

Enquiry into the Private Security and Military Companies' Identities: Shifting the Paradigm in Conceptualising Security

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ABSTRACT

This research recognises relevance of exploring Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs) identities, as being vital to furthering our understanding of ‘privatised security.’ More specifically, this research argues that exploration of PMSCs identities enables re-assessment of their very nature, and ultimately assessment of the shifting paradigm within which security is conceptualised. Through textual analysis of ten largest U.S. based PMSCs official websites this research shows how PMSCs internalise a set of commonly acknowledged norms that enable them to decrease ‘space’ for the debate and cast themselves as ‘unproblematic’ security experts. Furthermore, the research shows how PMSCs successfully ‘frame’ security discourses and how they strategically adjust to their target market by employing different ‘frames.’ This in turn enables them to expand and diversify their market, and intensify their presence and authority within the realm of international security. Importantly, the research reveals PMSCs identities’ core – profit maximization – that is characterized as being the ‘logic’ of their identities. Finally, the interaction between U.S. state identity and ten largest U.S. based PMSCs identities reveals how security is transferred to the crossroads of state’s and market’s domain, consequently being conceived according to economic calculus and vocabulary of ‘professionalism,’ ‘cost-efficiency,’ and ‘innovative thinking.’ The research concludes with assessing the shifting paradigm within which security is conceptualised, thereby identifying a dangerous leap towards international instability that ‘privatised security’ represents. More specifically, the research sheds light on the ‘encroachment’ of moral grounds, upon which responsibility over the use of force is determined, by the ‘market rationale.’

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INTRODUCTION

Traditional notion of security can be traced back to Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and the theory of social contracting that basically describes the occurrence in which citizens renounce their rights over the use of force in exchange for the state's promise of providing them with security.¹ Thus, state becomes the sole legitimate user of force, given that citizens renounce their rights to legitimately use force and consensually provide state with right of monopolizing the use of force within its territorial borders. Based upon this theory of social contracting West began building what we today know as being the modern nation-state. And during the 20th century nation-state has lived through a "golden age," given that it has been perceived as responsible and capable provider of security for its citizens.² Nevertheless, the Cold-War period triggered a change in these prevailing perceptions of security as being effectively provided by the nation-state. And even though the following period of globalisation led to increasing practices of nation-states' exertions of force, both domestically and within the international arena, the perceived capability of nation-states in providing security grew weaker along with exacerbating defence expenditures and reductions in the number of military troops.³ Consequently, the post-Cold War era shows a notable distrust in nation-state's capacity of delivering the promised security to its citizens. Logically, the traditional notion of security was and continues to be challenged, while the modern warfare continually reasserts various ethical dilemmas, including those related to the use of privatized force or contracting of the Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs) that have come to gradually assume state's responsibility over security of its citizens.

¹ Friend, Celeste. "Social Contract Theory." *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2004.
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/soc-cont/> (accessed on 25 April 2012).

² Hurrelmann, Achim. *Transforming the Golden-age Nation State*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

³ Berndtsson, Joakim. *The Privatisation of Security and State Control of Force: Changes, Challenges and the Case of Iraq*. Peace and Development Research, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, 2009.

Many scholars are concerned about morality of PMSCs and the breach of social contract. And even though it is possible to claim that state still provides security, given that it formally indeed does so only by contracting PMSCs as external private security ‘help,’ what appears to be dangerous is the informal power that PMSCs acquire over time. Furthermore, while citizens still pay taxes as their contribution that in turn enables states to provide them with public goods, privatisation of security blurs the line between public and private. This blurred line in turn leads to strengthening of the corporate interests, which is unproblematic unless the citizens’ security (as a public good) is endangered. However, as private entities, PMSCs hold profit maximization as their prime motivation, since the ‘market logic’ demands it as a prerequisite for their ‘survival.’ The concern over profit being the prime motivation behind PMSCs activities is tackled from different angles. One of these can be related to the analysis of what PMSCs represent for international relations. Amongst various authors, who tackle this issue in terms of what is known to be the principal-agent problem in international security is Peter W. Singer, who emphasizes complex relationship between the principal (state) and the agent (PMSCs) that stems from divergent core motivations of these two actors.⁴ In other words, he notes that there is a danger in mixing state’s core motivation of providing its citizens with security and PMSCs core motivation of profit maximization. The main point here being legitimacy that the state draws from its citizens by offering them security in return. And being dependant on the ‘security’ of their future contracts, PMSCs first draw its legitimacy from principals (i.e. the states that contract them), meaning that as private businesses they follow the ‘market logic’ in order to ‘survive.’ However, as their security expertise grows, they are more and more able to build legitimacy on these grounds. In addition, as private business entities PMSCs pose a serious normative dilemma, given that they operate on the basis of providing security services in return for financial remuneration,

⁴ Singer, Peter Warren. *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*. Cornell University Press, 2003.

historically linked to notorious ‘mercenarism.’ This further points out to another strand of literature on PMSCs that examines norms, the manner in which they change and the underlying reasons for such change. Recently, Sarah Percy dealt with international relations and norms across different time periods, thereby assessing the issue of ‘mercenarism’ and contemporary legitimized private security actors.⁵ And even though it is rather difficult to define mercenaries, she recognizes that there are two underlying characteristics that they have in common with PMSCs – pursuit of monetary gain and them being nationally disassociated with any of the parties involved in conflict. And there is great tension arising from these two common characteristics of mercenaries when it comes to PMSCs, given that these actors do have financial motivation in common with mercenaries and in some instances they are also non-nationals of either of the parties involved in conflict.⁶

The change in warfare across time can be described as a reaction to the change in nation-state identity.⁷ American identity in particular has been constructed by binary logic and rejection of the ‘otherness’ as being threatening the ‘goodness’ of the American society.⁸ In other words, American identity holds security at its core while practicing a continuous exclusion of the ‘other’ and thus can be described as a “society of security.”⁹ And being the most prominent international actor when it comes to military interventions, it is important to understand the nexus between the American identity and identities of its PMSCs. As stated by the Pentagon official records, the

⁵ Percy, Sarah. *Mercenaries: The History of a Norm in International Relations*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

⁶ As Deborah Avant notes in her book, *The Market For Force: The Consequences Of Privatizing Security*. Cambridge University Press 2005, whatever the case may be the ratio of military personnel and PSMCs cannot be taken lightly, given the fact that it increased from a ratio of one hundred to one (during Operation Desert Storm in Croatia, 1994) to the ratio of ten to one (during the Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003) over the course of only ten years.

⁷ Singer, Peter Warren. *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 2003.

⁸ Campbell, David. *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*. University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

⁹ Ibid.

U.S. invested circa \$300 billion in services provided by PMSCs since 1994.¹⁰ More importantly, the monetary value of U.S. Department of Defence (DOD) contracts with PMSCs increased by approximately fifty percent over the period of only one year (between 2004 and 2005).¹¹ Interestingly, PMSCs were first established in the U.S. as a response to increasing demand for security and the weakened image of the state concerning its capability of providing its citizens with security.¹² However, these private actors can also be regarded as symbolizing the *Zeitgeist* or the neoliberal structural reforms of the 1970s that began changing prevalent perceptions of the nation-state as being trusted and skilful security provider for its citizens and introduced the ‘burning’ need for privatizing most of the state’s responsibilities. These structural changes not only altered prevalent perceptions of the nation-state, but also created a fertile soil for the new private actors, amongst which the field of security was ‘filled’ by PMSCs.¹³ As a result, the traditional notion of security has been questioned, and the very concept of ‘privatised security’ had to be included within existing theories of international relations.

Importantly, PMSCs identities attracted several scholars who recognized the relevance of first attempting to grasp the nature of PMSCs, before attempting to grasp the concept of ‘privatised security.’ In fact, importance of understanding PMSCs identities can be related to the alteration of the very notion of security, and ultimately normative implications that this altered notion brings. Namely, as private business entities PMSCs have profit maximization at the core of their identities, which poses a serious moral concern over them being legitimate security experts. The main concern here is that their identities’ core is dependent on the existence of

¹⁰ Neil, Benjamin A, and I. I. Neil. “Are Private Military Firms The Answer To The Expanding Global Crisis?” *International Business & Economics Research Journal (IBER)* 10, no. 2 (January 27, 2011).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Berndtsson, Joakim. *The Privatisation of Security and State Control of Force: Changes, Challenges and the Case of Iraq*, 2009.

threats and general sensation of insecurity. This in turn means that PMSCs act as ‘norm entrepreneurs’ by framing security in terms of ‘cost-efficiency’ and ‘innovativeness.’ And given that these private security actors’ future contracts depend on how they are perceived, not just by their potential customers but also by wider society, PMSCs use commonly acknowledged set of norms as building blocks of their identities. These commonly acknowledged norms further diminish ‘space’ for the debate regarding their very nature and direct attention towards their security ‘expertise’ and ‘innovative thinking.’ Thus, ‘privatised security’ ceases to be constructively questioned. Instead, what becomes central concern is the most effective manner in which these private actors are regulated, in addition to them competing in becoming the most cost-efficient security provider. Surely there are numerous ethical issues arising out of the aforementioned norm change. Most of them are being discussed, such as the blurred private/public divide and disturbed civil-military relations. However, the most troubling concern has been noted by Anna Leander and that is the re-militarisation of security that PMSCs induce.

Leander approaches PMSCs in terms of ‘epistemic’ and ‘structural’ power they possess.¹⁴ This further leads her to conclude that these private security experts’ relevance for international security is underestimated. However, she does not focus on crucial point in understanding PMSCs and impact that they have on the very notion of security – the exploration of PMSCs identities. And it is precisely PMSCs identities that this particular research endeavour recognizes as being crucial in understanding implications of privatised security. More precisely, what this research argues is that the exploration of PMSCs identities enables re-assessment of the very nature of these private actors that is increasingly casted aside as being solely a question of proper regulation. Furthermore, the main focus of this research is the interaction between the U.S. state identity in particular and ten largest U.S. based PMSCs identities, operating on a transnational

¹⁴ Leander, Anna. “The Power to Construct International Security: On the Significance of Private Military Companies.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (June 1, 2005): 803–825.

scale. Central assertion here is the manner in which PMSCs internalize a set of commonly accepted norms and use them as the building blocks of their identities. This enables them to become unproblematic actors and establish a firm image of professionalism. Furthermore, this research shows how PMSCs identities' underlying 'logic' – profit maximization – gradually 'suffuses' the U.S. state's identity core – security. This in turn means that security becomes regarded as 'cost-efficient' and 'innovative' solution to identified threats, which in turn raises normative concerns, given that PMSCs existential concern – profit maximization – becomes the driving force of 'innovative' thinking in identifying security concerns. More precisely, these actors 'feed on' insecurities and when this *modus operandi* 'suffuses' the state's core, well, a question becomes – security for *whom*, the future of private security market? A peaceful globe seems to be bad for the business.

But how can one explain PMSCs increased engagement in the field of human security? Well, this question leads back to this particular research's discovery that shows how PMSCs act as 'norm entrepreneurs' and 'frame' their identities in such a way so as to expand their market and ensure the aforementioned – future of their contracts. Namely, by appropriating humanitarian norms into their identities, they aim at affirming their position on the market and reduce 'space' for the debate regarding their very nature. More precisely, by marketing 'humanitarian' values of their identities to the wider public PMSCs reveal how they internalise commonly accepted norms in order to become unproblematic security experts, and how they swiftly adjust to their clients' needs. In addition to revealing the internalized set of commonly accepted norms, textual analysis of ten largest U.S. based PMSCs official websites conducted in this research shows that the core of their identity – profit maximization – remains ever-present, and operates as the driving logic of their behaviour and a fundamental responsibility towards their shareholders. And understanding PMSCs identity is crucial in understanding what 'privatised security' implies, which is a dangerous

leap towards the world of insecurities and international instability. Finally, it is important to understand that PMSCs have become security experts, thereby penetrating the realm of international security. And given that security depends on how one perceives the world out there, meaning that it is a relative concept dependent on intersubjective meanings, it is critical to explore PMSCs identities in order to re-address their nature, their interests and manners in which these affect the paradigm within which security is conceptualised. More importantly, one needs to question the altered norms that allowed PMSCs to proliferate. Surely, it is important to search for effective regulative means for this private security industry. However, it must be noted that no regulation can remove the core of PMSCs identities or their very nature of being private business entities. And ultimately, no regulation can secure the future of peace with PMSCs yearly income and security expertise on a rise.

