categorized into two predominant camps: 1) academics, media pundits and government officials who cite a "continuing lack of effective national and international controls of the industry" (Krahmann, 2006, p. 103) and 2) academics, think-tankers and industry advocates who stress that PMSCs are subject to numerous industry, national and international codes, regulations and laws (see Frontline, 2005a). And much like my motivations for restricting discussion of PMSCs effects on the public-private governance to this concluding chapter, I only address issues with accountability here because it is only now necessary to overtly situate this dissertation amongst these issues. To be forth right, I find the textual terrain of holding PMSCs to account to be a disheartening read. It is disheartening because when PMSCs are determined to have impunity or be unaccountable or even compliant, these terms are restricted to arrangements of political, legal and moral codes and norms of the national and global regimes which govern how violence can be performed. The problem with this restricted arrangement is that it is so utterly human-centric that only human agencies become meaningful. Impunity, unaccountability and compliance become enactments of human intention be it inter-personally or structurally performed. Accordingly the negligence, maliciousness or hedonism enacted amongst PMSCs and their personnel in Fallujah, Nisour Square and Kabul are issues of human exclusive sensibilities, i.e. the offense, pain and unease produced through these incidents only matters because it is/was humans (or former humans) that suffered the offense, pain and unease. Restricting

174

accountability issues to human agency and sensibility means ethical enactments undertaken to redress issues of impunity and negligence or enhance issues of compliance must also be understood as human-centric.

A human-centric or human exclusive ethical accounting is not without its merits. As demonstrated in Iraq, "escalation of force" incidents involving PMSC PSDs decreased significantly once effective and enforceable oversight mechanisms were enacted by the DOS (Commission on Wartime Contracting, 2009). However, in this specific ethical accounting oversight was enhanced to assuage the inequities produced through the right of armed self-defence. Or in less sanitized terms, better oversight worked to ensure that shooting, or at least the potential/threat to shoot, continued to occupy a privileged position amongst the daily work routines of PMSC PSDs. This centralizing of shooting amongst the daily work of PMSCs thereby entrenches the meaningfulness of shooting amongst the privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing governance of (post-)conflict of spaces. Similarly, holding male embodiments to account for the heinousness of sexualized hazing is necessary. The human-centricity of the accounting that occurred post-Kabul incident ensured that male embodiments would continue to work amongst entanglements of fatigue, stress and violence that ironically ensure that male embodiments can never achieve the masculizined, heteronormal and phallic pretentions and expectations that make certain male embodiments matter more in (post-)conflict spaces. To this end a more thorough accounting, a post-human ethics, is necessary in order to not replicate the inconsistencies, ironies and incongruities of determining PMSC work through privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes. Such an ethical accounting cannot be determined to make PMSCs work properly, more effectively or more functionally for privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing processes. The post-human, feminist and

175

queer reading and writing that constitutes this dissertation is committed to an ambiguous ethical accounting.

Intra-acting with corpses, guns and penises are not mere flights of personal fancy. Although the intra-actions of this dissertation have been restricted to text and thus can and must be critiqued for such limits, writing that PMSC work comes to matter through corpses, guns and penises takes seriously Barad's admonishing that "even the smallest cuts matter". Political Science, IR and Security Studies too often forget, ignore or exclude[82] minute determinations of how words, things, agencies and processes come to matter. Such forgetfulness, ignorance or exclusion is only exacerbated when the predominant methodological, onto-epistemic and ethical commitments of these ways of knowing and thinking become human-centred. Human-centric accountability can only ever be a limited accountability because it already excludes the possibility that what matters is more and less than human. To hold PMSCs to account on the basis of what PMSCs do for and to humans means understanding that both PMSC work and humans cannot matter without intra-activity amongst the non-human, not exclusively human and formerly human. To realize an actual accounting means realizing a certain amount of less happy amongst those humans that disproportionality benefit from the work of words, things, agencies and processes that become constrained by privatizing, militarizing, securing and commercializing determinations.

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[82] Exclusion should not be read as an exclusive issue for the disciplinary, positivist and human-centric studies of Political Science, IR and Security Studies to which I am referring to in the above sentence. In the conclusion of his review of the exclusionary practices of Critical Security Studies Mutimer (2009) contends, "The question that remains, of course, is whether we can escape the production of exclusions in our attempts at critical (security) scholarship. My answer is that no, we cannot. By speaking for some we necessarily speak against others, and the range of those who face oppression, those for whom critical scholarship is written, is too great for them all to be written for at once. My corollary to this observation is that there will be different outsiders who most need critical theory at different times and in different places. In taking this step, I make clear my own choice amongst the inclusions and exclusions" (p.20).

Becoming accountable through realizing less happy could mean relinquishing interventions into the decomposition process that intend to delay, cover-up or bury the breakdown of formerly human material. It could also mean relinquishing the unquestionable right to violently defend oneself. Or it could mean learning to accept that becoming flaccid is not all that bad. Of course such relinquishing and acceptance can only matter as accountable enactments if they are conceived of as mattering globally. This is why PMSC work must (ethically) be understood as coming to matter through entanglements of the human, non-human, not altogether human and formerly human. The global meaningfulness of PMSCs detailed at the beginning of this dissertation makes PMSCs a prime component for realizing less happy. PMSCs matter globally and if they are going to be held accountable it matters that global politics/security relations currently rely on relations of exclusion, exploitation and inequity with the non-human, not altogether human and formerly human. Reconfiguring how PMSCs come to matter is necessary to realizing that happiness is enacted through exclusionary, exploitative and inequitable work. Understanding how this work works is an important move towards realizing that a little less happy is actually a most ethical way to hold PMSCs accountable.

