QUEERING SECURITY STUDIES: THE DEVIANCE AND PERVERSION OF THE ISLAMIC STATE

By

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ABSTRACT

On the 29th June 2014, it was announced that a new caliphate had been established under the name of the Islamic State (IS). The emergence of IS, as it captured large swathes of territory in Iraq and Syria, proved both startling and alarming. Indeed, the IS's use of brutal and violent tactics provoked cries from observers deploring the so-called caliphate as 'evil', 'barbaric' and 'perverse'. Yet IS appears to be unrelenting, battling to retain and gain new territory in pursuit of its goal of establishing a global caliphate. The aim of this thesis is to ask what insights queer theory might provide for International Relations (IR) in general, and for Security Studies in particular. By using the case study of IS, this thesis utilizes a queer analytical framework to interrogate and exhumes the gendered, sexual(ized) and racial(ized) assumptions upon which international structures and processes are rendered intelligible, and thus made meaningful.

Subscribing to a disruptive queer methodology, this thesis examines the concepts of 'state', 'sovereignty' and 'power' as dominantly understood in IR to investigate the ways in which IS challenge, reaffirm and unsettle these notions. It draws upon primary and secondary data including: governmental, organizational and institutional reports; newspaper articles; as well as documents produced by IS institutions, such as the English-speaking propaganda magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyyah,* official policy statements, declarations and codes of conduct. It is suggested that mainstream IR's primary focus on state power, states, sovereignty and (national) security both naturalizes and obscures racialized, gendered, sexualized and classed processes and global hierarchies, thereby reproducing and upholding the status quo of the modern-state system. In particular, it is argued that the queer plurality of IS exposes the fragility and constructed nature of states and sovereignty. By applying a Queer IR analysis to IS, this thesis re-examines and recasts key concepts and theories of international security in order to demonstrate the contradictions and instabilities inherent in conventional conceptions of (in)security and world politics.

KEYWORDS: Queer IR, IS, Islamic State, Security, Sovereignty, State, Power

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of original research; it contains no materials accepted for any other degree in any other institution and no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgement is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

I further declare that the following word count for this thesis are accurate:

Body of thesis (all chapters excluding notes, references, appendices, etc.): 19,400 words

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Signed   NATALIE LOVELL

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AQI – al-Qa'ida in Iraq

IR - International Relations

IS – Islamic State

ISI - Islamic State of Iraq

ISIS – Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham

JTJ - Jama'at al-Tawhid wa'al-Jihad

LGBT – Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender

OHCHR – United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

UNHRC - United Nations Human Rights Council

INTRODUCTION

> The time has come for those generations that were drowning in oceans of disgrace, being nursed on the milk of humiliation, and being ruled by the vilest of all people, after their long slumber in the darkness of neglect – the time has come for them to rise.
>
> (al-Furqan Media and al-Baghdadi, 2014)

The rise of the Islamic State (IS) has produced numerous challenges to regional and Western governments and the future stability of the region. Indeed, IS has been characterized in a plethora of ways, including but not limited to "a guerrilla army, Sunni revanchist political movement, millenarian Islamist Cult and ruthless administrator of territory" (Fromson and Simon, 2015: 9). The group's declaration of the establishment of a caliphate within its controlled territories in Iraq and Syria, and its vision of establishing a global caliphate poses a challenge to traditional conceptions of the 'Westphalian' state system. According to Hansen-Lewis and Shapiro (2015 : 142), the group maintained dominant authority in an area of roughly 138,000 square kilometres that contained a population of eight million people in April 2015. Within the occupied territories, IS regulates the economy, taxes civilians, maintains a strong military force and even provides social services. In other words, IS is engaging in state-building processes. By claiming sovereignty and demanding recognition for its Caliphate whilst simultaneously rejecting the 'Westphalian system', as well as its ability to mobilize a transnational community of people bounded by religious values, IS presents a curious vision of the sovereign state and the international order in which it resides.

Tickner (1988 : 429) once stated that "international relations is a man's world, a world of power and conflict in which warfare is a privileged activity." Whilst the end of the Cold War resulted in a "plethora of attempts" (Baldwin, 1997 : 9) to redefine security, traditional conceptions of security have centered on the "phenomenon of war" (Walt, 1991 : 212), consequently privileging military force as the primary source of security, and states as the most important referent unit. As a result, feminist International Relations (IR) scholars have sought to expose as androcentric this

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account of global politics, in order to demonstrate the gendered power relations that underpin, and are central to, international processes (Steans, 1998). Through analyzing seemingly gender-neutral concepts in IR and Security Studies, such as the state, war and violence, for example, feminist scholars have identified the ways in which security is *constituted* through gender (Sjoberg, 2010), thus calling for redefinition and reformulation. Whilst feminist IR has become more prominent, the continuing systemic omission of Queer IR and security analysis has consequences for IR in general. Specifically, "queer intellectual curiosity" (Weber, 2016: 11) seeks to build upon and go beyond feminist IR research, by refusing to take for granted institutional arrangements, international configurations and structures of understanding. As de Lauretis (1991: xvi) describes, queer strives to "rethink the sexual in new ways, elsewhere and otherwise." As such, Queer IR seeks to contribute to the growing interdisciplinary literature on the myriad and complex ways in which discourses of gender and sexuality are critical in the formation of race and nation as well as dominant understandings of security and international politics.

The aim of this thesis is to ask what insights queer theory might provide for International Relations (IR) in general, and for Security Studies in particular. Utilizing a queer analytical framework, I examine how a queer lens both interrogates and exhumes the gendered, sexual(ized) and racial(ized) assumptions upon which international structures and processes are rendered intelligible, and thus made meaningful. The contributions of using such a framework will be illustrated by a case study, focusing on IS. I suggest that mainstream IR's primary focus on state power, states, sovereignty and (national) security both naturalizes and obscures racialized, gendered, sexualized and classed processes and global hierarchies, thereby reproducing and upholding the status quo of the modern-state system. In particular, as a self-proclaimed, unrecognized state, I argue that the existence of IS exposes the fragility and constructed nature of states and sovereignty. By applying a queer analysis to IS, I re-examine and recast key concepts and theories of international security in order to demonstrate the contradictions and instabilities inherent in conventional conceptions of (in)security and world politics.

To this end, the following questions are central:

- What are the specific insights offered by a queer perspective that can augment analyses of power and provide new perspectives for security studies in particular and IR in general?

- How are dominant understandings of security constructed in and through sexuality, as well as other intersecting modalities of power such as gender, race, religion, and nation?

- What does a queer analysis of IS inform us about the relationship between sovereignty, the state, and violence?

Methodology

In this thesis, rather than exposing the resistant, oppositional or subversive, I seek to unearth the intimate relations and modalities of power between queerness, international relations and global regimes of security. Queer as a modality of inquiry "can challenge the supposed coherence, reliability and generability regarded as a central concern to some social scientists" (Browne and Nash, 2010 : 12). Methodologically, then, to examine and interrogate the ruptures and continuities of global politics, I engage a range of theoretical paradigms and employ an entanglement of methods, strategies of data collection and textual materials to reflect a disruptive queer methodology (Puar, 2007) that demonstrates the multiplicities of knowledge production and thus 'knowing'. Therefore, my research builds upon and draws from a number of scholarly literatures in conjunction to discourse and content analysis of primary and secondary data. The texts assembled for analysis include governmental, organizational and institutional reports; newspaper articles; as well as primary source documents produced by IS institutions, comprising of the English-speaking propaganda magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyyah,* official policy statements, declarations and codes of conduct, obtained from social media platforms and document-sharing websites such as justpaste.it. Through the use of discourse analysis and IS as a case study, this thesis seeks to expose and interrogate the underlying assumptions and the production of certain (il)legitimate international subjectivities within the hegemonic discourses of IR.

Terminology: what's in a name?