Being a part of the world in which the norm prohibition of historically well-known ‘mercenarism’ has shifted and enabled PMSCs to thrive, I find it difficult not to be sceptic regarding the future of international security. This primarily comes out of concern about not only impressive size of the private security industry, but also from notable authoritative power over security that PMSCs have come to acquire over the past two decades. And it is precisely the core of PMSCs identities that determines their interests and serves as the underlying ‘logic’ of their identities, which causes concerns over the future of peace. Chameleon identities, as PMSCs are labelled in this research endeavour, reveal the capacity of these private security actors to promptly adjust to their clients’ needs, i.e. the needs of their new target market. In addition, this capacity reveals their growing appetites in expanding and diversifying their market, which has been noted on various occasions, including their involvement in ‘humanitarian’ activities. And one does not question their ‘professionalism’ or their investments in technological advancements of their security services (what they often label as ‘innovative thinking’), one questions the nature of these

private business entities and how their identities affect our common understandings of security. Particularly worrying is their existential concern of profit maximization and market expansion, which can be characterized as strategic activities that ensure the future of their contracts. And again, it appears as if international stability is not quite what PMSCs identities' 'rationale' corresponds to.

CHAPTER 1: PRIVATISATION OF SECURITY ‘FRAMED’

1.1 *Historical Outlook: Security by Contract and the Evolving State*

Prior to 19th century the non-state actors (e.g. mercenaries and pirates) found their place in warfare, as their involvement in war was considered to be a common sense.¹⁵ In fact, the history of ‘mercenarism’ can be traced back to the Battle of Kadesh in 1294 B.C. and the rule of Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses the Second.¹⁶ In addition, both Roman and Byzantine Empires were heavily reliant on mercenaries who were prevalently recruited from the poor regions.¹⁷ However, during the Middle Ages contracts appeared as the new form of arrangement between mercenaries and the states employing them, and Italian *condottieri* became the leaders of this new contracting practice.¹⁸ The first private military companies offering their services to the states appeared during these Dark Ages, and as any private actor these companies pursued profit maximization.¹⁹ However, as previously mentioned, during 19th century the notion of non-state actors’ involvement in wars started to be perceived as unacceptable, and the nation-states began to emerge. Janice Thompson offers empirical evidence showing how strengthening of the U.S. and France’s state power during 19th century led to their reluctance in using mercenaries.²⁰ Interestingly, she asserts that it seems improbable for sovereign nation-states today to return to the old habits of employing foreign troops to fight their own wars, as it was a common practice throughout history marked by ‘mercenarism’. This assertion seems rather problematic, given that

¹⁵ Dupuy, Richard Ernest, and Trevor Nevitt Dupuy. *The Encyclopedia of Military History: From 3500 B.C. to the Present*. Harper & Row, 1970.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Singer, Peter Warren. *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*. Cornell University Press, 2003.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Avant, Deborah D. *The Market for Force: The Consequences of Privatizing Security*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

²⁰ Thomson, Janice E. *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns: State-Building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe*. Princeton University Press, 1996.

the Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs) have been increasingly relied upon by sovereign nation-states from the late 20th century onwards. And to trace back the origins of the modern day ‘mercenarism,’ it is necessary to go back to 1970s and the age of neoliberal structural reforms. As Avant notes, this period was marked by the evolving demand for private security that stems from the prevalent notion of state being the inapt security provider.²¹ She further recognizes that the demand for private security triggered the establishment of PMSCs, who simply supplied what was demanded, as it is the case in any sector that follows the ‘market logic.’

1.2 1970s And Neoliberal Structural Reforms

The end of the Cold War led to reductions in the number of military personnel. And neoliberal reforms of Reagan and Thatcher casted a veil of incompetence on states, thereby introducing rhetorics of need for private expertise and transferring of most of the state’s bureaucratic functions to the private sector. The weakened image of state not only boosted neoliberal trend of privatisation, but also created a general distrust in state’s ability of providing its citizens with security.²² This atmosphere of distrust, as a social factor, created a fertile soil for proliferation of the private security industry. And when it comes to material factors, the downsizing of military sector proved to be crucial to the increased reliance of states on the services offered by PMSCs. As Eliot Cohen argues, privatisation of security actually allows the U.S. to benefit from the capitalist economy in the new technologically advanced age.²³ Thus, as he further asserts, the U.S. is able to manage its security-related issues with less of its own troops and reach out for PMSCs as a more cost-efficient solution. Furthermore, the weak or the so called failed states saw PMSCs as an instrument for containing violence raging within their

²¹ Avant, Deborah. “From Mercenary to Citizen Armies: Explaining Change in the Practice of War.” *International Organization* 54, no. 01 (2000): 41–72.

²² Wood, Jennifer, and Clifford D. Shearing. *Imagining Security*. Willan, 2007.

²³ Cohen, Eliot A. “A Revolution in Warfare.” *Foreign Affairs*, March 1, 1996.

borders. Recent study by Željko Branović shows how failed or failing states are the most lucrative opportunities for PMSCs activities.²⁴ Many conflicts, such as those in ex-Yugoslavia and central Asia were influenced by PMSCs involvement.²⁵ Surely the increased reliance of states on PMSCs is considered as practical or beneficial, but also as controversial in terms of their legitimacy and potential spinning out of control. The notorious history of ‘mercenarism’ surely does not benefit the reputation of these private security actors and even brings-up moral dilemmas. However, it is important to note that unlike mercenaries PMSCs have been legally recognized, and their regulation attracted attention of scholars across various disciplines.

1.3 Legal Framework: Distinguishing PMSCs from Mercenaries

Joanna Spear offers a commonly used definition of PMSCs as being “corporate entities that provide military expertise and other professional services essential to combat and warfare”.²⁶ Similarly, Montreaux Document initiated by International Committee of the Red Cross and the Switzerland, defines PMSCs as “private business entities that provide military and/or security services, irrespective of how they describe themselves.”²⁷ Elke Krahmann notes how it is crucial to identify which definitions are most prevalent for particular actors, in this case PMSCs, given that social roles are assigned to such actors on the basis of how they are defined.²⁸ And defining PMSCs is of great importance for international security, since the very notion of security is affected by legitimacy of these private actors. More specifically, as legally recognized private

²⁴ Branović, Željko, and Sven Chojnacki. “The Logic of Security Markets: Security Governance in Failed States.” *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 6 (December 1, 2011): 553–569.

²⁵ Arnold, Guy. *Mercenaries: The Scourge of the Third World*. Palgrave Macmillan, 1999.

²⁶ Spear, Joanna. *Market Forces: The Political Economy of Private Military Companies*. Fafo Report 531. Norway: Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies, 2006.

²⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross. “Montreux Document on pertinent international legal obligations and good practices for States related to operations of private military and security companies during armed conflict,” 17 September 2008.

²⁸ Krahmann, Elke. “From ‘Mercenaries’ to ‘Private Security Contractors’: The (Re)Construction of Armed Security Providers in International Legal Discourses.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 40, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 343–363.

business entities, PMSCs gradually become disassociated from historically well-known mercenaries and consequently gain recognition of the wider public. Montreaux Document and the UN Draft Convention published in 2012 show that regulative adjustments to the expanding industry of PMSCs have been recognized as urgent requirement within the international law. In addition, the Montreaux Document combines ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ law, thereby establishing certain standards of PMSCs practices, at the same time creating the binding rules.²⁹ Nevertheless, these legal documents are considered inadequate as regulating instruments for this private security industry, given that they are legally non-binding.³⁰ Importantly, these documents can be taken as an indication of states’ willingness to continue their practices of outsourcing security-related tasks, which again poses many concerns and opens-up many questions that await to be answered. Whatever the case may be, PMSCs can be characterized as private entities that operate within the hazy legal frameworks and pose serious concerns for the international law and security.

But before offering an insight into various existing discourses on PMSCs it is important to briefly review the spectrum of services offered by these private actors. Widely acknowledged classification of PMSCs according to services they provide is Singer’s “tip of the spear” metaphor through which he divides them into three different categories: the first being Military Provider Firms that offer logistics support and supply required goods, the second being the Military Consulting Firms that provide training, expert planning and intelligence services to their clients, and the third being the Military Support Firms that provide combat-related services that range from armed protection to the independently conducted combat operations.³¹ Nevertheless, this classification of PMSCs according to services they offer certainly does not reveal the complexity

²⁹ Cockayne, James. “Regulating Private Military and Security Companies: The Content, Negotiations, Weaknesses and Promise of the Montreaux Document.” *Journal of Conflict & Security Law* 13, no. 3 (2009): 401-428.

³⁰ White, Nigel D. “The Privatisation of Military and Security Functions and Human Rights: Comments on the UN Working Group’s Draft Convention.” *Human Rights Law Review* 11, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 133-151.

³¹ Singer, Peter Warren. *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 2003.

of this industry. Namely, the division is not that clear as it appears to be and the reason for this is multiplicity of different services that companies offer, despite their public representation of specializing in security services that do not ‘cross over’ to the military or combat like practices.³² In addition, it is important to identify the type of PMSCs according to the purpose of their services, their scope and form. Schreier and Caparini argue that the most important difference between services provided by PMSCs is their purpose, i.e. whether the purpose is offensive or defensive in nature.³³ As they further note, there are different forms in which the aforementioned services are delivered, and these can be classified as direct combat operations and expert security advice. Scope on the other hand, according to these two authors, can be classified as horizontal or vertical. Horizontal refers to the distinction between domestically and/or foreign provided services, while vertical refers to the distinction between the top-down and bottom-up security services (e.g. government and social group/corporate entity outsourcing their security-related issues, respectively). And while the PMSCs classification offered by Singer represents a comprehensive overview of differences in security services that PMSCs provide, it appears that the latter classification offered by Schreier and Caparini reveals the complex nature of these private actors. And perhaps it is not sufficient to say that the latter classification reveals the complexity, but rather that it sheds light on potential danger that PMSCs represent for the international security. However, this is not to say that PMSCs are fundamentally ‘evil’ private entities, it is solely a motivation for furthering our understanding of this evolving industry, in order to better grasp both its nature and implications that its existence brings.

³² Schreier, Fred, and Caparini, Marina. “Privatising Security: Law, Practice and Governance of Private Military and Security Companies.” *Geneva Centre of the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF)*, Occasional Paper No. 6, March 2005. http://www.dcaf.ch/content/download/34919/525055/file/op06_privatising-security.pdf (accessed on 16 April 2012).

³³ Ibid.

1.4 Theoretical Framework: Constructivist Take on PMSCs

The end of the Cold-War brought three major developments within the international scene: (1) increase in failed and failing states (2) process of globalisation and development of complex power networks, and (3) technological enhancements, particularly in the field of information technology.³⁴ Various new states were ‘born’ during this period, accompanied by the blood-shed. And all these system disturbances led to the most creative period for the international relations, given that many traditional conceptions were challenged by the aforementioned developments. This further instigated international relations scholars to reassess main paradigms of their theories.³⁵ Constructivism became notable theoretical approach by posing the major challenge to realism. The core of constructivist thought – intersubjective meanings – is inspired by social theory and the process of social actors’ sharing meanings.³⁶ Alexander Wendt argues that individual actions are informed by meanings and that material factors result from these meanings that objects have attached to them.³⁷ Importantly, notion of identity attracted vast interest of many constructivist scholars. According to these scholars, identities of social actors are constructed on the basis of common meanings and must not be taken as given.³⁸ Thus, it is important to identify common meanings shared by societal actors in order to understand their identities.