CHAPTER NINE: AN ADDENDUM OF REVISIONS

On Tuesday, May 5, 2015 I defended the above dissertation. Over the course of three hours and after a series of sympathetically incisive questions it was determined that my textualizations needed some specific revisions. Rather than editing the document so as to seamlessly include, i.e. hide, the revisions amongst the already written text I have decided to address my committees concerns by adding an another, this, chapter to the dissertation. I am doing this for two reasons. The first is to temper potentials that I make "my critique is bigger than yours" arguments. The question/provocation that I was indeed invoking this style of argumentation was the most distressing moment of my defence. The irony that rather than disrupting and frustrating phallic masculinity (as I do in chapter six) I was actually perpetuating it deeply disturbed me. While I (did) maintain that I am not practicing phallicized and masculinized criticism, in foregrounding what the above text is lacking this chapter is an earnest exposure of failings and limits and my attempts to honestly engage with them.

Secondly, the decision to write this chapter is a decision to more forthrightly "own" what I do in the above text. What I am owning (up to/being responsible for) in writing a chapter that focuses on requested revisions is my/a desire to not suppress the tensions, undecidability and agnosticism that runs through what I have written and how I defended it. Injecting revisions into the body of the document (without proper acknowledgement of such injections) would potentially soothe concerns that for instance "theorists and concepts seem to be picked up on the journey for a particular analytical maneuver and then left at the side of the road". Not wanting to deny that I do indeed do this, nor wanting to obstinately ignore that I do it, this chapter will more responsibly take ownership of my normative, methodological and empirical

textualizations/vocalizations. To do so I will move through five issues of concern. First up, the globalness of my project.

GLOBAL?

Throughout the dissertation I use the phrase "global relations of security", yet my empirical analysis and critical commentary is focussed squarely on the Anglosphere thereby raising the questions: 1) Is this actually global? and 2) If so, what does global mean? In response, I contend that global is not articulated as a horizontal or even broadly inclusive concept. Global is expansive to the effect that the work that PMSCs do is consequential for/productive of privatized, militarized, secured and commercialized doings around the planet. Global is also hierarchical.[83] As demonstrated in chapters three through six the work of PMSCs enhances Anglosphere capacities to determine, if not dominate, ways and meanings of doing security globally. As Vucetic (2011, p.3) writes,

> … the Anglosphere has dominated international politics for the world for the past 200 years, perhaps longer. Its agents— companies, empires, states, nations— colonized and industrialized large swathes of the planet and moved millions of its inhabitants, often by force. They also acted as the market and lender of the last resort, the guardian of the reserve currency, and the bulwark against various revisionists and revolutionaries. As a result, the world has now gone Anglobal. Though Australians, Americans, British, Canadians, and New Zealanders make up less than 7 percent of the world's population today, the standard triumphalist argument is that "their" language is the global language, "their" economies produce more than a third of the global gross domestic product (GDP), and "their" version of liberalism in society and economy defines most human aspirations.

Anglosphere security relations are not global because they are considerate or supportive of the multiplicity of possible ways and meanings of doing security around the planet. Rather it is Anglosphere overdetermined agencies, in this case PMSCs, that arrange planetary relations through "their own" specific security needs and desires that matters globally. Global relations of security should not be reduced to Anglosphere relations of security because the Anglosphere does not always matter everywhere. Nonetheless, analyzing relations of security through the

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[83] Salter's (2015) distinguishing amongst the global and international is something that I need to further ponder with regard to asserting that the global is hierarchical.

work that PMSCs do for the Anglosphere is key to holding even minute Anglosphere practices accountable for their global a/effects.

EVENTFUL?

Writing about Barad's notion of "entangled agency" Aradau et al. (2015, p. 73-4) assert, Barad's "attention to the constitution of boundaries entails a methodological interest in events. Methodologically, entangled agency starts with an event […] it is a question of examining how a particular event illuminates the manner in which a specific set of elements have coalesced into an ensemble." If only this wonderfully clear articulation of a Baradian inspired methodology had been available to me at the time I decided to research the Fallujah, Nisoor Square and Kabul incidents. Unfortunately it was not. I have included it here as a post facto buttressing of my decision to privilege a Baradian post-human investigation, but I cannot use it to further articulate my rational for focusing on the three incidents.

If one were to ask "Why Fallujah, Nisoor and Kabul?" in a less future determining moment than a dissertation defence I might respond "because I like thinking about corpses, guns and penises". Or I might also say "No way could I pass up an opportunity to research and write about incidents that prominently feature (the agentic capacities) of corpses, guns and penises." Coinciding with such personal proclivities, the Fallujah, Nisoor and Kabul incidents must also be appreciated as three events that greatly affected the profile, popular perception and regulation of PMSCs in the first fifteen years of the 21st Century. For instance, as quoted in chapter four, the Fallujah incident "put [Blackwater a] little-known North Carolina-based security company into the American lexicon and on the world stage" (BBC News, 2004). To the extent that Fallujah (and Nisoor Square) made Blackwater infamous, it also accelerated interest in and concerns with the commercial military and security industry as a whole – including my own. The employee

180

counts and dollar amounts for PMSCs operating in Afghanistan and Iraq alone would have certainly sparked academic and regulatory scrutiny whether or not the Fallujah incident occurred. However, the horrific spectacle of the incident made PMSCs operations, in Iraq at least, impossible to ignore.