Following Bunzel (2016: 3), I adopt the term 'Islamic State' (IS) (*al-Dawla al-Islamiyya*) to reflect what the group names itself, its expansionist ambitions as well as the its existence since 2006. Therefore, IS refers to the group once known as: the Islamic State of Iraq, *al-Dawlat al-'Iraq al-Islamiyya,* (ISI, October 2006 – April 2013); the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham *al-Dawla al-Islamiyya fi Iraq wa ash-Sham* (ISIS, April 2013 – June 2014); the Islamic State (June 2014 – present); and Da'esh, which is the Arabic acronym (*al-Dawla al-Islamiyya fil il-Iraq wa al-Sham).*

Organization of the thesis

This thesis is organized as follows. Chapter 1 begins with an overview of Queer IR literature as well as providing a theoretical framework from which I depart. I then proceed to survey and analyse the dominant representations of IS within the field of IR before providing a tentative history of IS, and outlining their ideology.

In Chapter 2, I interrogate notions of the state and statehood as traditionally conceived in IR in order to demonstrate the similarities IS shares with state-building processes. I focus on the social contract and citizenship to argue that the IS provides services and obligations much like a state, thereby unsettling our notions of 'stateness' and 'statehood'.

Chapter 3 addresses the concept of sovereignty, beginning with Westphalian sovereignty. I then proceed to explore the relationship between sovereignty and violence. Whilst not intending to minimize nor condone the IS's use of violence, I argue that the construction of the IS as an exceptional state of violence obscures the use of violence inflicted by seemingly legitimate sovereign states.

In the final Chapter, I argue that the centrality of state power in IR and security discourse is both limited and limiting. I suggest that conceptualising power as diffuse allows us to broaden our understanding of global politics. By reworking the concept of power to include biopolitics and

necropolitics, I demonstrate how the figures of IS's foreign fighters and suicide attackers represent

a queer 'threat from within' that threatens to decay the sovereign population.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter introduces the theoretical basis for this thesis as well as providing a background to IS. I begin by mapping out the conceptual landscape of queer theory to suggest that the utility and necessity of applying a queer analytical lens remains marginalized by mainstream IR. Having characterized the state of Queer IR, in the second section I then proceed to outline the dominant representations of IS within IR before providing a brief history and overview of the IS's ideology.

1.1 Capturing Queer International Relations

What is the relevance of queer theory to IR? What is the current state of Queer IR and how do we characterise Queer IR? In this section, I will map out and analyse the existing literature on queer international relations and queer international theory in order to situate the relevance and necessity of my research within the wider field. I begin by discussing 'queer' as a concept, before broadly situating queer theorizing within social, political and international theory. Finally, I examine the theoretical contributions of the emerging body of scholarship known as Queer IR.

1.1.1 Queer as a Concept: Situating the Queer Turn

Queer theory emerged in the 1990s as a political and academic endeavour, and is often attributed to individuals such as Judith Butler (1993; 1990), Eve Sedgwick (1993; 1990), Teresa de Lauretis (1991), and Michael Warner(1993) as the founding thinkers. First coined by de Lauretis (1991), queer theory "originally came into being as joke" (Halperin, 2003: 339), intended to be scandalously disruptive to the complacency of 'lesbian and gay studies', the dominance of empiricism, and the homogenising discourses and assumptions underpinning 'theory' itself. Whilst early proponents of queer theory had diverging ideas regarding the ambitions and objectives of the queer political project, queer theory challenged the "normalizing mechanisms of state power" (Eng et al., 2005: 1) thereby reconceptualising normative understandings of sexuality, sexual identity and sexual desires. The commitment of queer theorists and scholars to the contestation of

simplistic normative and dichotomous conceptions, such as hetero/homo, male/female and normal/perverse, have thus served to highlight the socially constructed nature of subjectivity and the multiple sites of power in its establishment (Cohen, 1997).

The meaning and ambivalence of the term 'queer' continues to be disputed and deployed in a multitude of ways (Warner, 2012). In the article "Critically Queer", Butler (1993b : 18) asserts that for the reinvention and operations of queer critique to remain politically salient, "it will have to remain that which is, in the present, never fully owned, but always and only redeployed, twisted, queered from prior usage and in the direction to urgent and expanding political purpose." For Butler (1993b : 18), the continuous self-interrogation of queerness "is crucial to the continuing *democratization* of queer politics" as well as illuminating its complicity in the formation of new exclusionary logics and relations of power. Halperin (2003)and Jagose (2015), for example, have critically examined the institutionalization of queer theory and the conventional, reductive understanding of queer solely as 'antinormative'.

As a point of departure, I draw upon Sedgwick (1993: 8), for whom queer signifies:

> the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone's gender, of anyone's sexuality aren't made (or can't be made) to signify monolithically.

As Weber (2016b: n.9; 2014: 596) explains, Sedgwick's (1993) account brings to the fore the connections and affiliations between queer theory, feminist theory and poststructuralism. In the 1980s, for instance, feminist scholarship interrogated the essentialising foundations of the category of women (Spelman, 1991; Fuss, 1989). For Jagose (2009: 172) "feminist theory and queer theory together have a stake in both desiring and articulating the complexities of the traffic between gender and sexuality." In this way, queer denotes the pluralized significations and constitution of non-monolithic subjectivities. In particular, this notion of queer seeks to challenge processes whereby normative understandings of sexuality and gender sustain and are central to socio-political

relations and international formations of power. Moreover, following Castro Varela et al. (2011 : 18), I employ queer as an analytical category "that addresses a 'constitutive logic', exactly because it does not carry meaning itself." Indeed, it is precisely the term's instability, contingency, and open-ness to contestation that lies behind its political and analytical force.

In asking "What's queer about queer studies now?", Eng et al. (2005: 1) point to the ways in which reconfigured queer scholarship have expanded upon and broadened the boundaries of queer epistemology, ontology, methodology, and critique to interrogate a wide range of intellectual terrain. For Browne and Nash (2010 : 4), queer research constitutes "any form of research positioned within conceptual frameworks that highlight the instability of taken-for-granted meanings and resulting power relations". Concepts such as heteronormatitvity, that is, "institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent—that is, organized as a sexuality—but also privileged" (Berlant and Warner, 1998: 548, n.2) and homonormativity (Duggan, 2003), by which *some* 'homosexuals' are folded into the neoliberal fabric thus upholding hegemonic institutions and reinscribing new inclusions and exclusions, have enabled a rethinking of international processes. Consequently, queer theorizing has focused on and responded to a multitude of subjects from the likes of sex and sexuality on various scales from the personal to the international; questions of citizenship and human rights; homophobia; empire and nationalism; settler colonialism; eurocentric conceptions of modernity to murderous inclusions (Abbas and Ekine, 2013; Binnie, 2004; Briggs, 2002; Cruz and Manalansan, 2002; Rahman, 2014; Sabsay, 2013; Schulman, 2012; Smith, 2010; Haritaworn et al., 2013). Queer theory and queer theorizing, then, have developed into a plethora of branches and disciplines, "that it resists synthesis" (Warner, 2012 : online).

1.1.2 Queer IR

Despite the transversing of queer studies across multiple disciplines since the 1990s, Queer IR has only incrementally expanded as a legitimate body of knowledge. In asking why "IR [has]

not gone somewhat Queer?" after 25 years, Weber (2015: 28) calls attention to the marginalization of queer studies by the regulatory and disciplinary processes of IR as a whole. Similarly, Agathangelou and Ling (2004: 21) have demonstrated the ways in which "IR comes to resemble a colonial household" by prescribing particular ways of "thinking, doing and being", whilst simultaneously erasing and appropriating the knowledge production of Others. In positing IR as a metaphorical colonial household, Agathangelou and Ling (2004: 21) bring to attention the disciplines boundedness to "capitalist-patriarchy", prescribing and imposing certain forms of order. Indeed, as an academic discipline IR continues to be marked by raciality and coloniality.