Generally, identity can be defined as fundamental to any social and political action, a central characteristic of individual or collective ‘selfhood’ or the very product of political and

³⁴ Norwitz, Jeffrey H. *Armed Groups: Studies in National Security, Counterterrorism, and Counterinsurgency*. Government Printing Office, 2008.

³⁵ Reus-Smit, Christian, and Duncan Snidal. *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations / Edited by Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal*. Oxford Handbook of Political Science. New York : Oxford University Press, 2008.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Wendt, Alexander. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

³⁸ Ibid.

social actions.³⁹ These constructivist concepts of identities actually highlight the fluidity of identity *per se*. In fact, identities generally understand the creation of ‘others.’⁴⁰ This need of ‘others’ reveals the intersubjectivity of individual actors, inherent to constructivist thought. Schmitt’s assertion that identities are most efficiently formed in situations of combat can be corroborated by Bush’s administration use of ‘war on terror’ in reinforcing the American identity.⁴¹ And history of violence speaks about this need to construct ‘others’ in order to affirm one’s own identity, which again can be perceived as actors seeking security for their own identities. David Campbell analyses this search for identity security through the “demands of identity” or the “logic of identity,” expressed through discursive practices of constructing the ‘self’ and the ‘other.’⁴² That said, social actors seek to remain present and become defensive when their presence becomes questionable. PMSCs act no differently, and this particular research further analyses this through their identities’ construction. However, it must be noted that identities also ‘speak’ about actors’ interests or desires that are reflected in their behaviour or practices. Thus, in addition to analysing discursive practices surrounding actors’ identities formation it is also necessary to assess the practices resulting from the ‘logic’ of these identities. As far as the state is concerned, its identity can be defined as the self-understanding that is reflected in its discursive representational practices, but also reflected in its foreign policy interests and actions.⁴³ And when it comes to the U.S. state identity in particular, this research identifies security as the underlying ‘logic’ or the core of its identity, and a cohesive force that reinforces the collective identity of its citizens and enables legitimate functioning of the state.

³⁹ Lebow, Richard Ned. “Identity and International Relations.” *International Relations* 22, no. 4, (December 1, 2008): 473 -492.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Schmitt, Carl. *The Concept of the Political*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1976.

⁴² Campbell, David. 1996. "The Politics of Radical Interdependence." *Millennium*, Vol 25, no. 1, pp.129-141.

⁴³ Wendt, Alexander. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Furthermore, when it comes to PMSCs identities, this research shows how they construct their identities through corporate culture and how profit maximization is the core or underlying ‘logic’ of their identities. But before continuing, it is also necessary to offer a brief insight into changing notions of security and identify which particular notion will be used for the purposes of this research endeavour, by at the same time accounting for the increasing power of PMSCs shifting the paradigm within which security is conceptualised.

Increasing reliance on PMSCs directly implies the growing power of these actors in influencing the ‘politics of protection’ and the very notion of security.⁴⁴ Namely, through their engagement in numerous security issues, PMSCs acquire notable security expertise. In fact, they become a part of “global security assemblages” where public and private actors interact and construct new forms of power – the ones beyond state.⁴⁵ Furthermore, as business actors PMSCs are concerned about constructing their corporate identities, thereby aiming to enhance their reputation and increase their revenues. In other words, in ‘privatized security,’ the ‘logic of market’ is employed, meaning that sources of threat (insecurity) become the demand for security and PMSCs become the suppliers. And by acquiring the power through security expertise PMSCs become important security actors, having potential of shaping the very notion of security. And what is security after all? There have been numerous efforts made on behalf of security studies scholars to develop a widely accepted notion of security. During this process, security has become an “essentially contested concept” and has ultimately become a ‘broadened’ and ‘deepened’ conception.⁴⁶ The most notable recent reconceptualization of security has been done by Copenhagen School. This school of thought developed analytical framework that accents

⁴⁴ Leander, Anna, and Rens van Munster. “Private Security Contractors in the Debate About Darfur: Reflecting and Reinforcing Neo-Liberal Governmentality.” *International Relations* 21, no. 2 (June 1, 2007): 201–216.

⁴⁵ Huysmans, Jef. “International Politics of Insecurity: Normativity, Inwardness and the Exception.” *Security Dialogue* 37, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 11–29.

⁴⁶ Buzan, Barry (1991) *People, States and Fear*, 2nd edn. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

social characteristics of security, and that defines security as being the “speech act,” thereby focusing on three main concepts: securitizing actor, referent object and audience.⁴⁷ Security studies have gone as far as holding individual as being the referent object of security – an approach known as human security, which defines security as ‘freedom from want’ or ‘freedom from fear.’⁴⁸ But, for the purposes of this research, security will be regarded as social construct or result of shared meanings that form the basis of individual identities and interests, and in turn results from political practices.

⁴⁷ Buzan, Barry, Ole Wæver, and Jaap De Wilde. *Security: A New Framework For Analysis*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998.

⁴⁸ Floyd, R. “Human Security and the Copenhagen School’s Securitization Approach: Conceptualizing Human Security as a Securitizing Move.” *Human Security Journal* Vol. 5, No. 4 (Winter 2007): 38-49.

CHAPTER 2: DISCOURSES ON PRIVATE MILITARY AND SECURITY COMPANIES

Ken Silverstein is quite sceptic about PMSCs' motivations and their role in the U.S. defence sector.⁴⁹ As he notes, privatisation of security causes a dangerous shift in security being considered as public good to security gradually converting to private good. His main concern is that security issues will become severely influenced by PMSCs and their 'thirst' for profit maximization, meaning that real threats and security problems may easily be ignored. Similar concern is expressed by Anna Leander who notes that PMSCs relocate power from the public to private, and more importantly, from the civil to military sphere.⁵⁰ She further asserts that privatisation of security provides private security actors with 'epistemic' power to affect meanings through discursive practices, which allows them to interpret and implement security-related decisions in accordance with their own interests. This 'opens up' another relevant issue of PMSCs gaining techno-managerial expertise through which they alter the very meaning of security. Peter W. Singer also identifies the aforementioned shift from public to private, which ultimately erodes the state's authority, given that PMSCs strengthen their image of security expertise and knowledge.⁵¹ On the other hand, David Shearer offers quite a bright view on PMSCs by asserting that some seemingly insolvable security issues could be finally solved by these private actors.⁵² As an example he gives the so called failed states where intra-state violence is difficult to control, such as are most of the African states. Furthermore, he emphasizes that humanitarian missions could be excellent area where PMSCs could effectively fill-up the 'gap' caused by lethargy of international community. In the same optimistic tone, Doug Brooks argues

⁴⁹ Silverstein, Ken, and Daniel Burton-Rose. *Private Warriors*. Verso, 2000.

⁵⁰ Leander, Anna. "The Power to Construct International Security: On the Significance of Private Military Companies." *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (June 1, 2005): 803–825.

⁵¹ Singer, Peter Warren. *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*. Cornell University Press, 2003.

⁵² Shearer, David. "Private Armies and Military Intervention." *The Adelphi Papers* 38, no. 316 (1998).

that PMSCs are efficient actors that have potential of reducing the amount of conflicts in Africa.⁵³ And it is necessary to mention both scepticism and optimism regarding PMSCs, given that they affect existing discourses on privatisation of security. Surely one can encounter a wide variety of arguments regarding the privatisation of security, however, it is essential to classify existing discourses on PMSCs according to divergent theoretical perspectives in order to reveal potential research venues and offer answers to questions that have the potential of deepening our understanding of ‘privatised security.’

Theoretical approaches to PMSCs that are most prevalent are constructivism, political theory, legal theory, functionalism and rationalism. And as far as the focus of the literature on PMSCs is concerned, there is a predominant *problematique* of state’s weakened image and its control over the use of force. In other words, most of the literature either analyses or reflects upon the issues of civil-military relations, public/private divide and existing regulative frameworks for PMSCs. When it comes to international relations and security studies in particular, the notion of legitimate authority related to the use of force has been a vital concern expressed in discourses surrounding PMSCs. And according to Ian Clark, legitimacy is a normative question that is central to deeper analysis of privatised security.⁵⁴ Thus, it is inevitable to question ethical grounds of states’ increasing reliance on PMSCs, but also of various non-governmental actors’ and other private entities’ reliance on security services offered by PSMCs.

2.1 PMSCs and the Legal Theory

Legal discourses related to PMSCs deal with issues of their accountability and lack of regulative frameworks that can effectively manage their activities. Principal problem is the ‘form’

⁵³ Brooks, Doug. “Write a Cheque, End a War – Using Private Military Companies to end African conflicts.” *Conflict Trends*, (2000): 33-35.

⁵⁴ Clark, Ian. *International Legitimacy and World Society*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

that PMSCs take – private business entities that deal with tasks known to be legitimately performed solely by states, and that is the use of force. Overall, the lack of regulation over ‘privatised security’ cannot escape its normative dimension. In this vein, the efforts of constructing effective legal frameworks that will regulate PMSCs appear to affirm the future presence of these private actors within the international security, thereby gradually separating them from mercenaries. Additionally, these discourses also affirm the transition towards neoliberal governmentality and the complex power networks.⁵⁵ Lindsey Cameron explores the consequences of PMSCs being private entities whose employees are recognised as civil actors under the international law.⁵⁶ And her research can be linked back to issues of civil-military relations and the blurred public/private divide. In addition, it can be related back to transition to the very process of security privatisation and the ‘global security assemblages,’ which consequently led to the re-construction of legal frameworks. Interesting debate related to international humanitarian law and PMSCs stems from the increased number of contracts between international humanitarian organisations and these private security actors. The main problem here is not the very fact that humanitarian organisations contract PMSCs, but that PMSCs violate human rights and humanitarian law *per se*.⁵⁷ For example, controversy over Halliburton’s involvement in human rights violations during the Iraq war in 2003 instigated a number of legal issues surrounding PMSCs, particularly the issue of accountability gap that appears to be vast.⁵⁸ And accountability gap again relates back to the state-governed public domain, and the private domain being left for private actors that are not stringently governed by

⁵⁵ Leander, Anna, and Rens Van Munster. “Private Security Contractors in the Debate About Darfur: Reflecting and Reinforcing Neo-Liberal Governmentality.” *International Relations* 21, no. 2 (June 1, 2007): 201–216.

⁵⁶ Cameron, Lindsey. “Private Military Companies: Their Status Under International Humanitarian Law and Its Impact on Their Regulation.” *International Review of the Red Cross* 88, no. 863 (2006): 573–598.

⁵⁷ Chesterman, Simon, Angelina Fisher, and New York University. Institute for International Law and Justice. *Private Security, Public Order: The Outsourcing of Public Services and Its Limits*. Oxford University Press, 2009.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

the state unless they breach the existing legal norms.⁵⁹ This in turn can be characterized as legal unpreparedness of the international community on the process of security privatisation and the booming number of PMSCs.

2.2 Warfare of the 21st Century

Functionalist and rationalist views on PMSCs explain the process of security privatisation as the ‘cost-efficient’ approach to security governance that allows states to adapt to 21st century’s ‘art of war.’ These two approaches further note that the divide between public and private ought to be understood in terms of cost/benefit analysis.⁶⁰ Furthermore, Deborah Avant uses socio-economic institutional approach to the privatisation of security to offer an insight into the underlying rationale for the increasing number of PMSCs.⁶¹ She traces the root of change in security governance to what has been a common denote for scholars analysing PMSCs, and that are the neoliberal structural changes and demands that these changes pose. And despite various issues related to the privatisation of security (e.g. lack of adequate regulation), the ‘cost-efficiency’ of PMSCs indicates continuation of states’ reliance on their security services.⁶² Conversely, political theorists are concerned about the legitimacy of PMSCs and ground their assessment of these private actors on the Just War Theory. Sarah Percy examines the norm change in international relations across time in order to assess how the historical norm against ‘mercenarism’ – their immorality and prohibition – affects future PMSCs prospects.⁶³

⁵⁹ Berndtsson, Joakim. *The Privatisation of Security and State Control of Force: Changes, Challenges and the Case of Iraq*. Gothenburg: University of Gothenburg, 2009.