Fallujah, Nisoor Square and Kabul affected and reinforced the popular perception of PMSCs as secretive, unscrupulous and unregulated or more poetically as agents of failure. Intriguingly[84] while the (perceptions of) failure(s) in Fallujah, Nisoor Square and Kabul were certainly detrimental to the profitability of the specific PMSCs involved, failure should be considered integral to the marketing of security through insecurity and thus is a key driver of profitability for the industry as a whole. Likewise, Health-Kelly (2014) notes that for policies of resilience "security failure becomes part of the story about security learning and improvements in capability" (p.69). Accordingly, these incidents become meaningful opportunities for PMSCs, clients and regulators to learn how to do commercialized security better, which means these incidents become even more important for my suggestions that "better" should not be conflated with accountable. Indeed enhanced operational oversight of PMSCs in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as the formation of a transnational "good-practices" regime, i.e. the Montreaux Document and the ICoC, are unlikely to have been as rapidly implemented without the failures of Blackwater and Armorgroup.

While these incidents increased the popular visibility of PMSC operations and nourished transnational regulatory efforts, they did so through the privileging of Anglo-centric images of contractors, meanings of work and political, economic and emotional matters. This not a particularly poignant observation when considering the PMSCs were American and British

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[84] This is something that I am only now considering after it was brought to my attention during the dissertation defence.

owned, contracted by the DOS and the contractors were predominantly American citizens. What

makes the Anglo-centricity of these events worthy of further investigation is that the textual

reactions to/interpretations of them, including improved regulatory efforts, miss, if not ignore, an

opportunity to more thoroughly hold Anglosphere security and military desires and capacities to

account. In other words, I accept/argue that Fallujah, Nisoor Square and Kabul can be

articulated as meaningful learning opportunities insofar as what is learned is that even the

"smallest cuts", e.g. funerary, shooting and carnal practices, need to be altered if accountability

is to matter more than a process that reiterates Anglospheric predominance.

My decision to research and reinterpret the Fallujah, Nisoor Square and Kabul incidents

is also a consequence of accessibility to source material. In one instance, a plethora of media,

regulatory and lay-person textualization exists, however, except for Higate's (2012a) article

titled *Drinking Vodka from the 'Butt-Crack'* there is a dearth of academic textualization about

these incidents. In another instance, limited financial resources curtailed my ability to conduct

other forms of research such as ethnography and interviews (see Mutlu, 2013). Furthermore, my

methods training, at the time of researching the dissertation, had been limited to qualitative

assessments of text and thus even if I had the financial resources to do so I was not adequately

prepared to pursue other methods of observation.

On the topic of text I want to add some further justification for doing a textual analysis

through meta-theoretical conceptions that are interested in other materializations. That Barad

(2003) open's her article *Posthumanist Performativity* with the statement "Language has been

granted too much power" (p. 801) would seem to suggest that I have seriously misinterpreted and

misappropriated Barad's concepts. Although I would never claim to completely comprehend

everything that Barad contends, she is a theoretical physicist after all, I am confident my textual

interpretations do follow Barad's assertion (2007) that "Meaning is not a property of individual words or groups of words but an ongoing performance of the world in its differential dance of intelligibility and unintelligibility" (p. 149). As such rather than observing other matters amongst other circumstances, I observe the materializing a/effects of text; how textualization articulates and performs binary boundary practices; and how text becomes a privileged method of determining what matters even though matters become real/determined or are cut through a multiplicity of intra-actions – many of which exceed, circumvent or are (currently) unobservable through human apparatuses. By foregrounding other meanings of materialization, non-human agencies and/or other than human intra-actions amongst humanized/human-centric textualization I attempt to read different possibilities amongst text, possibilities that are post-human to the extent that "Humans are neither pure cause nor pure effect but part of the world in its open-ended becoming" (Ibid., p. 150).

Writing a post-human text is therefore as much an effort to write about other than human matters as it is an effort to write around anthropocentrism. My preferred strategy for writing around the anthropocentrism of text, which is not to say my text is not anthropomorphized, but on more this in a bit, is to write as unconventionally as possible whilst still being readable. Hence my predilection for reading and writing in an undisciplined manner, which, for instance, is evidence by the inclusion of text from internet comments sections and/or my picking up of theorists only to leave them at the side of road. As was pointed out to me during the defence, perhaps my most convincing (post-human) move is an inability or unwillingness to resolve tensions such as wanting to write clearly and also idiosyncratically incomprehensibly or desiring to become undisciplined while still accepting enough discipline to become credentialed. Tension is key to this text, whether I purposely inflect it or not, because it undercuts my individualized

183

authority as the author and it slows down and frustrates reading both of which work around the anthropocentric hubris of clear, concise, well argued, disciplined texts.