Within the metaphor of the colonial household, postmodern feminism and queer studies represent the 'fallen daughters' of IR: marginalised "for exposing its secret lusts and unrequited desire" (Agathangelou and Ling, 2004 : 30) and are consequently relegated to the peripheries of the house (read: discipline). Meanwhile, postcolonial IR, Orientalism, and Worldism are illegitimate "love child[s]" (Agathangelou and Ling, 2004: 33–35) questioning the very foundations of IR, and therefore banished to 'outside' the household. The spatial divisions within the colonial household represent the social relations of power that ungird the production of knowledge within the discipline. Indeed, more than a decade later, IR scholarship pertaining to issues of sexuality, queerness and explicitly queer approaches remains comparatively small despite a growing recognition of the salience of Queer IR scholarship and its intricate entanglements with the racialized and gendered logics of international politics. I see regimes of sex, gender, sexuality, racism, (neo)colonialism, neoliberalism and classism as inextricably connected, and as such, mutually constitutive within hegemonic structures of domination.

Whilst the burgeoning body of Queer IR and Security Studies scholarship has proliferated predominantly within the past few years, explicitly queer approaches to IR can be traced back to Weber (1998; 1999) and Peterson (1999) whose analyses explore the queering of nations, states and sovereignties. Peterson (1999), for example, interrogates the heterosexism that underpins

political identity formation and the processes of nationalism. Meanwhile Weber (1998a) links a Butlerian notion of performativity (Butler, 1990) to the subject of the sovereign nation-state, in order to argue the sovereign nation-state as a sexed and gendered body. In *Faking It,* Weber (1999) utilizes psychoanalytical discourse in tandem with feminist and queer theory, to provide a novel reading of U.S foreign policy and its enactment of hegemonic masculinity in the Caribbean. Weber's (1999)　account argues that US hegemonic masculinity was queered by the Cuban Revolution. Specifically, it is suggested that Cuba was a "certain feminine complement the United States relied on to forestall any pending midlife/hegemonic/masculine identity crisis" (Weber, 1999: 1) the loss of which triggered a hegemony crisis undergirded by anxieties in the US's own masculinity and heterosexuality.

Queer IR research has since navigated and centred on a multitude of analyses that enable a re-reading and re-evaluation of established IR concepts and configurations. A great number of literatures examining sexuality in international politics explore the ways in which lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) claims to human rights have reconceptualised the notion of the political subject, the role of the state, and the international structure itself (Kollman and Waites, 2009; Langlois, 2015; Picq and Thiel, 2015; Rao, 2012; Rao, 2014; Thoreson, 2009; Waites, 2009; Wilkinson and Langlois, 2014). Similarly, research focusing on sexuality has also been produced with the sub-disciplines of development studies and international political economy (Agathangelou, 2006; Bedford, 2009; Lind, 2010; Lind, 2009; Lind and Share, 2003). Additionally, the movement of queer subjects across borders has given rise to queer migration scholarship (Fortier, 2002; Gopinath, 2005; Jung, 2015; Luibhéid, 2008a; Luibhéid and Cantú, 2005; Patton and Sánchez-Eppler, 2000), calling into question the centrality of citizenship and the state as "critical loci for upholding and contesting regional, transnational, and neo-imperial hierarchies" (Luibhéid, 2008: 174) based on gender, sexuality, race and class.

However, as Wilcox (2014 : 615) argues, a fundamental feature of Queer IR is the drawing to attention "'sexuality' as regimes of desire, danger, and attachments that are not *a priori* reducible to orientations and identity, and yet nonetheless shape our political conditions of possibility". A prime example of this method of queering includes Amar's (2013) analysis on the "securitization of racialized, classed, and gendered bodies which manifest itself in the figurations of the terrorist, trafficker, and rescuer/redeemer" (Amar, 2016 : online), as illustrated by the case studies of Brazil and Egypt. Through his study of the formation and securitization practices of the 'human security state', Amar examines how sexuality politics are central to "new forms of sexualized and moralized governance" (2013: 3) within the Global South. Other examples include analyses of neoliberal privatization and racialized bodies (Agathangelou, 2013; Agathangelou et al., 2008); the torturer (Richter-Montpetit, 2007, 2014) queer 'assemblage' and the terrorist (Puar, 2007a; Puar and Rai, 2002); and the transgendering of security studies (Shepherd and Sjoberg, 2012). As such, this form of queer theorizing shifts the focus from narrow conceptions of sexuality as minority identities and sexual orientations to "queerness" as a set of hypervisible, racialized, classed, gendered and sexualized processes already present within regimes of inclusion/exclusion, life/death and security/insecurity (Wilcox, 2014; Puar, 2007a).

Cynthia Weber's (2016b) recently published *Queer International Relations* signals the latest attempt to comprehensively bring into dialogue the unique contributions of international queer theories to the "hard" questions of IR. Weber draws upon Foucault's (1978) *The History of Sexuality,* Ashley's (1989) notion of 'statecraft as mancraft' and the Barthesian rule of the (pluralizing logics of) *and/or* (Barthes, 1974), to articulate Queer IR theoretical and methodological frameworks that can be incorporated into future research. In particular, Weber's conception of the "queer logics of statecraft" (2016: 24)- that is, the sexualizing orders of international relations –propose a lens through which to investigate the plural logics that characterize international configurations as normal *and/or* perverse, and thus subsequently queer. According to Weber the utility of the logic of the *and/or* lies within its exposition that "a subject is *both* one thing *and* another (plural, perverse)

while *simultaneously* one thing *or* another (singular, normal)" (2016b: 40, original emphasis) therefore challenging binary logics, as subjects are constituted by multiple and seemingly contradictory planes of subjectivity. The framework of queer logics of statecraft, then, allows us to trace how the pluralities of international figurations such as the sovereign state and the IS are "performatively enacted" (Weber, 2016b: 44) and therefore queerly inhabited.

Drawing upon and building off of this growing body of scholarship, my thesis will demonstrate how utilizing queer methods and queer theorizing as applied to the case study of IS is able to explore the construction, regulation and reconfiguration of international subjectivities. As an "unruly" (Luibhéid, 2008: 169) line of inquiry, an analytical Queer IR framework traverses the ideological encampments of other critical bodies of research drawing from diverse fields including, but not limited to feminist, critical race, ethnic, and postcolonial studies. Moving beyond the narrow understanding of (homo)sexuality within IR theory, then, the plural logics of Queer IR methods exposes the centring and production of the racialized, sexualised and gendered normal/perverse binary in global security regimes (Amar, 2016 : online) and the normalization of the international order, to provide new insights into key IR concerns.

1.2 Representations of IS in International Relations

> The gist of the matter is that there is indeed a rhyme to our terrorism, warfare, ruthlessness, and brutality. As much as some liberal journalist would like you to believe that we do what we do because we're simply monsters with no logic behind our course of action, the fact is that we continue to wage – and escalate – a calculated war that the West thought it had ended several years ago.
>
> (Al-Hayat, 2016 : 33)

On the 29th June 2014, IS spokesman Abu Muhammad al-Adnani announced the establishment of a new caliphate under the leadership of Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (al-Furqan Media and al-Adnani al-Shami, 2014). Previously known as the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), al-Adnani proclaimed that the group would henceforth be known as the Islamic State, and al-Baghdadi as "Caliph Ibrahim" (Al Arabiya, 2014; Westall and Abdelaty, 2014). Having captured

large swathes of territory in Iraq and Syria, including the Iraqi city of Mosul and the northern Syrian city of Raqqa, the IS "blitzkrieg" (Fishman, 2016: 179; Fromson and Simon, 2015: 9) appeared to be unstoppable, unusually brutal and unrelenting. To many, the events signalling the sudden emergence and reinvention of the IS were startling and cruel: "you are no longer fighting an insurgency. We are an Islamic army" IS militant 'Jihadi John' declared in an online video before beheading American journalist James Wright Foley in August 2014 (Lockhart, 2014 : online). The IS's rise to global notoriety and infamy has since triggered numerous statements from Western governments decrying the group as a particular "brand of evil"(Borger and Wintour, 2014) and "the work of the devil" (Safi, 2015). The Obama Administration, for example, asserted that the IS are a group of "barbarians" who are "part of a cult of death" (Carissimo, 2015), vowing to follow them "to the gates of hell" (Topaz, 2014). The rhetoric of irrationality and dominant discourses depicting the IS as an exceptional 'evil' abound. Yet, as the above quote from the 15th issue of IS's *Dabiq* magazine demonstrates, the IS has deep roots in larger historical trends, strategic depth and a course of action. In other words, there is a "method to [IS's] madness" (Kadercan, 2015b).