⁶⁰ Brauer, Jürgen. “An Economic Perspective on Mercenaries, Military Companies and the Privatisation of Force.” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 13, no. 1, (1999): 130–146.

⁶¹ Avant, Deborah Denise. *The Market For Force: The Consequences Of Privatizing Security*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

⁶² Ortiz, Carlos. “The New Public Management of Security: The Contracting and Managerial State and the Private Military Industry.” *Public Money & Management* 30, no. 1 (2009): 35–41.

⁶³ Percy, Sarah. *Mercenaries: The History of a Norm in International Relations*. Oxford University Press, 2007.

Importantly, she does not discount existing arguments of PMSCs ‘cost-efficiency,’ but rather focuses on the question of legitimacy and normative implications of changing ‘authorities’ over the use of force. Similarly, James Pattison uses legitimacy as being the normative notion in order to analyse privatisation of security.⁶⁴ In his analysis, Pattison uses the Just War Theory so as to assess the very ethics of waging war. However, he does so through evaluating who legitimate actors in waging war are and concludes with the notion of PMSCs not being legitimate ‘army,’ given that they undermine democratic control and pose serious threat to morally responsible conduct.

2.3 Constructing the Security Debate

Constructivists, Leander and van Munster, argue that discourses regarding humanitarian disaster in Darfur that started in 2003 emphasize strong expert ‘image’ that PMSCs acquired since the late 20th century onwards.⁶⁵ They further note that the main concern related to transformation of security governance is precisely the narrowed ‘space’ for the public debate surrounding security. And shrinking ‘space’ for public discourses concerning security is the process of depoliticization, as mentioned by these two authors. Furthermore, PMSCs ‘techno-managerial’ expertise relates to wider neoliberal changes in the modes governance and the creation of “global security assemblages.”⁶⁶ This again relates to state being perceived as inadequate in protecting its citizens, and the general neoliberal advocacy for privatisation of all spheres of what is known as state bureaucratic apparatus. And while privatisation of security is the ‘spirit’ of neoliberalism, there are many unknowns concerning the transformation of security governance and alteration of

⁶⁴ Pattison, James. “The Legitimacy of the Military, Private Military and Security Companies, and Just War Theory.” *European Journal of Political Theory* 11, no. 2 (April 1, 2012): 131–154.

⁶⁵ Leander, Anna, and Rens Van Munster. “Private Security Contractors in the Debate About Darfur: Reflecting and Reinforcing Neo-Liberal Governmentality,” 2007.

⁶⁶ Abrahamsen, Rita, and Michael C Williams. “Security Beyond the State: Global Security Assemblages in International Politics.” *International Political Sociology* 3, no. 1 (March 1, 2009): 1–17.

the very meaning of security. For constructivist scholars, such as the aforementioned, PMSCs are a dangerous mode of Foucauldian power given the increasing amount of knowledge they acquire over time. This in turn leads to the issue of security being gradually individualised and converted to technologically advanced risk assessments, which as Leander notes, provides PMSCs with legitimate authority over security related issues that is founded on their ‘techno-managerial’ expertise.⁶⁷ Finally, the legitimacy that PMSCs gradually acquire and that stems from their increasing security expertise can again be related to an increasing need for studying how these private actors construct their identities within the wider framework of neoliberal agenda.

2.4 Exploring the PMSCs Identities and Setting the Research ‘Frame’

Recent studies began recognizing importance of PMSCs identities, thereby aiming to reveal the very nature of these private entities. The main concern of this body of literature, that is not large or widely recognized as important, is the manner in which PMSCs have managed to construct their identities in accordance with humanitarian actors themselves.⁶⁸ This further relates to fluidity of PMSCs identities, meaning that these actors adjust to the contracting party’s identity through identifying the main ‘personalities’ or virtues that are required of them in order to acquire contracts. More specifically, Joachim and Schneiker use ‘frame appropriation’ to show how PMSCs create their humanitarian identities in order to understand the role that identity plays in this growing industry.⁶⁹ By using memoirs of British contractors engaged in Iraq war during the period of five years (from 2003 to 2008), Paul Higate shows importance of intersubjective meanings that arise from national identities of contractors and that affect the manner in which

⁶⁷ Leander, Anna. “The Power to Construct International Security: On the Significance of Private Military Companies.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (June 1, 2005): 803–825.

⁶⁸ Joachim, Jutta, and Andrea Schneiker. “New Humanitarians? Frame Appropriation Through Private Military and Security Companies.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 40, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 365–388.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

PMSCs construct their identities.⁷⁰ Another recent analysis of PMSCs identities reveals many different ‘faces’ that these companies use in order to represent themselves to their potential clients. And although these ‘faces’ are adjusted to the client’s contracting bid terms, there is a constant in PMSCs public image and that is the security expertise, efficiency and knowledge.⁷¹ Overall, this research venue aims at understanding how PMSCs construct their identities, represent themselves as security experts and interact with the very notion of security. This particular interaction is crucial in deepening not just our current understanding of this growing industry, but also the manner in which PMSCs shift the paradigm within which security is conceptualised. More precisely, PMSCs identities open up a ‘space’ for furthering the understanding of privatised security overall. More importantly, their identities offer an opportunity for returning to the problematic notion of ‘war profiteering.’ Furthermore, in order to understand PMSCs identities it is crucial to start with assessing the manner in which these actors construct their identities within the wider social context, and the manner in which they publicly represent themselves. And it is precisely the process of PMSCs identities construction, their public representation, and interaction of their identities with the state identity that this particular research endeavour focuses on.

And as already stated, the prime purpose of this research is to understand how PMSCs construct their identities. In addition, the aim is to reveal why PMSCs identities are crucial to explore in order to grasp the normative shift in international security and increased transfer of security to the ‘hands’ of market. This prime aim will be attained by using both secondary and primary qualitative research in exploring the construction of PMSCs identities and context within

⁷⁰ Higate, Paul. “‘Cowboys and Professionals’: The Politics of Identity Work in the Private and Military Security Company.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 40, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 321 -341.

⁷¹ Berndtsson, Joakim. “Security Professionals for Hire: Exploring the Many Faces of Private Security Expertise.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 40, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 303 -320.

which these identities' are constructed, in addition to dynamics through which they interact with the U.S. state identity in particular. The primary research understands textual analysis of the U.S. based ten largest PMSCs official websites and identification of common patterns that reveal internalization of widely acknowledged set of norms, which serve as the building blocks of PMSCs identities. The secondary research understands acquiring empirical data collected by recognised academics that analyse PMSCs and the process of privatisation of security in general. This part of research will serve the purpose of identifying the manner in which PMSCs 'frame' security discourses so as to adjust their identities to their new target market. In addition, the research will show how PMSCs identities core – profit maximization – remains constant and acts as the underlying 'logic' of their behaviour. Finally, the data will be used to assess the U.S. state identity within which PMSCs construct their identities and ultimately interact with. That said, this research shows how PMSCs act as 'norm entrepreneurs' through 'framing' security discourses so as to secure the future of their contracts and expand their market. They accomplish this through internalizing commonly accepted set of norms, so as to decrease 'space' for the debate regarding their private nature and further build a strong image of security professionalism and expertise. And following are the sections through which the research is structured: (1) exploring the manner in which PMSCs 'frame' security discourses, and the manner in which their identities strategically adjust to their target market's needs, thereby diversifying their market and intensifying their involvement in matters of international security; (2) conducting textual analysis of ten largest U.S. based PMSCs official websites to show the construction of their identities, thereby identifying a set of commonly acknowledged norms that these PMSCs internalize with the purpose of becoming legitimate security experts; (3) revealing the PMSCs identities core or the underlying 'logic' of their behaviour – profit maximization; (4) exploring the relationship between the U.S. state identity and PMSCs; (5) and finally assessing the dynamics of PMSCs identities and the state identity, and ultimately the shifting paradigm in conceptualising security.

CHAPTER 3: CHAMELEON IDENTITIES

3.1 *PMSCs Chameleon Identities: Adjusting to Client's Needs*

According to Finnemore and Sikkink, norms that are not questioned become internalized by social actors.⁷² They further note how commonly acknowledged internalized norms make actors' behaviour unproblematic, which in turn results in diminished 'space' for the debate. Consequently, varieties of vocations are constructed around particular set of norms that serve as building blocks of social actors' identities. And as professionals in the field of security, PMSCs construct their identities around a commonly acknowledged set of norms that further guide their behaviour. However, as private business entities operating within the field of international security PMSCs have come to construct their identities similar to Chameleons. Namely, in order to affirm their positions on the market these actors use widely accepted norms as the founding blocks of their identities. However, as business actors they have profit maximization at the core of their identities further directing their behaviour. This in turn means that they tend to aim at diversify their target market in order to secure the future of their contracts. And given that the security of their contracts depends on their recognition as legitimate security providers by not only their target market but also society in general, they use the aforementioned commonly accepted societal norms to become 'unproblematic.' More precisely, through internalising these norms PMSCs decrease 'space' for the debate regarding their behaviour. Finally, as the core of PMSCs identities shapes these actors interests they tend to adjust to their target market's needs in order to both increase the number of their contracts and secure their continuity/future.

⁷² Finnemore, Martha, and Kathryn Sikkink. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization* 52, no. 04 (1998): 887–917.

As the theory of framing states, language is deployed as means of persuasion or means of conveying intended messages to the specified public.⁷³ These intended messages are purposefully built on already acknowledged meanings, which in turn enable actors to employ these meanings in order to further structure norms in accordance with their target audience.⁷⁴ And in doing so actors use frames as powerful tools in constructing their identities, establish and preserve their presence within a given social realm, and ultimately promote themselves as legitimate authorities.⁷⁵ Moreover, identities are constructed according to the binary logic of ‘us’ and ‘them,’ given that actors employ language to accentuate how they differ from the ‘other,’ or to accentuate how they are compatible with the ‘other.’⁷⁶ And PMSCs use discursive ‘frames’ in constructing their identities, however, they use different frames depending on their clients’ needs and varying interests. Thus, their identities can be described as Chameleon identities, which is compatible with the hybridity of their very nature already discussed by Abrahamsen and Williams who also note how PMSCs tend to frame security discourses in order to promote themselves as legitimate authority in security provision.⁷⁷ Recent debates regarding PMSCs ‘framing’ the discourses regarding their identities have been increasingly present in the humanitarian sector, targeting various non-governmental organisations, international organisations and the United Nations peacekeeping missions.⁷⁸ These recent debates show how PMSCs employ different frames in order to diversify their target market, affirm their identities as being security experts, and

⁷³ Payne, Rodger A. “Persuasion, Frames and Norm Construction.” *European Journal of International Relations* 7, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 37–61.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Klotz, Audie. *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid*. Cornell University Press, 1999.

⁷⁶ Berndtsson, Joakim. “Security Professionals for Hire: Exploring the Many Faces of Private Security Expertise.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 40, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 303–320.

⁷⁷ Abrahamsen, Rita, and Michael C Williams. “Security Beyond the State: Global Security Assemblages in International Politics1.” *International Political Sociology* 3, no. 1 (March 1, 2009): 1–17.

⁷⁸ For example see: Spearin, Christopher. “Private, Armed and Humanitarian? States, NGOs, International Private Security Companies and Shifting Humanitarianism.” *Security Dialogue* 39, no. 4 (August 1, 2008): 363–382; Joachim, Jutta, and Andrea Schneiker. “New Humanitarians? Frame Appropriation Through Private Military and Security Companies.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 40, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 365–388.

ultimately secure their future contracts. And while employing different frames in adjusting their identities to their clients' needs, PMSCs also frame security discourses, thereby gradually structuring common meanings within the field of security.