Before moving on, it should be noted that the textual play in this dissertation is also a method of experimenting with what is possible. It is an experiment in conceptualizing how certain matters come to matter and it is an experiment in considering what concepts could and should become entangled amongst other, perhaps more interesting and unique, apparatuses of observation. In other words, this dissertation is as much a training exercise as it is the culmination of a particular form of training. Through working through playful, profane or curious understandings of PMSCs, corpses, guns and penises I am hoping to work through what conceptual and textual practices can become most accountable and thus appropriate methods for observing and otherly-articulating materialization processes that are not bounded through text.

SKATEABLE?

As just mentioned methodology is perhaps my least (well) practiced scholastic activity. This, in part, is attributable to an all too comfortable allegiance to Doty (2010) when she writes,

> … I have a deep-seated suspicion and distrust of 'methodology' as it has come to be thought of in the social sciences. This does not mean I do not think it is important to be up front and honest in one's research, but I think we often get distracted with endless discussions of methodology. In one sense this is insulting to the reader because it is often fairly clear what the writer has done. (p. 1049)

Chapters two through six abide by Doty's wonderfully smarmy assertion that "intelligent people […] can figure out how the writer has gone about his/her research" (Ibid.). Nevertheless, rejecting a more thorough discussion of methodology is antithetical to taking ownership. As such, I want to return to the activity, i.e. skateboarding, I frequently practice and ponder as an analogous explication of methodology. Allow me to elaborate.

When I skate I do so for three entangled purposes: 1) for pleasure, 2) to annoy, and 3) to be in moment. The pleasure derived/produced is realized through the speed that can be reached

184

pushing down the street and the fear that is manifested when it becomes apparent that one is going too fast – typically when going downhill. Pleasure is also realized through the ebb and flow of joy, rage, frustration, exhilaration and exhaustion of trying to land/landing tricks. Skateboarding pleasures are thus multifarious and entangled enactments of haptic, kinetic, emotional and somatic doings. Annoyance comes to matter through the repurposing of public and private spaces and architecture, the impediment of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and the scraping, screeching and yelling that becomes audible when grinding a curb, pushing on rough patch of asphalt or failing to land a trick for umpteenth time. Being in the moment is at once a micro-performance of movement amongst the very specific time and space of trying to land a trick. It is also a more amorphous opportunity to play amongst and with the often overlooked material-discursive determinations that govern urban life. In other words, being in the moment constitutes concentrated specific movements amongst an open ended desire to (differently) sense the contemporary city.

Articulated as such skateboarding is a privileged activity that I do for me. The privilege(s) of the "I" and "me" are however made possible, and subsequently governed, through a host of local and more global intra-actions amongst concrete/asphalt, weather, friction, gravity, traffic, public-private property, equipment, finances and energy. Evaluating my skating as a political doing means holding accountable personal privileges, i.e. being an able-bodied white man with just enough personal disposable income, amongst possibilities for bodily harm, social sanction, legal discipline and/or missing out on other moments of movement and sense. How I skate, the repetitious pushing, ollieing, grinding and falling, is thus variously determined and thus variously performed. If temperature, time, traffic and energy permit I can spend over ninety-minutes rolling up to a single (very low) curb attempting the few tricks I know I can land

185

and a few more that if I fail will only lead to scratches and bruises. Or if my feet are not as dexterous as I need them to be, I'll just ride around the streets of Toronto slowing down motorists and cyclists and weaving through pedestrians. Or if I am feeling capable and adventurous I'll roll around the city searching for new/different terrain to skate and when I find something I'll either 1) roll up to it and decide "I can't skate that", 2) give it a few attempts before moving on, or 3) fully commit to landing a particular trick that I think is doable. I should also note, to be able to grind or slide on certain curbs/ledges wax is applied in order to reduce the friction amongst the metal of my skateboard trucks and the concrete of the curb/ledge. Phrased academically, intra-actions of equipment, space and bodily capacity determine what can be done amongst intra-actions of bodily resiliency, time and preventive intervention (e.g. rough asphalt, skate-stoppers, and concerned citizens/private security guards) that determine how it can be done.

I read, write, think and observe or, in short, study in similar fashion. The pleasures of studying come to matter through the time and energy expenditures that are experienced as inspiration, excitement, frustration and anger. Annoyance is pursued by not doing what I should or is expected, e.g. chapter introductions that fail to introduce, literature reviews that are specific rather than comprehensive or methodological articulations that are flimsy at best. Being in the moment is the privileged limiting of cognitive, sensuous and perceptive functions so as to whimsically probe, intently pursue and/or reflexively interpret the experience of thought and observation. Although theses pleasures, annoyances and moments are properly considered to be "mine", much like skating, studying comes to (be determined to) matter through entanglements that cannot be reduced to individual preferences or performances. Language comprehension, altered/impaired senses, volume of literature/analysis, social, familial and collegial

acceptance/sanction, and disciplinary norms (technical and political) variously affect and thus make possible how studying can be done. Or as Bennett (2005) writes, "My speech, for example, depends upon the graphite in my pencil, the millions of persons, dead and alive, in my Indo-European language group, not to mention the electricity in my brain and laptop computer" (pp. 461-2). Also like my skateboarding, my studying is done for me. A privileged me that has the time, finances and social support to study, but is also a "me" or an "I" that can only come to matter through the reiterative governance of the Anglosphere academy.