Broadly speaking, scholarship and analysis pertaining to the "nature" of IS can be organized into four dominant frameworks, whereby IS is characterised as: (1) a terrorist organization; (2) an apocalyptic cult; (3) an insurgency or (4) a quasi- or proto-state. Firstly, early interpretations classified the IS as a particularly insidious terrorist organization that represented the latest development in transnational jihadist terrorism. In this view, IS is considered to be an offshoot of al Qa'ida, or what Kadercan (2015a) terms "al Qaeda redux". Ganor (2015: 58), for example, suggests that IS is a "hybrid terrorist organization" operating simultaneously within the military, civilian, and political spheres. However, as Cronin (2015) argues, whilst there are similarities in ideology and rhetoric between the two groups, IS and al-Qa'ida are not the same, nor does IS represent the latest phase in al-Qa'ida's evolution.

Meanwhile Barron and Maye (2017) argue that IS satisfies all the criteria of an apocalyptic cult, which brings us to our second domain. Proponents of the 'apocalyptic cult' interpretation centre on IS's ideology, strategy, tactics and goals to purport that IS grossly manipulates and distorts the religion of Islam in order to recruit, brainwash and indoctrinate its followers for the purpose of sustaining a brutal regime (Fishman, 2016; Gaub, 2016; Kaplan and Costa, 2015; McCants, 2015). Thus, it is argued that "cults are more flexible, more cohesive, more agile and ultimately more challenging than other enemies" (Gaub, 2016 : 113), in which religious scripture and beliefs are deployed to gain legitimacy, credibility, establish control and a sense of urgency cast in eschatological terms.

The third framework regards IS as an insurgency, combining protracted guerrilla warfare and terrorism as strategies (Katagiri, 2015; Rich, 2016). Connected to this is the conception of IS as a revolutionary armed group (Kalyvas, 2015; Whiteside, 2016). Here, insurgency is defined as "an armed struggle dedicated to replacing the government" (Whiteside, 2016 : 745), whilst a revolutionary group is taken to be "a group that aims not just to gain power but self-consciously to transform society in a deep and radical way, by profoundly rearranging social and political relations" (Kalyvas, 2015 : 43). Therefore, an insurgent group may have territorial and/or ideological (read: revolutionary) objectives.

The final dominant characterisation of IS is that of a proto- or quasi- state (Cronin, 2015; Esfandiary and Tabatabai, 2017; Phillips, 2014; Tziarras, 2017), and more specifically, a jihadi proto-state (Lia, 2015). According to Lia (2015: 36), IS can be regarded as an exercise in state building, and as an internationalist, ideological project with a commitment to territorial administration and governance. Moreover, the IS is highly aggressive, inciting fear and insecurity among its neighbouring countries, and as such, for Walt (2015) and Byman (2016), IS appears to be strikingly similar to a revolutionary state.

The four above dominant explanatory models and frameworks function to reduce complex social, political and historical dynamics, thereby rendering the IS as a static, unchanging, classifiable pathology. Interwoven into these strands of categorization are strategies for which to defeat the IS, either by containment, eradication or "socialization" into the modern state system (Kadercan, 2015a). As Puar and Rai (2002 : 122) assert "Counterterrorism is a form of *racial, civilizational knowledge*, but now also an academic discipline that is quite explicitly tied to the exercise of state power". Similarly, as Khalili (2011: 1) identifies, counterinsurgency "has long been a mainstay of colonial way-fighting and imperial policing". By casting the IS in this way and confining it to banal taxonomies, such discourse not only fails to capture the shifting fluidity and malleability of the IS, but also serves to define the parameters of the normal/abnormal, the legitimate/illegitimate and by extension, the deviant and thus perverse.

1.3 Understanding the Rise of the Islamic State

In this section, I seek to provide a brief profile of IS by addressing its historical trajectory, and ideology. I begin by tracing the evolution of IS and its predecessors, situating the emergence of IS within the wider socio-political conditions in Iraq and Syria that allowed for the groups emergence and subsequent expansion, before proceeding to outline the IS's ideological foundations. Due to limitations, this account will be neither comprehensive nor exhaustive, instead providing an overview of the major developments in the IS's history.

1.3.1 A Brief History of the IS

Broadly speaking, the IS's history can be divided into four crucial periods beginning with: (1) Jama'at al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad (JTJ) led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (1999-2004); (2) al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI) (2004 – 2006); (3) the establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI) (2006 – 2013); and (4) 2013 to the present.

1999-2004: al-Zarqawi and Jama'at al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad (JTJ)

Our story begins with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian who fought alongside the *mujahidin* against the Soviets in Afghanistan in the late 1980s. After being released from five years in prison, al-Zarqawi returned to Afghanistan in 1999 to establish a training camp in the Afghan city of Herat (Lister, 2014; Bunzel, 2016). According to Hashim (2014: 69) and Bunzel (2016: 13), contrary to popular belief there is insufficient evidence that al-Zarqawi and Osama Bin Laden had much interaction during this period. Nevertheless, following the U.S-led invasion of Afghanistan, al-Zarqawi and his group JTJ fled to Iran, before eventually relocating to the Kurdish controlled areas of northern Iraq (Kirdar, 2011). By 2003, the US occupation of Iraq had ignited a deadly insurgency launched by a hybrid of Sunni, Ba'athist and nationalist militants, including al-Zarqawi's JTJ (Kirdar, 2011: 4). During the insurgency, JTJ gained notoriety for its heavy use of suicide bombers and other violent tactics such as publicised beheadings (BBC, 2004; Roberts, 2003).

2004-2006: al-Qa'ida in Iraq

In October 2004, al-Zarqawi finally pledged allegiance to Osama Bin Laden and al-Qa'ida, renaming his group AQI (Mapping Militants, 2017). The relationship between al-Zarqawi and central al-Qa'ida, however, was highly strained and fraught with tensions, due to AQI's violent tactics and the targeting of Iraq's Shi'ite community. In February 2004, in a letter reportedly intercepted by the U.S, al-Zarqawi had written that the Shi'a are "the insurmountable obstacle, the lurking snake, the crafty and malicious scorpion, the spying enemy, and the penetrating venom[…] a sect of treachery and betrayal throughout history and throughout the ages" (2004: online). Consequently, AQI's deliberate ignition of sectarian violence, with the intention of inciting a civil war, elicited criticism from al-Qa'ida's senior members, al-Zawahiri (2004) and Sheikh Atiyah Abd al-Rahman al-Lib.

2006-2013: The Establishment of the Islamic State of Iraq

Following al-Zarqawi's death by a US airstrike on the 7th June 2006, AQI appointed Abu Hamza al-Muhajir (Abu Ayub al-Masri) as the leader (Bunzel, 2016; Lister, 2014). Shortly after,

ISI was established under the leadership of Abu Omar al-Baghdadi (Hashim, 2014: 722). AQI and ISI faced a major backlash from Iraqi Sunnis, as a result of the sectarian violence enacted during al-Zarqawi's reign as well as the perceived foreign presence within the group. Local tribal resistance to AQI and ISI eventually culminated in the Anbar Awakening in 2007. Allied with the US and the central government of Iraq to fight the insurgency, the Anbar Awakening proved a breakthrough for US forces to greatly diminish AQI and ISI's capacity (Long, 2008).