Discourses produced by PMSCs tend to present state as inefficient security provider and themselves as security experts or professional and efficient security actors. And discourses surrounding humanitarian disaster in Darfur allowed PMSCs to accent the aforementioned security expertise they are equipped with and further denote the reluctance of international community to effectively deal with security issues.⁷⁹ Furthermore, this debate is used by PMSCs to appropriate humanitarian frame, expand their target market and intensify their involvement within the realm international security.

But perhaps there is a way to stop the killing even without sending an American or European army. Send a private army. A number of commercial security firms such as Blackwater USA are willing, for the right price, to send their own forces, made up in large part of veterans of Western militaries, to stop the genocide.⁸⁰

This statement solely demonstrates how PMSCs have grown powerful in framing security discourses and how they strategically use certain situation, such as Darfur, to show their 'willingness' to contain and even prevent disasters from occurring. And it is not surprising that PMSCs are persuasive in security discourses, given the increasing amount of their contracts and staggering growth of their profits.⁸¹ Moreover, PMSCs are employed as 'humanitarian' actors in various contexts, such as Somalia, South Sudan, Kenya and Caucasus by NGOs, UN or Red

⁷⁹ Leander, Anna, and Rens Van Munster. "Private Security Contractors in the Debate About Darfur: Reflecting and Reinforcing Neo-Liberal Governmentality." *International Relations* 21, no. 2 (June 1, 2007): 201–216.

⁸⁰ Boot, M. "Darfur Solution: Send in the Mercenaries." *Los Angeles Times Articles*, May 31, 2006. <http://articles.latimes.com/2006/may/31/opinion/oe-boot31> (accessed on 8 May 2012).

⁸¹ During the Gulf War the U.S. government contracted around 9000 private security and military personnel, while in 2006 the U.S. army contracted 60,000 solely for their activities in south-west Asia. For more details see, Spearin, Christopher. Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organizations and International Private Security Companies : The "Humanitarian" Challenges of Moulding a Marketplace. *DCAF*, 2007.

Cross.⁸² The U.S. International Peace Operations Association (ISOA), a powerful lobbyist of PMSCs, has used humanitarian disaster on Haiti to sponsor a summit on “Haiti: Resources for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid,” and this particular occasion was also used as means of promoting PMSCs humanitarian image.⁸³ Furthermore, of the U.S. top ten contractors – DynCorp – offers “international development solutions for stability and human progress,” and accents their great responsibility regarding peace-building solutions by stating, “We Serve Today for a Better Tomorrow.”⁸⁴ By and large, there is increasing number of PMSCs efforts in framing security discourses, both overall and in specific occasions such as the aforementioned ones. And these efforts provide PMSCs with opportunities to affirm their position of being legitimate security experts and further diversify their target market. Consequently, there is a notable increase in PMSCs discursive power within the realm of international security overall. However, once PMSCs adjust their identities to meet the demands of humanitarian sector and provide their services to these 'neutral' actors, they distort the ground ethics of humanitarianism, meaning that this sector's 'impartiality'⁸⁵ becomes questionable. And once there is interaction and exchange of meanings between contracted PMSCs and humanitarians, there is a whole new process of ‘security’ reconstruction. Namely, being regarded as security experts, PMSCs have the capacity of influencing the very notion of human security based on which humanitarian actors perform. This in turn opens up a whole new venue of questions waiting to be answered.

⁸² Stoddard, A., Adele Harmer, and Victoria DiDomenico. “The use of private security providers and services in humanitarian operations.” *Humanitarian Policy Group*, Report 27, October 2008, Overseas Development Institute. <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/3703.pdf> (accessed on 8 May 2012).

⁸³ Renouf, Jean S. “Understanding How the Identity of International Aid Agencies and their Approaches to Security Are Mutually Shaped.” *A thesis submitted to the Department of International Relations for the degree of Doctor of philosophy*, The London School of Economics and Political Science, January 2011.

⁸⁴ DynCorp International. “The Responsibilities are Great.” <http://www.dyn-intl.com> (accessed on 8 May 2012).

⁸⁵ One cannot claim that humanitarians are value-free, but they certainly aim at preserving their status of being neutral actors focused exclusively on the human well-being.

PMSCs also offer maritime security services or the so called anti-piracy services. Their services range from risk assessment, armed protection to crisis negotiation and training.⁸⁶ There are two geographic areas that are lucrative for their business, and these are Malacca Strait and Gulf of Aden, where modern pirates are very active and pose grave security threats to the vessels that have these spots as part of their routes.⁸⁷ In addition, pirate activities are quite intense in the Horn of Africa, which is recognized by the U.S. State Department. More importantly, Hillary Clinton explicitly encouraged the use of PMSCs in solving pirate attacks, given that PMSCs offered their services in this security area as well.⁸⁸ Again one can see the diversified market of private security industry. And PMSCs are affirming their security expertise regarding piracy attacks as well. The largest U.S. based PMSC's – Lockheed Martin – Chief Executive Officer addressed media on this particular issue by accenting that Lockheed Martin perceives threats such as piracy and recently cyber-security as “a dangerous combination of known and unknown vulnerabilities” that their customers face. However, Lockheed Martin is “ready to help customers meet the challenges of the 21st century.”⁸⁹ Again, one can see how PMSCs swiftly adjust to their target market's needs and how their discursive power grows.

3.2 Corporate Culture: Internalizing Commonly Acknowledged Norms

Now, to go back to first assertion regarding PMSCs use of commonly acknowledged norms as building blocks of their identities. Namely, as already stated, in order to affirm their position of being legitimate security actors PMSCs internalize widely accepted norms.

⁸⁶ Liss, Carolin. “Losing Control? The Privatisation of Anti-piracy Services in Southeast Asia.” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 63, no. 3 (2009): 390–403.

⁸⁷ Brown, J. “You're Nicked: Arrest on the High Seas.” *The Interpreter | Lowy Institute for International Policy*, January 18, 2012. <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2012/01/18/Youre-nicked-Arrest-on-the-high-seas.aspx> (accessed on 8 May 2012).

⁸⁸ Pelton, Robert Young. “SomaliaReport: US to Promote Use of Armed Guards on Vessels”, April 11, 2011. <http://www.somaliareport.com/index.php/post/1956> (accessed on 8 May 2012).

⁸⁹ Stevens, Robert J. “The New Reality: Embracing Change and Driving Affordability.” Lockheed Martin, June 17, 2010. <http://www.lockheedmartin.com/us/news/speeches/061710-stevens.html> (accessed 8 May 2012).

Consequently, PMSCs behaviour gradually becomes perceived as unproblematic. However, this first assertion requires further insight in PMSCs identities in order to be confirmed. And in order to do so this research employs textual analysis of ten largest U.S. based PMSCs official websites. The main ground for choosing the U.S. based PMSCs is precisely leadership role that the U.S. has taken during the very beginning of security privatisation and wider neoliberal structural reforms of late 20th century. Another ground for choosing to assess the U.S. based PMSCs is their international presence and increasing yearly profits.⁹⁰ The methodology that will be employed is textual analysis of material presented on the top ten PMSCs official websites. Furthermore, by analysing the manner in which PMSCs publicly present themselves through their corporate culture⁹¹ common patterns that reveal the internalized set of commonly acknowledged norms will be detected. And this is important to note, because it is through corporate culture that PMSCs construct their identities, thereby using commonly acknowledged norms as building blocks of their identities and further adjusting them to their clients' interests and needs. Finally, PMSCs interests and behaviour is led by the logic of the core of their identities – profit maximization – which is in alignment with the economic theory. The main concern regarding PMSCs identities core is the realm of their activities – the 'transnational' market. And within this market PMSCs are driven by 'market logic,' meaning that they create competitive strategies for generating premier returns. This would not be problematic as it is regarded to be common business behaviour, however, given that PMSCs also 'enter' the state domain these actors gradually influence security discourses thereby bringing 'market logic' into the state domain. Thus, security appropriates 'business-like' norms, and instead of being perceived as an individual right

⁹⁰ For more details see: Gregory Sanders, David J. Berteau, Guy Ben-Ari, Joachim Hofbauer, Jesse Ellman, Reed Livergood, and David Morrow. "U.S. Department of Defense Contract Spending and the Supporting Industrial Base." *CSIS – Center for Strategic and International Studies*, May 6, 2011. http://csis.org/files/publication/110506_CSIS_Defense_Contract_Trends-sm2.pdf (accessed on 8 May 2012).

⁹¹ Corporate culture can be defined as the set of values, traditions, meanings, and customs that define the company's 'character'/identity. The definition was taken from: Montana, Patrick J., and Bruce H. Charnov. *Management*. 3rd ed. Barron's Educational Series, 2000.

guaranteed by the state, becomes confined within a vocabulary of ‘security expertise,’ ‘innovative thinking,’ ‘technological efficiency’ and ‘professionalism.’ A question is, do these values become a shared understanding of normative legitimacy in international security? Surely there is no instrument to measure shared understandings. However, certain indicators such as Montreux Document on PMSCs released in 2008⁹² show the ‘normalization’ of private security throughout the globe. In addition, various regulative discourses and initiatives regarding ‘proper’ behaviour of PMSCs again indicate towards ‘normalization’ or societal ‘acclimatization’ to the very concept of ‘war profiteering,’ once regarded as notorious mercenarism.

As Audie Klotz notes, norms are changing under the influence of various actors, and these may be both state and non-state actors.⁹³ More importantly, norms constitute actors’ identities and determine their interests, further defining social values, costs and benefits of social actions.⁹⁴ As for the realm of international security, privatisation of security can be perceived as the norm change, given that the private/public divide became complexly intertwined and centuries’ old prohibition of profit motives behind the use of force has shifted. The prevalent conceptions of state being inefficient security provider only contributed to the aforementioned norm change and boosted growth of PMSCs, whose very hybrid nature reflects the aforementioned complexity and emphasizes change. Main concerns over PMSCs being regarded as legitimate security authority are precisely the altered norms that no longer fit the original Westphalian system of nation-state sovereignty. As private business entities PMSCs soon supplied the neoliberal demands of privatisation, professionalism and efficiency. And being the leader of privatised security, U.S. exhibits increasing reliance on PMSCs services. According to

⁹² For greater insight into the content of Montreux Document see, International Committee of the Red Cross. “Montreux Document on pertinent international legal obligations and good practices for States related to operations of private military and security companies during armed conflict.” ICRC, 17 September 2008.

⁹³ Klotz, Audie. *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid*, 1999.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

Allison Stanger, the top five U.S. contractors are: Lockheed Martin, The Boeing Company, Northrop Grumman, General Dynamics and Raytheon, and the data show that these five contractors' profits in 2005 amounted to \$12.94 billion.⁹⁵ Furthermore, the recent data show that these five top contractors' profits experienced a staggering growth, as they amounted to \$48.25 billion in 2010.⁹⁶ Overall, the profits of top ten U.S. contractors for the 2010 amount to approximately \$63 billion, and these profits can serve as indicators of private security industry's rapid growth.⁹⁷ As already mentioned, for the purposes of enquiry into PMSCs identity this paper employs textual analysis of ten largest U.S. based PMSCs' official websites, and the following are the enlisted top ten: Lockheed Martin Corp., Northrop Grumman Corp., The Boeing Co., Raytheon Co., General Dynamics Corp., L-3 Communications Corp., KBR Inc., DynCorp International Inc., CACI International Inc., and BAE Systems.

The main purpose of textual analysis is identification of common patterns that reveal the internalized set of widely accepted norms, which serve as the building blocks of PMSCs identities. And by revealing these internalized norms the growing perception of PMSCs as being legitimate security authorities becomes clearer, given the fact that these commonly acknowledged norms serve as tools of affirming or normalizing PMSCs presence within the international security realm. Furthermore, these norms enable PMSCs to further construct different frames depending on their target market. Namely, by using commonly accepted norms as building blocks of their identities PMSCs diminish 'space' for the debate regarding their nature and gradually affirm their status of being security experts. The common patterns also indicate towards the

⁹⁵ Stanger, Allison. *One Nation Under Contract: The Outsourcing of American Power and the Future of Foreign Policy*. Yale University Press, 2009.