Scholastically, my skateboard methodology becomes entangled amongst Aradau et al.'s (2015) conception of "experimentation", Callon's notion of "free association" (quoted Salter, 2015. p. xii), Lobo-Guerrero's (2013) articulation of "wondering", Law's (2004) methods of "mess", Bennet's (2004) "naive realism", Connelly's (2013) "speculative realism" – not to mention Barad's "agential realism" and Halberstam's "queer negativity". I skate around (i.e. study) the textual terrain of PMSCs trying to do what can be done. "Trying" and "can be done" are at once imaginative/speculative/open as well disciplined/bounded/limited maneuvers/articulations. Routes to particular textualizations are not arranged prior to research, which is not to deny the entangled limits of researching affected through search engines, paywalls and library stacks. Nor do I shy away from pursuing less travelled or potential treacherous terrain e.g. internet comments.   Similar to my preferred concrete terrain e.g. low curbs, I do seek out spectacular events involving PMSCs as privileged features of the textual terrain. Such seeking is not done with a "map" however and once "found" investigation/observation of such features/events becomes a multifarious and repetitious effort to do what can be done. The possibilities of what "can be done" are certainly not boundless. Personal predilection for post-human and queer theorizing, previously written analysis, time and

energy commitments, and desires for credentials and readability/expectations of impact, rigour and discipline variously become meaningful determining aspects of the studying process. What the studying becomes and how it is articulated is cut amongst intra-actions that perform the possibilities of the studied and the study as much as the possibilities of the studier. Or in Baradian parlance, the apparatus of observation, which for this study is me, is integral to the realization of the observation.

Accordingly, articulating my methodology through skateboarding is an auto-ethnographic reflection on a methodological approach to PMSCs, work and agentic capacities that is idiosyncratic. It politicizes the methodological process by privileging how the apparatus of observation intra-acts amongst the observed. It demonstrates a personal method that is never individual and can subsequently be "evaluated" or held accountable through the cuts that are made in the studying process. Beyond and because of idiosyncratic cuts this dissertation is premised on the evaluative standard of generating "new and valuable insights for particular knowledge communities" (Brigg & Bleiker, 2010, p. 792). In skateboarding the realization of "new" tricks is termed progress. Recalling my queer sensibilities, progress is too entwined amongst "better" and this is something I am not seeking to do. Articulating different possibilities amongst how PMSC work comes to matter is what I (attempt) to do. Doing different possibilities needs to be attuned to how intra-active cuts affect and effect study-studied-studier Hence, doing different possibilities must involve/study, and likely fail to effectively conceive and articulate, intra-actions amongst the apparatus, empirical, theoretical and analytical. MATERIAL?

In his introduction to the material turn section of *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies: An Introduction* Mutlu (2013) writes, "Acknowledging the distinctions between

[mediating and philosophical] approaches and then clearly selecting to use one should be the first step in doing a research project that focuses on the material, grounding the research in one of these two traditions" (p.175). This is an apropos citation to begin to situate my text amongst the material turn because it moves to resolve tensions amongst the study of materiality that I am not certain should be resolved. I do appreciate the call for clarity, and by foregrounding Barad as my prime theorist I can be read as setting up my tent in the philosophical camp. What concerns me is that the conceptual/observational value of the material turn is, as Connolly (2013) emphasizes, its "protean monism", "problem orientation", "combination of experiments and speculations", "techno-artistic tactics" and "planetary dimension" (pp. 399-402). Or as Coole and Frost (2010, p. 9) assert "According to new materialisms […] materiality is always something more than "mere" matter: an excess, force, self-creative, productive, unpredictable."[85] Add to these aspects queered preferences/desires for "the unexpected" and "the unplanned irruptions" and I am hesitant of the possible limitations of attaching my theories and observations to a particular camp from the outset of a particular study. Cuts will be made, but as is articulated in the previous section, I prefer my methodological cuts to not be that deep. Accordingly, this dissertation should be situated amongst the tensions of the material turn rather than anchored to a particular position.

For instance, branding one's particular study of materiality can be a tricky affair. As Connolly recites "new materialism, immanent naturalism, posthumanism, antihumanism, speculative realism, complexity theory, object-oriented metaphyics, [and] a philosophy of becoming" (Ibid.; see also Coole, 2013) have all been used to denote distinctive approaches to

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[85] In as similar fashion, Barad (2007, p. 237) writes "Materiality is rethought as a contingent and contested, constrained but not fully determined, process of iterative intra-activity through which material-discursive practices come to matter, rather than as mere brute positivity or some purified notion of the economic."

materiality. Connolly continues, "Any title you pick is potentially susceptible to misrepresentation, as we have seen many times before. But those two titles [posthumanism and antihumanism] almost invite it." (Ibid., p.402). I am actively sending out such invitation for misrepresentation by denoting my analysis as post-human. To the extent that posthumanism "is flexible, ambiguous and contested" (Cudworth and Hobden, 2011, p. 143) and "generates different and even irreconcilable definitions" (Wolfe, 2009, p. xi), the term thereby performs tension. It foregrounds undecidability. It oozes possibilities. In doing so it also curbs the authority of the author and inflects an acceptance amongst text that the intentions of authors may become differently meaningful/affect unintended realizations. Ironically, the decentring of authors intentions, i.e. human intentional authority, is the key intention of post-human pursuits. Barad's variant of post-humanism does not intend to escape humanness, but similar to other variants of new materialist practice intends to do humans differently than the rational, enclosed, bifurcated individuals of liberal humanism, evangelical Christianity, consumer capitalism and contemporary partisan Anglosphere politics. Much like skateboarding, I "know" what I want to do with a post-human study, but that is no guarantee that I will be capable of doing it.