On the 18th June 2010, both Abu Ayub al-Masri and Abu Omar al-Baghdadi were killed in a joint US-Iraqi raid. Since 2008, ISI had suffered major losses to its leadership with the majority of the group's 42 leaders having been killed or captured, leading to the emergence of the current leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (Hashim, 2014: 73). Consequently, the withdrawal of the US-led Coalition in 2011 led to the ISI's resurgence, with the group releasing a number of speeches declaring its imminent return (Bunzel, 2016: 24). Meanwhile, Abu Omar al-Baghdadi established Jabhat al-Nusra (The Salvation Front) in Syria using the Syrian Civil War as an opportunity for expansion (Lister, 2014).

2013 – Present: The emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS)

The transformation of the group into ISIS in 2013 signalled the latest developments in Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's strategy for expansion as the group extended its operations into Syria. Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi also claimed that ISI had created Jabhat al-Nusra, which was disputed by both al-Nusra's leader, Abu Muhammad al-Jawlani and al-Zawahiri (Bunzel, 2016). In February 2014, al-Qa'ida released a statement officially renouncing relations with ISIS: "ISIS is not a branch of the Qaidat al-Jihad [al-Qa'ida's official name] group, we have no organizational relationship with it, and the group is not responsible for its actions" (cited in Zelin, 2014a: online). The group have since changed its name to the Islamic State, proclaiming a global and universal caliphate.

1.3.2 The Ideology of the IS

> The Islamic State was drafted by Sayyid Qutb, taught by Abdullah Azzam, globalized by Osama bin Laden, transferred to reality by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and implemented by al-Baghdadis: Abu Omar and Abu Bakr.
> (Abdulelah Haider Shaye cited in Hassan, 2016: 19)

As stated in by the quote above, the ideology of the IS is multifaceted, drawing from different movements, figures and schools of thought, and therefore cannot be reduced to a single ideologue. The IS draws from Salafism, and in particular Wahhabism, as well as other Islamist currents. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that the context of political oppression as well as state and governance failure within Iraq and Syria allowed the IS to emerge.

Derived from the writings of important figures such as Ahmad ibn Hanbal (780- 855) and Taqi al-Din ibn Taymiyya (1263 -1328), Salafism preaches a return to the study of basic sources of Islam, the Qur'an and the *hadith*[1] (Meijer, 2009). Predicated on a literalist reading of Islamic scripture, Salafism is a theological movement in Sunni Islam that makes claims to purifying and clarifying the faith. In particular, adherents lay claim to emulating the "pious predecessors" (*al-salaf al-sali)* (Wagemakers, 2016: online)*,* the first generations of Muslims. Central to Salafism is the concept of *tawhid* (God's Oneness) and thus, the elimination of *shirk* (idolatry or polytheism) (Haykel, 2009: 39). Those considered guilty of *shirk* include the Shi'a and Sufis. The term Salafism itself is highly contested, encompassing a diverse phenomenon and can be said to be divided into three branches: Quietist Salafism; Political Salafism and Jihadi-Salafism (Wagemakers, 2016).

The IS presents itself as Salafist, pertaining specifically to the brand of Islam adopted by Saudi Arabia known as Wahhabism (Hassan, 2016). Named after the eighteenth-century cleric Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792), adherents to Wahhabism believe the decline of

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[1] Often referred to as the sayings of the Prophet, *hadith* are considered authoritative reports of the words and deeds of Muhammad and other early Muslims (Esposito, 2003)

Islam is due to Muslims living in *jahiliyya* (a state of ignorance) (Meijer, 2009: 4). According to Ibn Abd al-Wahhab "One's Islam cannot be sound, even if they adhered to the oneness of God and worshipped none but God, without enmity to the polytheists and showing to them hate and hostility" (cited in Hassan, 2016: 5). Wahhabism therefore takes a hardline stance.

The IS and its al-Qa'ida predecessors have also been heavily inspired by the ideological writings of Sayyid Qutb (1906 - 1966)[2], a prominent figure of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt who created a *takfri* (excommunication) ideology. By introducing the concept of *hakimiyya* (sovereignty of God)[3] (Hassan, 2016) Qutb's political ideology rejected many of the political regimes and modern Muslim-majority societies. The IS therefore claim legitimacy to their violence as a means of cleansing the Islamic faith, and thus for achieving political ends.

Finally, the IS has roots in Saddam Hussein's Baath party. Relying on Baathist networks for leadership, spy networks and battlefield tactics, and ex-baathists are thus a prominent component in the rise and emergence of the IS's 'caliphate' (Coles and Parker, 2015; Nance, 2015). Nevertheless, whilst the IS has deep roots in all of the above, there are numerous divergences between the IS's understanding and preaching of these ideological foundations, and the multiple manifestations they inhabit (Al-Ibrahim, 2015).

1.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have sought to outline the advantages of queer theory and subsequently Queer IR to the discipline of IR. Having explored the conceptual basis of 'queer' I highlighted the insights that queer theorizing has brought to a wide range of intellectual terrain both within and outside the discipline. The second aim of this chapter was to chart the evolution of the IS, before providing an overview of the IS's ideology. In briefly tracing the groups historical and ideological

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[2] See (Binder, 1988) for an account of Qutb's writings.
[3] As opposed to the sovereignty of man.

roots, I presented the backdrop against which to analyse the group's rise and prevalence. Finally, I argued that to reduce the IS's ideology to Salafism alone is to mischaracterise the IS's selective use, understanding and mobilization of its ideas, as well as the political context in which it resides.

CHAPTER 2: ENEMIES OF THE STATE?

> States have been the world's largest and most powerful organizations for more than five thousand years.   (Tilly, 1990 : 1)

Since the discipline's inception, the sovereign state has been, and remains, a critical component of IR. Conceived as an object and central unit of analysis, the state is essential to classical realism (Morgenthau, 1948a; 1948b), neorealism (Waltz, 2000; 1993), and neoliberal institutionalism (Keohane, 2005) as well as having been integral for a number of constructivist and English School theories (Bull, 1977; Lake, 2008; Wendt, 1999). Taken to be the basic referent of IR in general, and security studies in particular, the state is considered the most significant actor in world politics "because they are both the framework of order and the highest sources of governing authority" (Buzan, 1991 : 22). The IS's claims to statehood pose a number of challenges for security studies, and the practices of international politics more generally. By situating and constituting itself as a legitimate state in addition to re-creating and re-appropriating the parameters of the caliphate, IS blurs the boundaries between state and non-state actors, defying neat classification and bringing into question mainstream IR's revered unit of analysis.

One great contribution of feminist IR has been to reveal the extent to which mainstream IR and its state-centric theoretical models, disciplinary boundaries, central concerns and empirical research are underpinned by gendered assumptions, privileging masculinist 'virtues' over 'femininity' (Enloe, 1989; Hooper, 2001; Peterson and Runyan, 1993; Sylvester, 1999; Tickner, 1992). Within the Westphalian system, (Western) states are constructed as masculine: they represent rationality, autonomy, legitimacy, and are seen to be logical, unitary, and aggressive (Gentry, 2016; Kantola, 2007). Gender, in this view, is conceived a social construct, operating as a system of symbols and valuations based on perceived association with gendered traits. Thus, as Kantola notes "not only do states construct gender, but gender constitutes the state" (2007: 272). Building upon this, the theoretical insights generated by a queer analytical lens complicates this further, arguing that gender and sexuality are regulatory discursive mechanisms "through which

bodies [and by extension, states] are made intelligible" (Butler, 2004b; Butler, 1990; Griffin, 2007: 223). Furthermore, a queer analysis demonstrates how structural inequalities are codified, justified, naturalized and constituted by racial-sexual, hetero-patriarchal, power regimes within the international state-system.