⁹⁶ Washington Technology. "2011 Washington Technology Top 100." *Washington Technology, Federal Procurement Data System and Houlihan Lokey*, n.d. <http://washingtontechnology.com/toplists/top-100-lists/2011.aspx> (accessed on 8 May 2012).

⁹⁷ Ibid.

PMSCs adjustment to existing discourses regarding the ‘broadened’ and ‘deepened’ understanding of security, which again enables them to diversify and expand their target market. And this can be seen in their current engagement within humanitarian sector, already discussed in the previous section. Following is the list of identified patterns or commonly repeated norms identified through the textual analysis of U.S. based top ten PMSCs’ official web sites:⁹⁸ excellence, integrity, diversity, inclusion, innovation, leadership, performance, customer-focused, delivery, efficiency, accountability, ethical conduct, adaptability, philanthropy, promoting development, sustainability, valuing people, volunteering, maximizing performance, and ensuring superior returns.

Furthermore, these common patterns can be clustered into three different categories in order to gain better understanding of how they correspond to the commonly accepted norms. The first category can be characterized as professionalism, which corresponds to the prevailing trend towards expertise and effectiveness. And common patterns that were identified are: excellence, efficiency, accountability, adaptability, delivery, innovation, leadership, performance, and sustainability. The second category can be characterized as the core of PMSCs identities – profit maximization, which corresponds to the neoliberal driving force of financial performance. This category contains three common patterns: maximizing performance, ensuring superior returns, and being customer-focused. Finally, the third category can be characterized as the social responsibility, which corresponds to the commonly accepted philanthropic attitudes and values.

⁹⁸ For details see, Lockheed Martin. ““We never forget who we're working for..”” <http://www.lockheedmartin.com> (accessed on 10 May 2012); Northrop Grumman Corporation. “The Value of Performance.” <http://www.northropgrumman.com> (accessed on 10 May 2012); The Boeing Company. “Boeing.” <http://www.boeing.com> (accessed on 10 May 2012); Raytheon Company. “Customer Success Is Our Mission.” <http://www.raytheon.com> (accessed on 10 May 2012); General Dynamics Information Technology. “Home.” <http://www.gdit.com> (accessed on 10 May 2012); L-3 Communications. “Success Defined.” <http://www.l-3com.com> (accessed on 10 May 2012); KBR Inc. “A Global Engineering, Construction and Services Company.” <http://www.kbr.com> (accessed on 10 May 2012); DynCorp International. “We Serve Today For a Better Tomorrow.” <http://www.dyn-intl.com> (accessed on 10 May 2012); CACI International Inc. “Welcome to CACI.” <http://www.caci.com> (accessed on 10 May 2012); BAE Systems. “Home.” <http://www.baesystems.com/home> (accessed on 10 May 2012).

And following are identified common patterns for this category: integrity, diversity, inclusion, ethical conduct, philanthropy, valuing people, promoting development, volunteering, and responsibility. The aforementioned identified patterns show how PMSCs internalize a wide scope of commonly acknowledged norms, thereby opening-up ‘space’ for themselves to engage in ‘broad’ security-related issues and diversify their target market. In addition, when clustered into three different categories these patterns also reveal the hybrid nature of PMSCs. More precisely, three different categories show how PMSCs construct their identities in accordance with their form – being private business entities – thereby holding neoliberal norms related to privatisation and financial performance at their identities’ core. However, the third category reveals how PMSCs also construct their identities in the public realm by internalizing commonly acknowledged norms such as respect for diversity, inclusion and philanthropic practices. These three categories also reveal how PMSCs operate on the overlay of public/private divide, consequently dimming the divide through establishing and affirming their presence within international security, as being legitimate security authority.

The textual analysis also shows how the ten largest U.S. based PMSCs exhibit competitive attitudes and underlying profit maximization interests. BAE Systems for example clearly delineates company’s competitiveness through explaining its corporate culture: “To be the premier global defence, aerospace and security company.”⁹⁹ Similarly, Raytheon aims to “be the most admired defence and aerospace systems company” by employing ‘innovative thinking’ and enhancing company’s performance.¹⁰⁰ The Boeing Company emphasizes the core of their identities that defines their interests and behaviours by stating: “Our business must produce a

⁹⁹ BAE Systems. “Our Culture.”

¹⁰⁰ Raytheon Company. “Our Company.”

profit, and we must generate superior return on the assets entrusted to us by our shareholders.”¹⁰¹

These attitudes and interests can be related back to the ‘space’ in which they operate (i.e. overlaying the public/private divide), given that the first two categories reveal business-professionalism and performance-focus while the third category reveals socially responsible behaviour or good corporate citizenship. And it is this third category of internalized commonly accepted norms that enables PMSCs to diminish ‘space’ for the debate regarding their private-business nature and build a sound reputation of building a better future through security expertise. As DynCorp’s Credo states: “We Serve Today For a Better Tomorrow.”¹⁰²

Nevertheless, due to their very nature of being private business entities PSMCs have profit maximization as the underlying rationale of their identities and as determinant defining their interests, norms and behaviour. And this is crucial to understand when discussing the states’ increasing reliance on security related services, given that PMSCs act according to the market logic and do not conceive of security as being the individual right, but rather perceive security as a lucrative contract and the primal tool of their ‘survival’ on the market. There is only one important caveat to mention here and that is the economic calculus according to which PMSCs bring decision, meaning that in order to maximize their profits these actors seek to expand their target market and provide security exclusively in exchange for financial gains. And how are then they different from the very conception of ‘mercenarism’? After peeling-off the layers of PMSCs identities, the core becomes visible and has to be taken into account when attempting to understand the impact they have on the paradigm within which security is conceptualised.

¹⁰¹ The Boeing Company. “Culture & Values.”

¹⁰² DynCorp International. “The Responsibilities are Great.”

3.3 PMSCs Identities' Core: Profit Maximization

The demands of post-Cold War strategy of the United States, which encompass heavy involvement in various security operations in both conflict and post-conflict states around the globe, have put a heavy burden on the Department of Defence (DOD) budget.¹⁰³ And given that the number of military troops was heavily reduced during the late 20th century's neoliberal reforms, the DOD turned to contracting PMSCs. These companies not only enabled the U.S. to successfully conduct its involvement in conflict and post-conflict zones, but also introduced an opportunity for cost reductions.¹⁰⁴ However, due to the rapid growth of private security industry the U.S. government had no effective means of regulating its contracts with PMSCs.¹⁰⁵ This posed series of problems, among which profit pursuit was marked as issue of prime regulative and moral importance. Some of the prominent examples of overpricing or profit maximization during the 1990s and beginning of 2000s are Kellogg Brown and Root's involvement in the raging Balkan's conflicts and Halliburton's involvement in Iraq War.¹⁰⁶ Namely, during the 1990s Kellogg Brown and Root, currently KBR Inc., has been involved in the Balkan conflicts amidst the fall of Yugoslavia. However, despite hopes of cutting down costs, U.S. government discovered that this PMSC overpriced its services for approximately \$2 billion.¹⁰⁷ Recently, KBR Inc. confessed overpricing its services in Iraq.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, the 2004 audit made by the Pentagon's officials discovered that Halliburton overpriced its services provided to the U.S. DOD by circa

¹⁰³ Avant, Deborah Denise. *The Market For Force: The Consequences Of Privatizing Security*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Stranger, Allison, and Mark Erik Williams. "Private Military Corporations: Benefits and Costs of Outsourcing Security." *Yale Journal of International Affairs* 2, no. 1 (Fall/Winter 2006): 4-19.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ GAO. "Contingency Operations: Army Should Do More to Control Contract Cost in the Balkans." *United States General Accounting Office Washington, DC*, September 2000. <http://www.gao.gov/archive/2000/ns00225.pdf> (accessed on 5 May 2012).

¹⁰⁸ Markusen, Ann R. "The Case Against Privatizing National Security." *Governance* 16, no. 4 (September 17, 2003): 471-501.

\$1.8 billion as well.¹⁰⁹ These examples reveal profit maximization motives of PMSCs, along with inadequate regulative oversight. However, the most important concern over these private actors is particularly their form of being private business entities. Namely, according to economic theory all private business entities strive towards profit maximization, in other words, economic profit serves as an indicator of further business behaviour.¹¹⁰ Consequently, PMSCs have profit maximization as the core of their identities, the underlying rationale, or the determinant in their further behaviour. Thus, economic profit can be regarded as an existential concern for PMSCs. That said, there are ethical dilemmas stemming from governments' increasing practices of outsourcing security-related services to these private business entities.

Evidence presented by the DOD inspector in charge of PMSCs oversight, who examined twenty four contracts that amount to \$122 million, reveal that sixty percent of those contracts were considered "urgent" and were given to only one contractor (i.e. on a sole-source basis).¹¹¹ The U.S. government advocates an economic approach to issues of awarding defence contracts, which opens-up a 'space' for intense lobbying on behalf of PMSCs. This in turn increases potential of unfair market competition, given that PMSCs strive towards profit maximization. In addition, there is an increased potential of conflicting interests related to PMSCs and government officials. One example of this conflict of interests has been revealed in the case of Halliburton. Namely, U.S. vice president Dick Cheney who held a position of CEO at Halliburton from 1995 to 2000 could not legally support approximately \$4 billion that he was awarded with for his

¹⁰⁹ Miller, Christian T. "Halliburton Is Unable to Prove \$1.8 Billion in Work, Pentagon Says." *Baltimore Sun*, August 12, 2004. http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2004-08-12/news/0408120504_1_halliburton-pentagon-auditors-government-contracting (accessed on 5 May 2012).

¹¹⁰ Hirshleifer, Jack, Amihai Glazer, and David Hirshleifer. *Price Theory And Applications: Decisions, Markets, And Information*. Cambridge University Press, 2005.

¹¹¹ Berrios, Ruben. "Government Contracts and Contractor Behavior." *Journal of Business Ethics* 63, no. 2 (January 15, 2006): 119–130.

provided services.¹¹² Another prominent example of conflicting interests is Vinnell, a subsidiary of Northrop Grumman Corporation (the biggest U.S. PMSC after Lockheed Martin). Namely, this company provided various political actors with financial reimbursements, among who are George W.H. Bush and James Baker.¹¹³ And conflicting interests bring another ethical concern over PMSCs and their profit maximizing behaviour, given that they corrode political authorities and bring ‘market logic’ into the public domain.

As any market, private security market is aiming towards expansion. And its main actors, PMSCs, are searching for new clientele. Again, recent research deals with the non-governmental organisations (NGOs), regional organisations and other international actors as the identified PMSCs new target clientele. As Bryden and Caparini note, the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations are increasingly contracting PMSCs for both support and security services.¹¹⁴ In addition, they stipulate how the UN recognises security expertise that PMSCs gained over time, particularly since the Executive Outcome’s assertion on how their security services could have prevented genocide in Rwanda. The humanitarian disaster in Haiti in 2010 is one recent example of the UN and various NGO’s increasing reliance on PMSCs security expertise. Namely, in this particular humanitarian mission MPRI has been contracted in providing support and reconstruction services.¹¹⁵ Generally, the mere fact that humanitarian agencies lack security expertise turned out to be a lucrative opportunity for PMSCs in increasing their profits. Peter W. Singer’s recently conducted research revealed over forty contracts between PMSCs and humanitarian agencies, which ‘speaks’ for itself and certainly alludes towards the

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Leander, Anna. “The Power to Construct International Security: On the Significance of Private Military Companies.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (June 1, 2005): 803–825.

¹¹⁴ Bryden, Alan, Marina Caparini, and Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces. *Private Actors and Security Governance*. LIT Verlag Münster, 2006.