Another locus of tension emerges from Schmidt (2013, p. 179) when she writes "In this way, new materialism's critique of the hubris of the human subject, although held accountable for entrenched and persistent inequalities, exploitations and injustices, is that this subject is an illusion." Furthermore, "From an ontological perspective on processes, the constructs of autonomy and juridico-political sovereignty are simply a misreading" (Ibid., p.182). Tension emerges here amongst the question, to paraphrase Latour, "Have humans ever been human?" and the need to more thoroughly account for the harmful a/effects of anthropocentrism (see Coward, 2006; Youatt, 2014). That is to say, there is a need realize human being as a process of

entangled materialization, which means "humans" have "always" been more, less and/or other than rational, enclosed, bifurcated individuals (see Barad 2003, 2007; Bennett 2004, 2010; Cudworth and Hobden, 2011, 2013; Squire, 2014). The difficulty with realizing that humans matter differently is: 1) a potential to erect a new truth to the reality of humanness and 2) a potential to actually reiterate human-centricity through a different voice/text/arrangement.

Perhaps I am too fixated on Schmidt's usage of the terms "illusion" and "misreading" insofar as I infer a wrong versus right understanding of human reality amongst these terms. While occasionally I do long to shout that "humans have never been human" I remain cautious of sounding like I and other post-humanists and new materialists know the actual meaning of human being. Similarly if humans have never been human and human intentionality is not all that intentional how can anthropocentrism be cited as a crucial problematic? Put differently, perhaps post-human theorizing puts too much emphasis on the capacities of anthropocentrism (see Chandler, 2013)? The Baradian retort is that "the "posthumanist" point is […] [to] understand the materializing effects of particular ways of drawing boundaries between "humans" and "nonhumans" (Barad, 2011, p. 123-4). That is to say, there certainly is a danger of realizing a different anthropocentrism, one in which only humans can de-centre humans (see Mutlu, 2013). If it is boundary practices that matter most however, the risk is worth it so long as post-humanizing is never satisfied and always moves tenuously amongst how distinctions come to matter.

Concerns that new materialisms/post-humanism reduce politics to "blind necessity" (Chandler, 2013), risk justifying the instrumental usage of people (Bennett, 2004), concentrate on the "vitality of things" to the detriment of harmful practices amongst people (Squire, 2014) and/or "new materialism offers little guidance for conceptualizing harms in an abstract or generic

way" (Mitchell, 2014, p. 13) demonstrate more tensions that I am content to leave tense. I am content to raise these concerns without specifically assuaging them, i.e. poignantly explaining how my analysis is or is not to subject to such criticism, because, like Bennett's (2004) "naive realism", I believe Barad (2007) when she writes, "Agency never ends; it can never 'run out'" (p.177). Believing that agency, which "is about changing possibilities of change" (Ibid., p. 178), never runs out means accepting that resolutions are only temporary inasmuch as a "resolution" affects differing arrangements amongst the "resolved" that are likely to enact unexpected or unintended matters. For the concerns of Chandler, Bennett, Squire and Mitchell this means letting go of the possibility for certain resolutions in favour of letting their concerns push, pull and pervade the interpretation of this dissertation. As I believe these concerns to be very meaningful tensions amongst the material turn I'd much prefer my work exist amongst them then to claim to the redress them, which is another way of saying I am perhaps naively waiting for something unexpected to happen.

A final pivotal tension that runs through all the aforementioned instances is an onto-political dispute amongst flatness and hierarchy. For as Coole (2013) notes, "New materialists espouse what Bruno Latour calls a flat ontology: that is, one that does not privilege some kinds of entity or agency over others and one in which new assemblages and unstable hybrids are recognised to be constantly emerging and dissipating across a normatively and ontologically horizontal plane" (p. 454). Barad's (2011) locating of inherent indeterminancy amongst "quantum entanglements," (p.125), differs from the networks, confederacies and assemblages of actor network theory (ANT) and vital materialism, but does it "flatten" ontology (and epistemology and ethics) nonetheless. For Cudworth & Hobden (2015) such "horizontalism" is problematic because "relations are not understood to exist in a context of hierarchies of power"

(p.138). Accordingly, "The flat, non-hierarchical networks for ANT cannot deal with power because it cannot make distinctions between nature and society, or between humans, other animals, plants, and objects" (Ibid., pp.138-9).

The easy response is to leave the "hybridity and vitalism" theorists in the lurch, by noting that a Baradian post-humanizing moves "not to blur the boundaries between human and nonhuman, [nor] to cross out all distinctions and differences" (Barad, 2011, p. 123). Likewise, "The acknowledgement of 'nonhuman agency' does not lessen human accountability; on the contrary, it means that accountability requires that much more attentiveness to existing power asymmetries" (Barad, 2007, p. 219). As such and as demonstrated throughout this dissertation, Baradian post-humanism is capable of stressing "the domination of non-human nature under certain kinds of relations and the ways in which certain groups of relatively privileged humans are able to assert domination over certain other kinds of human, other animal, and life forms" (Cudworth & Hobden, 2015, p. 139).