In this chapter, I interrogate the concepts of 'state' and 'statehood' by examining the IS's processes of state-building. I begin by surveying definitions and theories of what constitutes the 'modern' state, before examining the following elements of IS's state-building processes: territoriality and borders; the creation of a global *ummah* (Muslim community); population and governance and thus the creation of a 'social contract' of sorts. As Peterson (2013: 61) argues "state-making in the modern era was shaped by both the legacy of earlier states and the emergence of new techniques, modalities and operations of power". Rendered as a terrorist organization, death cult, insurgency and proto-state, I argue that IS is configured as an illegitimate non-state actor, one that is simultaneously hyper-masculinized and feminized, constructed as an irrational, violent, sexually deviant (read: backwards) enemy of the (Western) state. Indeed, the case of IS demonstrates the instability of our very attempts to delineate and employ the notion of statehood.

2.1 What is a state?

Within international law, the most cited classical definition of statehood is found in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of the State (1933, hereafter Montevideo Convention). According to Article 1 of the Montevideo Convention (1933: online), for an entity to be regarded as a state four criteria must be met: "(a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) government; and (d) the capacity to enter into relations with the other States." Furthermore, Article 3 of the Montevideo Convention (1933: online) stipulates that "the political existence of the state is independent of recognition by the other states" and as such "has the right to defend its integrity and independence, to provide for its conservation and prosperity, and consequently to organize itself as it sees fit." Undergirding this definition is the notion of

sovereignty, a fundamental concept which will be addressed in detail in Chapter 3. The universality of the prerequisites to statehood listed by the Montevideo Convention have been called into question by a number of scholars (Brownlie, 2008; Crawford, 2007; Grant, 1998; Raič, 2002). I begin with a discussion of the Montevideo Convention because despite its "discontents" (Grant, 1998), it continues to form the normative basis for the definition of statehood, due to being succinct and possessing only four elements (Coleman, 2014). Another prominent and oft-cited conception of the state is the sociological definition afforded to by Weber ([1922] 1978 : 54) who defined the state in terms of its means:

> A compulsory political organization with continuous operations will be called a 'state' insofar as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the enforcement of its order.

Particularly noteworthy within this definition is the monopoly of the means of violence within a bounded territory, with the question of legitimacy being of great significance here.

It is imperative to note, however, that the definition of statehood found in the Montevideo Convention and as espoused by Weber (1978a) were conceived in particular historical, political and legal epochs. As Grant (1998: 457) asserts, "the definition of statehood has been fluid and controversial" and greatly dependent on context both spatially and temporally. Conceptions of the state and statehood are contested, unstable and historically contingent. With this in mind, I invoke the Montevideo Convention and Weber's (1978a) definition to bring attention to a number of prevailing questions pertaining to recognition, legitimacy, the monopoly of violence, territory and thus borders, population, and governance. In what follows, I interrogate the elements of territory, population and governance in relation to the IS, whilst legitimacy, recognition and the monopoly of violence which I argue underpin multiple notions of sovereignty, will be examined in Chapter 3.

2.1.1 Detangling Nation from State

The conflation, or indeed the indiscriminate "interutilization" (Connor, 1978 : 379) of the two distinct concepts of nation and state is pervasive. Drawing on Anderson (2006) and Smith (1986), Walby (2003 : 531, emphasis mine) suggests that "a nation is a political and cultural *project*, based on a sense of common heritage […] and imagined community." Despite the hyphenation of the terms indicating the differences between nation and state, the 'nation-state' has merged into a single entity, becoming the principal unit of the modern sovereign nation-state model. The tendency to equate the nation with state masks 'the nation' as a political and cultural project that is in the process of becoming, whether that is bounded within a state and territory of its own, or sharing a state with other national projects (Connor, 1978; Walby, 2003).

For Cole and Kandiyoti (2002 : 190) the nation-state is "a set of changing discursive and institutional practices that differ from pre-modern self-conceptions and political arrangements". Denaturalizing the conflation of nation and state is significant for several reasons. First of all, the "myth" (Walby, 2003) of the nation-state serves to perpetuate a normative model of statecraft that imposes a common identity on its citizens, whereby a 'unified' internal Self is inscribed vis-à-vis an external Other. This is significant when we consider that Iraq, for example, was formed as a modern 'nation-state' under a British Mandate in 1920 (Zubaida, 2004). In the case of Iraq, as Zubaida (2004 : 206) argues, a fragmented and fractured Iraqi nation was formed by external colonial arrangements: "as elsewhere in the colonial world (and indeed in many parts of Europe), it is the state that makes the nation". Second of all, in the transition to, or quest for, 'modernity', undergirding European state-making and the 'international' state system it generated, are ongoing colonial, (neo)imperial, racialized, heteronormative discourses (Peterson, 2013; Weber, 2016b). The naturalization and normalization of the (European) nation-state as the assumed territorial unit of a political community was constituted and reproduced through "tremendous expenditure of labour and extreme and coordinated violence" (Cowen and Gilbert, 2008 : 2). 'Modern' nation-state formation is therefore marked by establishing and maintaining hierarchal dichotomies such

as whiteness/blackness (Fanon, 2008), barbaric/colonial, civilized/savage (Stoler, 2010; Stoler, 1995), masculine/feminine, male/female, heterosexual/homosexual (Peterson, 1999; Peterson, 2013) and the normal/pathological (Fruhstuck, 2014).

2.2 Unveiling the Caliphate: Constructing a Global Ummah

> O ummah of Islam, indeed the world today has been divided into two camps
> and two trenches, with no third camp present: The camp of Islam and faith,
> and the camp of kufr (disbelief) and hypocrisy – the camp of the Muslims and
> mujahidin everywhere, and the camp of the jews, the crusaders, their allies and
> with them the rest of the nations and religions of kufr, all being led by American
> and Russia, and being mobilized by the jews.
>
> (al-Furqan Media and al-Baghdadi, 2014: 4)

During his first public appearance on the 4th July 2014, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi delivered a sermon in the great mosque of Mosul, ceremoniously declaring the formation of the caliphate and himself as the self-proclaimed Caliph. Throughout the sermon, al-Baghdadi (2014) generates a vision of a united, galvanized global *Ummah* (Muslim community), calling upon all Muslims throughout the world to perform *hijrah*[4] (emigration) to the territory it had seized and over which it was exerting its control. Declaring the centrality of the concepts of *jihad*[5] and *mujahidin* (one who engages in jihad) as vital to the IS's vision of Islam and therefore as the path to Allah, al-Baghdadi (2014) structures the world into two camps: the "camp of Islam" vs. "the camp of *kufr*", or in other words, 'believers' and 'disbelievers'. Urging the global *Ummah* to "stand up" and "rise", al-Baghdadi (2014) condemns the humiliation, domination and violations Muslims have suffered at the hands of the *kufr*, the "crusaders", and the Western world. In doing so, the enemies of the IS are clearly defined, with no option given outside of the two camps: you are either with the IS or

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[4] *Hijrah,* like *jihad,* has numerous theologically historical meanings. First and foremost, it refers to the journey of Prophet Muhammad and his Companions from Mecca to Medina in the course of the first year of the Islamic calendar, in 622.C.E. Perhaps most salient for the IS's usage, is its definition as "the willingness to suffer for faith and the refusal to lose hope in the face of persecution" (Esposito, 2003).