¹¹⁵ Joachim, Jutta, and Andrea Schneider. “New Humanitarians? Frame Appropriation Through Private Military and Security Companies.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 40, no. 2 (January 1, 2012): 365–388.

expansion of private security market beyond the state.¹¹⁶ This data can be interpreted in various ways, however, what cannot be denied is that PMSCs are acting according to the economic theory (as any private business entity indeed does). In other words, they are ‘listening’ to the core of their identities – striving towards profit maximization.

The main lesson to be learned from these cases of PMSCs identities core – profit maximization – is need for more stringent regulation of ‘privatised security.’ However, regulation itself cannot ‘repair’ the core of PMSCs identities, i.e. the aforementioned profit maximization. The main concern over this underlying motivation of PMSCs activities is morality of these actors. More precisely, by pursuing profits PMSCs become quite dangerous actors within the international scene, particularly when one considers their presence in the long-run. And it is not even the issue of profit maximization that has the highest potential damage for international security, but the very question of legitimate authority or the growing expert power that these actors gain over time. Anna Leander warned about the growing ‘epistemic’ and ‘structural’ power of PMSCs.¹¹⁷ Overall, the moral concern indeed lies in their growing authoritative power. Nevertheless, a greater concern lies in the altered notion of security *per se*. Here, the main question is whether security is being transformed into lucrative business and an entire new global market that will be difficult to simply ‘shut down,’ given that its economic significance is exponentially growing. That said, it can be noted that the core notion of security has shifted from the traditional notion of security as exclusive ‘business’ of the nation-state, and a derivative of military power, to the notion of security being fragmented and transferred to the individual level

¹¹⁶ Singer, Peter W. “Humanitarian Principles, Private Military Agents: Some Implications of the Privatised Military Industry for the Humanitarian Community,” in Victoria Wheeler & Adele Harmer, eds, *Resetting the Rules of Engagement: Trends and Issues in Military–Humanitarian Relations 2006*, Humanitarian Policy Group Research Report 22. London: Overseas Development Institute (67–79).

¹¹⁷ For deeper insight on these two concepts of power see, Leander, Anna. “The Power to Construct International Security: On the Significance of Private Military Companies.” *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 33, no. 3 (June 1, 2005): 803–825.

of responsibility, and security as implying reaction (use of force) to any potential ‘evils’ of the globe. This has significant normative implications, since it shifts the paradigms within which security is conceptualized. And the new paradigm for conceptualising security is led by the wider neoliberal thought which holds ‘market rationale’ at its core, meaning that security concerns are decided on the basis of economic calculus. And what occurs once the ‘market logic’ enters the realm of citizens’ well-being? That is perhaps a vital question arising out of ‘privatised security’ and state’s increasing reliance on PMSCs in security provision.

3.4 U.S. Identity Core: Security as a Fruitful Contract

Identity can be described as an intersubjective construct and, as such, it is constantly changing depending on the manner in which an actor perceives its ‘Self’ and the manner in which it constructs the ‘Other’ accordingly.¹¹⁸ In this vein, identity can be described as having multiple ‘faces’ depending on social context in which the meaning of identity is produced.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, interests and identities have to both be taken into account when attempting to grasp social actors’ behaviour and the impact such behaviour has on the production of common meanings within a particular societal context.¹²⁰ And as a complex and important social ‘structure,’ identity has gained prominence in international relations’ academic discourses during the recent years. Within a particular context of international security identities are crucial in understanding how different social actors influence the very notion of security and how this influence further impacts perceptions of security ‘authority,’ the state, and ultimately stability of the international system. As mentioned in the earlier sections, this research focuses on understanding the ten largest U.S. based PMSCs identities. Thus, it vital to understand the social context within which these

¹¹⁸ Fierke, Karin M. *Critical Approaches to International Security*. Polity Press, 2007.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 76.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 82.

identities are constructed in order to gain a better insight into both these private actors and the manner in which they affect the U.S. identity, and ultimately the very notion of security. Importantly, this does not imply that there is any intent of generalisation based upon the top ten U.S. based PMSCs being the empirical example. Nevertheless, given that the U.S. is leader in privatisation of security and given that its ten largest PMSCs operate internationally, there is a certain inclination towards and value in analysing these PMSCs in particular.

State identity is also a changing construct that is often contested and cannot be easily understood. Constructivist scholars tend to regard state identity as being a set of widely shared values and meanings that can be described as culture.¹²¹ That is not to say that any state consists of a uniform culture. Quite the contrary, as identities of social actors have different faces, so does the state identity, meaning that there are different sub-cultures co-existing within a particular society as a whole. However, when talking about the U.S. state identity in particular, there is a certain set of prevalent discourses that can offer us at least approximate 'shape' of the state identity. As David Campbell notes, there is a certain sensation of being 'American,' the one which is always present but comes prominently reified when there is potential threat to the 'Americans' identified on behalf of legitimate security authorities.¹²² Security is therefore constructed as a response to the perceived threat from the 'Other' or the threat to the U.S. 'Self.' This is where the state identity is crucial to account for in order to understand the shared meanings of security, actors who produce these meanings, as well as their interests and practices. Again, there is no intent of making any causal inference here regarding the relationship between interests and identities, given that these two are considered as complexly intertwined. Furthermore, in order to close the 'circle' of exploring PMSCs identities it is necessary to account

¹²¹ Wendt, Alexander. *Social Theory of International Politics*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

¹²² Campbell, David. *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*. University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

for the U.S. state identity within which these actors ‘exist.’ In addition, neoliberal structural reforms have to be mentioned here, since their gradual normalization within the ‘American’ identity enabled general trend towards privatisation of security. Differently put, the prohibited norm of having profit motives in exercising force was shifted towards the acceptance of these motives and ‘embodied’ in PMSCs.

Being transferred to the crossings of both the state and the private or market domain, the paradigm within which security is conceptualised has been shifted as a part of prevalent sensation of state’s incapability to protect its citizens and the neoliberal emphasis on markets as being the most efficient security solution. Consequently, PMSCs have been able to gain prominence as professional and efficient security providers. More importantly, they have come to enjoy the status of being legitimate security experts and as a result have been involved in security discourses production. An example that will be taken to account for the U.S. state identity and the shifting paradigm in conceptualising security is the tragic event of September 11. Reason for this particular choice being that this event constructed the ‘Other’ threatening the U.S. and its citizens, thereby reifying the ‘American’ identity. However, this event is neither just an example of ‘American’ identity reification, nor is it just an example of identified top-priority security threat. September 11 is also an example that reveals high dependence of the U.S. Department of Defence (DOD) on PMSCs.¹²³ Namely, the War on Terror initiated by the U.S. President George W. Bush as a response to the aforementioned tragedy, imposed a serious burden on defence budget and high demands on the number of military and security personnel. And these high demands were supplied by PMSCs, who gained prominence in security discourses and used the opportunity to show their growing efficiency and security expertise.

¹²³ As noted by, Singer, Peter Warren. *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*. Cornell University Press, 2003.

During the War on Terror, PMSCs have acquired impressive number of contracts, maximized their profits, but also caused great public controversies.¹²⁴ The contracts were awarded according to the framework charted during the 1980s called Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP), which has been re-drafted after September 11, 2001 to LOGCAP III.¹²⁵ LOGCAP III has been used for contracts awarded during the time period of five years, starting from 2001 all the way to 2006. However, after the U.S. Government Accountability Office Audit of 2006 has identified approximately \$2 billion of overpriced services and approximately \$1 billion of unjustified costs incurred by KBR Inc., the new framework LOGCAP IV has been drafted.¹²⁶ These occurrences led to more detailed studies of PMSCs and the whole concept of privatised security, given that PMSCs have come under the 'loop' of media due to suspicious practices and inadequate regulation of the whole industry. And although the U.S. Government made several steps towards better regulation and supervision of PMSCs contracts and activities, strong 'signals' have been sent on behalf of the U.S. legal system showing perturbing tendency of providing PMSCs with an 'escape window' in legal accountability. The aforementioned contracting misdeeds of KBR Inc. for example have never undergone a litigation process, which indicates towards the growing tendency of U.S. Government in holding markets as ultimately the most efficient solution.¹²⁷ However, PMSCs have not only posed troublesome concerns regarding their war profits, but also very serious concerns regarding their war practices. More specifically,

¹²⁴ For details see an excellent article by, Leander, Anna. "The Paradoxical Impunity of Private Military Companies: Authority and the Limits to Legal Accountability." *Security Dialogue* 41, no. 5 (October 1, 2010): 467–490.

¹²⁵ United States General Accounting Office. "Military Operations. Contractors Provide Vital Services to the Deployed Forces but Are Not Adequately Addressed in DOD Plans." *GAO Report No. 03-695 to the Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support*, Committee on Armed Services, U.S. Senate, June 2003. <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-03-695> (accessed on 15 May 2012).

¹²⁶ The contracts awarded to KBR Inc. by that time amounted to impressive \$19 billion, according to Leander, Anna. "The Paradoxical Impunity of Private Military Companies: Authority and the Limits to Legal Accountability," p. 478.

¹²⁷ U.S. Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives. "War Profiteering and Other Contractor Crimes Committed Overseas." *Hearing held by the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security of the Committee on the Judiciary House of Representatives No. 110-103*, 19 June 2007. <http://judiciary.house.gov/hearings/printers/110th/36173.PDF> (accessed on 15 May 2012).

there have been several instances of reported human rights violations on behalf of these private actors during the Iraq and Afghanistan operations, as well as shady involvements in CIA's operations on these two territories.

The U.S. Defence Criminal Investigative Service has led ninety three PMSCs conduct-related investigations during the War on Terror,¹²⁸ and all these have been 'quietly' settled between the U.S. Government and PMSCs. In addition, various allegations regarding human rights' violations during Iraq and Afghanistan operations have been set aside and also 'quietly' dismissed. The most controversial example is Abu Ghraib prison, where two PMSCs CACI International and Titan held contracts in providing the U.S. Army with both logistic support and security expertise.¹²⁹ And during various interrogations conducted by their employees, the prisoners were severely abused. This particular example circulated the world media and highlighted the extent of U.S. DOD's reliance on PMSCs, in addition to the lack of supervision and regulation of this growing industry. Importantly, 'American' identity has been ashamed by Abu Ghraib abuses and even questioned by the U.S. citizens' outrage expressed after the photos of prisoners' abuses have been released.¹³⁰ However, the reaction of D.C. Court of Appeal to Abu Ghraib abuses shows how PMSCs have been allowed to escape the legal sanctions, precisely because of inadequate regulations and unpreparedness of the U.S. judicial system to privatised military and security sphere.¹³¹ And even though PMSCs have been intensely relied upon during the War on Terror, they cannot be enlisted into the U.S. Army as equal to the U.S. soldiers. This in itself is rather controversial issue, given that Abu Ghraib abuses have been successfully labelled

¹²⁸ Ibid, 12.

¹²⁹ Schooner, Steven L. "Contractor Atrocities at Abu Ghraib: Compromised Accountability in a Streamlined, Outsourced Government." *Stanford Law & Policy Review* 16, no. 2 (2005): 1-24.

¹³⁰ Steele, Brent J. "'Ideals That Were Really Never in Our Possession': Torture, Honor and US Identity." *International Relations* 22, no. 2 (June 1, 2008): 243-261.

¹³¹ For more details see, Cockayne, James, et al. "Beyond Market Forces: Regulating the Global Security Industry." *International Peace Institute*, New York, 2009.

as misdeeds of ‘mercenaries’ and not those of U.S. honourable soldiers. Consequently, the responsibility over reported abuses has been transferred to the market sphere, as if it were something that the market would efficiently take care of itself. And surely one has to question normative shift to neoliberalism that allowed for the aforementioned to occur. Finally, Abu Ghraib and overpricing reports also show that even though PMSCs construct their identities within the ‘shape’ of U.S. state identity, they are private business entities that operate on the basis of receiving financial remuneration for their services. In other words, they behave according to their identities’ underlying logic – profit maximization – in acquiring their contracts and naming their prices, as well as in choosing their employees. This means that depending on the potential supply of human capital available to them on the global market, PMSCs tend to hire those ‘experienced’ in security and military matters regardless of their socialization environment,¹³² i.e. the ‘security’ culture within which they developed their expertise.