Acknowledging the influence of Latour and Bennett in this dissertation, e.g. the contingent application of Bennett's notion of "material recalcitrance" in chapter four and Latour's notion of agency as "anything that makes a difference" (Bourne, 2012, p. 156) in chapter five, means it is rather disingenuous and not at all collegial to smugly suggest, as I've just done, that Cudworth and Hobden's contestation does not apply to this dissertation. Fortunately, Salter (2015) provides a more meaningful response when he quotes Latour: "'Be sober with power.' In other words, abstain as much as possible from the notion of power in case it backfires and hits your explanations instead of the target you are aiming to destroy" (pp. xvi-xvii). As Salter elaborates "new materialist scholars must discover how different actants express their position in relation to one another" (Ibid.). In other words, it is not that studies that enact a

flat ontology are incapable of addressing power or recognizing hierarchy, it is that such studies

prefer to "start" elsewhere in order to more thoroughly understand the materializing affects of

various networks, actants, assemblages and/or entanglements. Additionally, Bourne (2012)

asserts,

> Yet Latour is often misunderstood on this point: this is an ontological symmetry, not a symmetry
> of power in which all things, people and states are equal. Further, it is not an a priori assumption,
> but a heuristic device to resist common habits of thought: 'It simply means not to impose a priori
> some spurious asymmetry among human intentional action and a material world of causal relations.'
> […] it is a call to abandon all such attempts to 'overcome dialectically' the divisions between human
> and nonhuman, social and technical, and instead to ignore the distinction and proceed by enquiring
> about the agency of all kinds of objects. (p. 154)

If Chandler (2013) can accuse post-humanists of manifesting an anthropocentric strawman, then

perhaps the same can be said for Cudworth and Hobden (2015) and "the old materialists" that

find "new materialist approaches" "so objectionable" (p. 139).

To be honest, I am not defending Latour or Barad because I feel they need my help.

Rather I raise issues with flat ontologies, so as to situate this dissertation amongst Barad's focus

on boundary practices and Latour's focus on symmetry, which is to say my inclination is to study

boundary practices and the pernicious politics that attend to certain practices by imagining that

boundaries do not matter. I know I can think and I have tried to write about boundary

materializations by imagining different possibilities, but as Barad (2007) writes "[…] (simply

saying something is so will not causes its materialization) […] (not any story will do)" (p. 207).

Hence, a corollary tension to enacting a flat ontology is my wondering if this story will do?

ACCOUNTBALE?

One way to ensure that this story will do, is a more through discussion of what post-

human accountability entails. Amongst the contemporary regulatory landscape, including the

textual terrain of PMSCs, accountability is pursued through managerial (e.g. best practices

regimes, debarment), juridical (e.g. criminal and civil litigation), market (e.g. need to secure

profit) and moral (e.g. public condemnation) sanction. While such varied regulatory efforts can deter escalation of force incidents, as evidenced in chapter five, the locus of blame is limited to the intentional and negligent actions of humans. Or as Bennett (2010, p. 38) writes, "Outrage will not and should not disappear, but a politics devoted too exclusively to moral condemnation and not enough to cultivated discernment of the web of agentic capacities can do little good." That is to say, managerial, juridical, market and moral regulation must become more attuned to materializations and how materializations, of which human being and doing is subsumed, is more, less, other or not all limited to rationally intentional individuals.

Material accountability (Schmidt, 2013) can be motivated by what Connolly (2011) terms an "ethic of cultivation" which "infuses mundane human interests, identities, responsibilities, tasks, and understandings rather than obeying an unconditional law or divine inspiration above them" (p. 79). Accordingly, such an ethic "can bring this care to bear on new and unexpected situations, combining refined sensitivity with critical reflection on a new situation or revise or adjust old norms whose mode of operation is now up for reconsideration" (Ibid.). My difficulty with Connolly's eloquent ethics is its tinge of positivity that humans can do more and do better and this avers me from becoming too attached. I prefer a coupling of Barad's (2007) non-specific sentiment that "Accountability and responsibility must be thought of in terms of what matters and what is excluded from mattering" (p.220) with Bennett's (2010) suggestion that the search for blame and harm needs to be broadened; "a hesitant attitude toward assigning singular blame becomes a presumptive virtue" (p.38). As Barad and Bennett (see Mitchell, 2014) do not provide specific guidance for the realization of a vital materialist or post-human accountability, especially in terms of how this matters to PMSCs, I'll now make some speculative remarks about how it may actually be necessary to do less, i.e. reduce the opportunities for PMSCs to work.

Beyond demonstrating how corpses, guns and penises and decomposition, shooting and dysfunction matter amongst the work of PMSCs, chapters four, five and six also provide a basis for a more thorough understanding of how the harms of PMSCs work come to matter. That is to say, it is not only or not at all negligent management, stone-cold killers, homosocial debauchery or corporate greed and bureaucratic inefficiencies that are to blame for the enactment and effects of the Fallujah, Nisour Square and Kabul incidents. Indeed funerary practices that privilege whole corpses and prompt medico-scientific intervention, shooting practices that rely on the industrialized production of dual use pleasure-protection pistols, rifles and sub-machine guns and carnal practices that worship spectacular and routine tumescence are privatized, militarized, secured and commercialized entanglements that as demonstrated are also affectual amongst globally meaningfully processes of violence, commerce and intimacy that determine that inequity, competition and exclusion should and do matter most.