[5] The concept of *jihad* has been a source of great confusion within Western news media and much of IR literature and discourse. Following the events of 11th September 2001, the term *jihad* has been grossly misunderstood, misused, and abused. For a brief overview of its multiple meanings see (Mandaville, 2007: 49–50).

against them[6]. Furthermore, in constructing the global *Ummah,* al-Baghdadi (2014) utilizes an all-embracing narrative and rhetoric that is seemingly utopian:

> O Muslims everywhere, glad tidings to you and expect good. Raise your head high, for today – by Allahs grace – you have a state and khilāfah, which will return your dignity, might, rights, and leadership: It is a state where the Arab and non-Arab, the white man and black man, the easterner and westerner are all brothers. It is a khilāfah that gathered the Caucasian, Indian, Chinese, Shāmī, Iraqi, Yemeni, Egyptian, Maghribī (North African), American, French, German, and Australian. Allah brought their hearts together, and thus, they became brothers by His grace, loving each other for the sake of Allah, standing in a single trench, defending and guarding each other, and sacrificing themselves for one another.   (al-Furqan Media and al-Baghdadi, 2014)

As demonstrated by the above quote, the IS presents a vision of its caliphate and its *Ummah* that transcends nationality, race, ethnicity, and therefore as an "imagined community" (Anderson, 2006) bound by faith. In the eyes of the IS, however, inclusion into the brotherhood is only afforded to Sunni Muslims, delegitimizing other Muslim sects and therefore calling for their persecution. As Lister (2014 : 18) notes, the "IS aims to present itself as the protector of true and pure Sunni ideals." Moreover, through the selective use of Qur'anic[7] verses, al-Baghdadi (2014) seeks to legitimize the IS's claims to authority and consolidate its self-proclamation as an 'Islamic' state, by manipulating historic Islamic language and ideology to serve the political project of the caliphate.

Drawing on Weber's (2016b) queer logics of statecraft, I would argue that a Queer IR analysis illuminates the pluralities of the IS's construction of the global *Ummah,* as both mirroring *and* deviating, whilst simultaneously mirroring *or* deviating from constructions of 'the nation' by 'nation-states' regarded as legitimate. What I mean by this is that, on the one hand, IS mirrors

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[6] This, to me, seems highly reminiscent of Bush's (2001: online) now infamous declaration "Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists".

[7] It is important to note that Qur'an has multiple meanings, and is open to multiple interpretations. Like other sacred texts, the Qur'an is polysemic, which is why Islamic feminist have called for the need to "examine both the methods that Muslims have applied to read the Qur'an and also the extra-textual contexts in which they have read it historically" (Barlas, 2001: 15). Unfortunately, I was unable to find information regarding the version of the Qur'an that the IS relies upon.

nation-building projects insofar as reflecting exclusionary logics of who is included in the nation/caliphate and who is not. Whilst nations are usually 'established' by way of commonality by language, ethnicity, race or nationality, in the case of IS, inclusion into the 'brotherhood' is marked along the lines of gender, faith and sect. Whilst IS *appears* to transcend certain dualisms, both are dependent on the creation and exclusion of the Other, the Other for IS being *kufr,* apostates, crusaders and Shia. On the other hand, inclusion into nation-building projects is dependent on the boundaries of the nation, whereas for IS, inclusion into its caliphate knows no bounds, its perversity threatening to 'contaminate' the globe.

2.3 Remaining and Expanding[8]: Territoriality and Borders

> Here the flag of the Islamic State, the flag of tawhīd (monotheism), rises and flutters. Its shade covers land from Aleppo to Diyala. Beneath it, the walls of the tawāghīt (rulers claiming the rights of Allah) have been demolished, their flags have fallen, and their borders have been destroyed.
> (al-Furqan Media and al-Adnani al-Shami, 2014 : 4)

The concept of boundary and the notion of a defined territory have been central to conceptions of the state, and arguably more so for sovereignty, in IR. Indeed, much of the scholarship assumes the state to be a fixed territorial, political entity (Agnew, 1994), whereby the concept of boundary is entangled with membership to the polity. The IS's rejection of modern nation-states and the 'destruction' of the border between Syria and Iraq, drawn during the colonial period, is an explicit attempt to transcend borders and establish centralized political rule over large swathes of territory that, it claimed, would eventually become worldwide.

According to a RAND Corporation report, at the height of its expansion in late 2014, the IS controlled over 100,000 km^2 of territory containing more than 11 million people primarily within Syria and Iraq (Jones et al., 2017). It is estimated that by early 2017, this had more than halved to

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[8] The title of this section, "Remaining and Expanding" refers to a key slogan used by the IS. See Dabiq Magazine *Remaining and Expanding* (2014)

approximately 45,377km^2 and 2.5 million people (Jones et al., 2017). Furthermore, during the heyday of its operations, the IS controlled multiple urban centers and continued to expand both territorially and through governance. Whilst the IS has lost substantial territory since its resurgence in 2014, a number of *wilayats* (provinces) have been established in countries such as Yemen, Libya, Egypt, Saudia Arabia, Algeria, the Caucasus, Afghanistan and Nigeria, as well as a number allegiances pledged by militant networks in the Philippines and Indonesia. The expansion of IS influence and 'territory' was announced in the fifth issue of *Dabiq*:

> [W]e give you good news by announcing the expansion of the Islamic State to new lands, to the lands of al‑Haramayn and Yemen […] to Egypt, Libya, and Algeria. We announce the acceptance of the bay'ah of those who gave us bay'ah in those lands, the nullification of the groups therein, the announcement of new wilayat for the Islamic State, and the appointment of wulat [governors] for them.   (al-Ḥayat Media Center, 2014 : 22)

As Ruggie (1993: 149) suggests, "systems of rule need not be territorially fixed". In the case of the IS, its boundaries and territories have proved permeable and elastic. On the one hand, the IS presents itself as transcending boundaries by constructing a global *Ummah,* establishing *wilayats* globally and defying seemingly 'stable' state borders. On the other hand, by operating as a "digital caliphate" (Atwan, 2015) IS is able to occupy the social spaces and contours between boundaries, presenting itself as dispersed and fluid.

Here, territory is defined as "land or space that has had something *done to it* – it has been acted upon" (Cowen and Gilbert, 2008: 16, original emphasis). In other words, territory is land or space that has been claimed or *occupied.* Meanwhile, territoriality refers to a social and spatial process that "assigns identities for collective subjects within structures of power […] that is only possible if other forms of the subject are violently or peacefully removed, coercively or voluntarily destroyed" (Balibar, 2004 cited in Jabareen, 2015 : 52). Territoriality, then, serves as an instrument of social control within the boundaries of a geographic area, marked by categorization and therefore the boundaries of inclusion, exclusion and belonging. On one hand, territoriality can be considered a spatial expression of state power. On the other hand, Cowen and Gilbert (2008)

stress the need to denaturalize the relationship between state power and territory, to articulate a more complex conception of power as diffuse in order to understand processes of re-territorialization, de-territorialization and global restructuring.

In August 2014, as part of their exclusive documentary about the IS, VICE News (Anon, 2014) posted the video *The Islamic State (Part 5)* in which IS fighters are seen demolishing a barrier dividing Syria and Iraq, declaring the end of the Sykes-Picot Agreement (hereafter the "Sykes-Picot"). Officially known as the Asia Minor Agreement, the Sykes-Picot was a secret convention brokered between Great Britain and France during World War I for the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire (Anghie, 2016; Donaldson, 2016). Carving up the Middle East into British and French spheres of influence, the "Sykes-Picot is seen as an embodiment of imperial inference in the Middle East and a major cause of the ongoing violence and instability that has afflicted the region" (Anghie, 2016 : 105). Undeniably, the legacies and implications of the Sykes-Picot agreement and other mandates in the Middle East are highly complex, and need to be considered alongside a number of heterogeneous factors.