By obtaining increasing number of contracts over the years, which intensified during the War on Terror, PMSCs have acquired security expertise and have used intense lobbying to establish themselves within the security and military sphere. As a consequence, their expertise ‘equipped’ them with authoritative power in security related issues¹³³ and enabled the deepening of their rootedness, not only within the domain of threats to the U.S., but on a much wider scale. The reason for this being mere fact that the ten largest U.S. based PMSCs operate on the transnational level, thereby impacting international system on various grounds, encompassing

¹³² Blackwater, renamed to Xe, after Iraq and Afghanistan employs former military officers from countries such as Nepal, Chile and Honduras, where the living conditions are below tolerable and these officers are eager to accept low salaries. This is one of the examples where it is visible that PMSCs aim at profit maximization, but the one that offers potential clarity on different ‘security’ cultures that PMSCs’ employees come from. See, Kaufmann, Christine. “Report of the Working Group on the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of people to self-determination.” *Human Rights Council, A/HRC/7/7*, 9 January 2008. <http://www.ivr.uzh.ch> (accessed on 15 May 2012).

¹³³ Leander, Anna. “The Paradoxical Impunity of Private Military Companies: Authority and the Limits to Legal Accountability,” 2010.

international security sphere, but also questioning the very notion of state sovereignty. Contemporary international relations have been impacted by PMSCs global activities and the overall changing 'art of war' that the twenty 21st century brought. The shift in norm prohibition on 'mercenarism' or profiting from war, internalized by the U.S. as hegemonic power within the international system's turbulences during the late 20th century, has spread to different countries that 'followed the leader' in relying on a variety of PMSCs security services. And as legitimate security experts, PMSCs are intensely involved in security discourses, which in turn allow them to 'construct' security and even inflate potential threats or prolong their elimination. This is why this research deemed as important to account for societal context, within which the ten largest PSMCs construct their identities, in order to better understand the very 'logic' of their identities and ultimately the shifted paradigm within which security is conceptualised. Surely, this reveals a wide venue of reconceptualising security in accordance with the changed nature of warfare and the placement of security into the 'hands' of the market.

CHAPTER 4: NORMATIVE IMPLICATIONS ('SUFFUSED' CORE)

4.1 *Assessing the Shifting Paradigm in Security Conceptualisation*

With the growing number of PSMCs security can no longer be perceived as a core function of the state, in terms of state's responsibility for ensuring the protection of its citizens, and a cohesive force that enables the existence of state's identity. Instead, security crosses boundaries of this paradigm and becomes a 'product' with an increasing demand. More worrying is the notion that security becomes conceived according to the logic of market efficiency. This in turn poses great concerns regarding the loss of democratic control over violence, and not only on domestic scale but on international scale as well, given that PMCSs operate on a transnational level. Namely, since the 'market rationale' becomes transferred to the state level and further dispersed throughout society, once democratic control over violence becomes gradually controlled by private business interests and economic cost/benefit analysis pursuant to the 'market logic.' Furthermore, 'suffusion' of the state identity by the aforementioned logic of market efficiency leads to the transformation of norms within the society. Once the state is no longer monopolistic user of force that guarantees its citizens' security it becomes unclear who is legitimate authority over security provision, by which means is security delivered and who has the 'right' to security. Societal expectations of state being the sole authority deciding over the use of force are then transformed into a general sensation of insecurity, which further 'disintegrates' state identity as the cohesive force allowing for its existence – security – loses its 'grip.' But this disintegrated identity can be regarded as solely one of the neoliberal impulses towards diminished importance of political authority and shift towards the most efficient market solutions in all spheres of life. However, once citizens are unable to identify state as their security provider there is a great danger in militarisation of the civil sphere, meaning that the heightened sensation of insecurity can lead to armament of individuals and even creation of civil armed divisions. Surely

this seems as highly unlikely case scenario. Nevertheless, the point here is not to chart possible future scenarios, but to emphasize how ‘privatised security’ impacts the very notion of security and how it is important to understand the nature of PMSCs in order to understand the normative implications that arise out of the ‘normalisation’ of these private actors and their recognition of being legitimate security authority.

Being at the core of PMSCs identities, profit maximization determines their interests, norms and behaviour. And in order to survive on the market PMSCs compete in delivering premier security services, thereby having no interest in providing their services unless there is a contracting party willing to offer them financial remuneration in return. What this means for any entity in need of protection is rather frightening, given that once an entity is not in possession of financial means, that entity is deprived of security. However, this does not mean that one can completely exclude state from being capable of providing its citizens with security. The main problem here is that the state’s weakened image and its increasing reliance on PMSCs creates a general sensation of insecurity and distrust, particularly as PMSCs clientele grows both in its number and diversity, and as the discrepancy between the state’s and PMSCs’ security expertise amplifies. One example mentioned in the preceding sections is the debate surrounding humanitarian disaster in Darfur and the seeming indolence of international community to cease the genocide. Through framing security discourses in this particular situation, PMSCs emphasize their security expertise and represent themselves as willing ‘humanitarians’ in not only putting an end to disasters such as the one in Darfur, but also assessing the risks and preventing them in the first place. So who is willing to offer them financial gains in return for their services? Questions such as this one can shed light on important considerations that go deeper than the issues of legal frameworks for this market’s regulation and institutional solutions that are most effective. The

mere fact that someone has to offer financial incentive to stop the killing is sufficiently deep an issue in itself.

Analysis of ten largest U.S. based PMSCs has shown how these actors appropriate widely accepted norms and use them as building blocks of their identities, in order to reduce ‘space’ for the debate regarding their very nature, in addition to normalising the concept of ‘privatised security.’ This shows how norms are indeed subject to change, given that once notorious concept of ‘mercenarism’ or the use of violence in exchange for financial gain is being perceived as the most efficient security solution and ‘acclimatized’ through the notable security expertise that PMSCs possess. Furthermore, as PMSCs develop different strategies in diversifying their target market they tend to use the ‘broadened’ and ‘deepened’ notion of security in adjusting to their target market’s needs. In other words, they act as Chameleons in order to establish, affirm and preserve their security ‘business.’ This is not uncommon in the market environment, nevertheless, it is important to denote in this particular case, given that PMSCs alter the very notion of security by ‘framing’ it through the vocabulary of ‘security expertise,’ ‘professionalism,’ ‘cost-efficiency,’ ‘technological efficiency’ and ‘innovative thinking.’ Consequently, citizens’ right to security as guaranteed by the state becomes a matter of ‘market logic’ and the most ‘cost-efficient’ solution. This normative change leads to a shift in paradigm within which security is conceptualised, and to security becoming a service provided by the most ‘cost-efficient’ actor in exchange for financial gain.

Security solutions offered by PMSCs also reveal how these private actors target any emerging security threat and adjust to the needs of their target market or their potential clients. These examples have been given in preceding sections and include issues of pirate attacks, cyber-security and protection of humanitarian actors. In fact, PMSCs even offer a full-range of security services to NGOs, international organisations and the UN in their peacekeeping operations. In

this vein, human security is being targeted as the new market sector that offers lucrative contracts. And why is PMSCs 'humanitarianism' problematic? Well, given that humanitarian sector embraces the paradigm of conceptualising security by having individual as the referent object of security, and generally perceives security to be the 'freedom from want' and 'freedom from fear',¹³⁴ it appears that PMSCs 'humanitarianism' opens-up a whole new window of opportunity for their future contracts. Namely, given that any issue threatening the well-being of individual becomes a security issue, and given that PMSCs have security expertise to most 'efficiently' defeat the threats, there is a huge and diverse target market for PMSCs to maximize their profits. The only thing here is that the 'freedom from want' and the 'freedom from fear' comes in exchange for financial compensation, and the responsibility over compensating PMSCs and ensuring security becomes difficult to 'attach' to any particular actor as being their area of responsibility. Main point here being that once security is conceived according to the paradigm of 'efficiency' and the 'market logic,' state responsibility over the use of force is also altered, meaning that the state reaches out for the most 'cost-efficient' security solution according to economic calculus. So what appears to be the case is that state loses its legitimacy and that the cohesive force of its identity – security – becomes dissolved. Responsibility over the use of force is consequently determined on the moral grounds 'encroached' by the 'market rationale.' And when the sensation of state being incapable of providing security for its citizens becomes prevalent, insecurity can lead to citizens' armament and engagement into the use of force as means of protection and a reaction to the existing notion of insecurity – being unprotected by the state. And when transposed to the international system, it seems unlikely that peace is attractive for PMSCs, given that international stability disables their future contracts. Thus, what appears to

¹³⁴ For example see, Newman, E. "Critical Human Security Studies." *Review of International Studies* Vol. 36, No. 01 (2010): 77-94.

be of vital importance for these security experts is the very instability of international system, which leads to the following question: security of *whom*? – The future of private security market?

CONCLUSION

Being casted at the crossroads of state and market, security is undergoing significant conceptual transformations since 1970s and the neoliberal structural reforms. These reforms yielded Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs) as private experts capable of appropriating state's responsibility over the use of force, and ultimately security of its citizens. 'Weakened' state image, or the overall 'coating' of public sector's inaptness in offering effective security provision, enabled PMSCs to gradually overtake notable number of security-related issues, thereby acquiring security expertise. More importantly, PMSCs have come to operate on a transnational scale, becoming increasingly involved in matters of international security. Consequently, these private security experts are enabled the 'access' to the very notion of security through their provision of security services, but also through security-related information they come in possession. And as this research shows, being transferred to the crossroads of state and market – being the most 'efficient' solution for security matters – there is a normative shift that occurs within the realm of international security. Namely, as private business entities, PMSCs have profit maximization at the core of their identities. This leads us back to the notion of 'war profiteering' or 'mercenarism' once regarded as immoral and prohibited. However, this prohibition has been altered and 'embodied' in PMSCs as being the most efficient 'market' solution.

And this particular research endeavour aimed at understanding PMSCs identities, and the manner in which identities affect common understandings of security, thereby contributing to a particularly interesting body of literature that explores identities of these private security actors. Furthermore, the exploration of ten largest U.S. based PMSCs identities conducted here revealed the troublesome shift in paradigm within which security is conceptualised. The main research findings can be separated into four interconnected sections according to steps undertaken. First

section reveals how PMSCs ‘adjust’ their identities through using different ‘frames,’ in order to expand and diversify their market, and ultimately satisfy the core of their identities – profit maximization. Second section employs textual analysis of the aforementioned ten largest U.S. based PMSCs official websites to reveal how PMSCs internalize commonly acknowledged set of norms in order to decrease ‘space’ for the debate regarding their very nature, and thus become perceived as ‘unproblematic’ security experts. Third section reveals the ever-present core of PMSCs identities – profit maximization – that determines their interests and can be characterized as the ‘logic’ of their identities. Fourth section reveals ‘suffusion’ of U.S. state identity’s core – security – with the underlying ‘logic’ of PMSCs identities – profit maximization. More specifically, this section shows the shifting paradigm within which security is conceptualised, and that is the one of security being regarded through the lenses of ‘cost-efficiency,’ ‘professionalism,’ and ‘innovative thinking.’ As the final note, this research offers assessment of the aforementioned shifting paradigm, ultimately offering a ‘warning’ of dangerous leap towards the future of international instability that PMSCs represent. Particularly relevant to emphasize is the ‘encroachment’ of moral grounds, on which responsible use of force is being determined, by the ‘market rationale.’ Finally, this research shows the relevance of returning to questioning the very nature of PMSCs, which leads us to back furthering our understanding of the shifted paradigm within which security is conceptualised.

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