Taking post-human responsibility for these practices and processes entails accounting for "all" the materializing intra-actions (e.g. time, space, finances, energy, creatures, periodic elements) that become meaningful to and through PMSC work. As I only begin to take account of the multiplicity of intra-actions that matter through PMSC work, I want to tentatively put forth the notion that what is needed most is less. Less expenditure on the development, distribution and marketing of weapons platforms and projectiles that can shred flesh, bone, metal, plastic and glass (all of which themselves require significant expenditures to become real) in seconds. Less interventions of wood, metal, concrete, granite, preserving chemicals and earth in order to defer decomposition. Less finances, research, advertising and sophomoric anxiousness about penis size, rigidity and performance. Less manufacturing of antagonisms amongst right-to-defend, civil-pious-respectful, straight-vanilla selves and blood-thirsty, barbaric-monstrous, hedonistic

196

others and the subsequent sequestering of resources amongst the preferred selves.   Less

punishment, disdain and fear of marginalized processes and less profit seeking amongst the

realization of punishment, disdain and fear. Less recruitment of global resources for the satiation

of Anglocentric pleasures be they pleasures of corpses, guns and penises. Less justification for

all this taking, hoarding and coveting on the basis of human exceptionalism. The harms that

mattered amongst Fallujah, Nisoor Square and Kabul would not have become as meaningful and

subsequently detrimental had the work of PMSCs been motivated to do less to enact, sustain and

muster materializing intra-actions of inequity, competition and exclusion.

Ironically, I am suggesting that austerity is a key aspect of a post-human ethics of

accountability. Such austerity however is not favourable to practices and processes of inequity,

competition and exclusion. Rather what needs to become austere is the prevention of the

realization of other, i.e. different, possibilities for how PMSCs can and may work. Doing less as

a method of accountability will not be easy, especially because managerial, juridical, market and

moral regulation very much curtail the possibility of doing the materializing intra-activity of

PMSC work differently. More and better regulations and oversight may and do make PMSCs

work well. Failures to work well also serve as the knowledge base for crafting better regulation

and greater oversight. However, it is amongst the failures that one can also observe how it is that

the working well is what also needs to be held to account, an account as I have just suggested

entails the need for PMSCs to work less. Will PMSCs working less resolve the problems of

Anglocentric privatized, militarized, secured and commercialized practices and processes. No!

Such a move is not a panacea. It is a move however to become responsible for reducing the

materializing possibilities that enact inequity, competition and exclusion. Advocating for less

requires attention to even the "smallest cuts" for it is amongst the cutting together and apart of

the buried and burned, defended and shot, erected and penetrated that the materializing intra-

actions of PMSC work matters most.

ANTHROPOMORPHISM?

By way of winding down this addendum of revisions, I want to address the query, "Is

anthropocentrism unavoidable, in virtue of the fact that we are human?" (Youatt, 2014, p. 210).

Youatt does provide a satisfactory response in writing, "There is an important distinction to be

made between the unavoidably human perspective that comes from being human, on one hand,

and the entirely avoidable content of moral and political frameworks that are expressed through

human language" (Ibid.). This distinction suffices to assuage any concern that my contention to

do less is actually anti-human and not post-human. Doing less is a matter of reducing the

materializing a/effects of practices and processes that centre a rational individual human subject

as an exceptional arbiter, observer and experiencer. Where this distinction falters is amongst the

realization that Connolly, Bennett, Barad and myself are calling for less anthropocentrism

through specific human means. Or as Mitchell (2014) notes, "New materialism is weakly

anthropocentric in the same sense: it invokes *human* values, experiences and forms of agency as

means for responding to harms to nonhumans. Although this pathway emphasizes the actancy of

nonhumans as crucial contributors to the (trans)formation of worlds, it ultimately appeals to

human action and affect" (p. 15, emphasis in original).

For Bennett (2010), weak anthropocentrism is translated into anthropomorphism whereby

"an anthropomorphic element in perception can uncover a whole world of resonances and

resemblances – sounds and sights that echo and bounce far more than would be possible were the

universe to have a hierarchical structure" (p.99). I rather like the usage of anthropomorphism as

a methodological ethic – hence my auto-ethnography on skateboarding. Amongst a Baradian

post-humanism anthropomorphism means something more. According to Barad (2007, p. 171), "Humans do not merely assemble different apparatuses for satisfying particular knowledge projects; they themselves are part of the ongoing reconfiguring of the world." Where Bennett (2010) holds that anthropomorphism is "the interpretation of what is not human or personal in terms of human or personal characteristics" (p.98), a Baradian perspective would hold that anthropomorphism is not an exclusively human practice or process. Indeed the world anthropomorphizes "itself" through the materializing intra-actions that become humans. As such humans are already worldly and thus the problem of weak anthropocentrism is a tension of being and becoming amongst the world. The problem of strong anthropocentrism is that it attempts to escape worldly anthropomorphizing by over determining the possibilities of humanness in order to assert dominance over the other aspects of materialized becoming. Appealing to "human action and affect" or studying human practice need not be an effort to elevate humanity above the world. It is matter of understanding how anthropomorphizing can become anthropocentric and consequently realizing different possibilities of and for a world that is at this moment anthropomorphized. Becoming tense and being less sure are how this dissertation post-humanizes the anthropomorphisms of text. Realizing how and where PMSCs can and should do less work is how this dissertation becomes responsible.

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