Nevertheless, as Jabreen (2015: 53) argues, one facet of the IS that we can identify is the call for the *deterritorialization* of international borders and the 'modern' state-system, and the *reterritorialization* of a united Sunni *Ummah* and caliphate (as interpreted by the IS). The reterritorialization of a united *Ummah* interrogates the concepts of territory and territoriality further, to include the boundaries of social *relations* (Cox, 1991) and thus as a social arena of sorts by challenging existing nation-state structures. The struggle over both the redefinition of territory and, in many ways, its inhabitants, fosters new patterns of inclusion/exclusion based on a Sunni identity. The inscription of certain subjectivities and identities within the IS's rhetoric demonstrates its conception of territoriality as the destruction of certain subjects and subjectivities which have been inscribed by "deceptive slogans such as: civilization, peace, co-existence, freedom,

democracy, [and] secularism" (al-Furqān Media and al-Baghdādī, 2014). In this way, the IS seeks to transform both territory and society.

Queer and feminist theorists such as Weber (1999; 1998b) and Peterson (1999b) have argued that borders are highly gendered and sexualized constructions. Drawing upon Weber (1998, 1999), Peterson (1999b) and Butler (1993a), Sjoberg (2014: 610) argues that "no border is stable, because borders are conceptually, psychically, and materially unstable". Despite being naturalised in global politics, borders function as a regulatory mechanism 'defining' the parameters of statehood and thus reifying the notion of territorial state settled-ness. The foundational myth of borders as stable and territory as settled is mutually constitutive within regulatory regimes of gender and sexuality. By delineating the bounded territory of a state, borders constitute and are constituted by the myth of the unitary, rational and therefore 'masculine' state. Taking this further, Sjoberg (2014: 610) suggests that "borders have always been, and remain violently entangled with (heterosexual) sexual norms". Within the context of European state-making, the institution of the heteropatriarchal household and the policing of sexualities served to regulate the reproduction, and thus continuity, of the state's population within its delineated borders (Peterson, 2013). Indeed, underlying assumptions of compulsory heterosexuality, in which heterosexual marriage served as a means to normalize heteropatriarchal relations, have been central in the reproduction of both nation and state, and by extension, their borders.

The IS is particularly intriguing in this aspect, since it is precisely the fluidity of its boundaries, that renders it as *both* feminine *and* sexually deviant, *and/or* masculinist, never fully occupying these positions but rather simultaneously oscillating between. First of all, in the Westphalian state system, states are regarded as the primary, legitimate, rational actor (Tickner, 1992). Subsequently, IS is constructed as an illegitimate, irrational, non-state actor and therefore can be read as feminized (Gentry, 2016). Second of all, the IS is constructed as sexually deviant insofar as it's sexuality is ambiguous. Although discussing the context of al-Qa'ida, Wilcox's

observation that despite "its ideology is of strict heterosexuality in pursuit of a violent homosociality, its global presence makes it open to foreign flows that might penetrate it as well" (2014: 615) is also relevant for IS.

Finally, the penetration of IS into 'legitimate' states territory and the reterritorialization of the caliphate results in the ongoing violent (re)production of 'stable' borders and territory vis-à-vis perpetually unsettled 'artificial' states. In this way, IS re-inscribes masculinist, expansionist, heteronormative logics of the relationship to the land whereby territory equals domination and thus power over. Arguments regarding the violent enforcement of "unnatural" (Knight, 2012) or "artificial" (Alesina et al., 2011) borders, such as the borders drawn by the Sykes-Picot agreement, serves to simultaneously draw attention to the volatility of borders and thus "artificial states" (Alesina et al., 2011) whilst also reifying the notion that 'real', 'authentic', 'stable' borders, territory and states exist.

2.4 The IS's 'Social Contract'[9]: Citizenship and Governance

Although the "social contract" is predominantly associated with western liberal thought and theorists such as Hobbes (1651) , Locke ([1689] 1960) and Rousseau (1762), social contracts have been found in a number of governance formations outside that of a 'legitimate' state (Milliken and Krause, 2002; Duyvesteyn et al., 2015; Arjona et al., 2014). At the most basic level, the social contract constitutes an implicit reciprocal relationship of duties and obligations between a population and a ruling authority, whereby "the people grant the state the right to rule over them in return for the state providing security from civil disorder and war" (Milliken and Krause, 2002: 758) as well as public goods. According to Arjona et al (2014: 1375), social contracts, especially in

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[9] The title is adapted from (Revkin, 2016a; Revkin, 2016b)

the context of 'wartime', do not necessarily indicate legitimacy, but are nevertheless crucial for establishing social order.

When the IS seizes new territory, its priority first and foremost is to capture the 'hearts and minds'[10] of the local population, and thus gain their trust and cooperation. Civilians living under the rule of the IS have reported that within the IS's administration "everything is coordinated and the different parts of the administration are linked, share information, and generally seem good at working together" (Zelin, 2014b). It has also been reported that the IS earns the trust of the civilians by resolving local disputes, persecuting criminals, and setting up courts and police forces to enforce law and order (Revkin 2016c). In addition, the IS employs a number of strategies to ensure the basic needs of its citizens are met, a responsibility previously charged to the central governments of Iraq and Syria. In 2015, it was reported that IS distributed free bread in Palmyra (Barnard and Saad, 2015), meanwhile there have also been accounts of IS providing food aid in both Syria and Iraq during the month of Ramadan (Kaplan, 2015). The construction of an implicit social contract is often initiated through a group, such as the IS, by capitalising on popular grievances levied at the 'legitimate' government and seek to address those grievances.

According to a number of documents, *Diwans* (governmental institutions) were established in charge of various functions, outlined in Figure 1 below. In conjunction to the institutional apparatus as seen in the table, the IS has issued a number of documents, called *wathīqat al-madīnah* (documents of the city) specifying the rights, duties and obligations of its citizens. These texts have been issued in cities seized by the IS, such as Raqqa and Mosul.

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[10] I use the phrase 'hearts and minds' in an ironic sense, to invoke references to both colonial and imperialist counterinsurgency measures in general, and the US's strategy in the Invasion of Iraq and the protracted Iraq War (2003-2011) in particular.

Government Department	Function
Diwan al-Ta'lim	Education
Diwan al-Khidamat	Public Services (e.g. electricity, water, street cleaning). Management of public facilities (e.g. parks)
Diwan al-Rikaz	Precious resources (two known divisions: fossil fuels and antiquities)
Diwan al-Da'wah wa al-Masajid (wa al-Awqaf)	Da'wah activity and control of the mosques
Diwan al-Sihha	Health
Diwan al-Asha'ir	Tribal outreach
Diwan al-Amn (al-Aam)	Public security
Diwan Bayt al-Mal	Finances and currency system
Diwan al-Hisbah	Enforcement of public morality: Islamic police
Diwan al-Qada wa al-Mazalim	Islamic court, judicial matters, marriages
Diwan al-Alaqat al-Amma	Public relations
Diwan al-Zira'a	Agriculture, environment
Diwan al-Ifta' wa al-Buhuth	Fatwas, textbooks for training camp recruits etc.
Diwan al-Jund	Military and defence

Figure 1: Diwans and their Functions (al-Tamimi, 2015)

In January 2016, an electronic version of *wathīqat al-madīnah* [11] was published, detailing a "contract" between the IS and its subjects that "defines the *sharī'a* principles and Islamic regulations by which the shepherd and the flock are bound" (Revkin, 2016c : 15). Containing approximately 13 articles, these documents enumerate a number of provisions that can be summarized as below:

> (1) the right to justice and due process of (Islamic) law; (2) the right to security of persons and property; (3) a duty to fulfill obligations required by Islam, including abstention from alcohol and drugs; (4) a duty of exclusive allegiance and loyalty to the Islamic States; and (5) entitlement to public goods and services provided by the Islamic State.   (Revkin, 2016a : 7)

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[11] For the original document in Arabic, see Maktab al-Himma, "Wathīqat al-Madīnah," (Islamic State, 2016)

As demonstrated by the *Diwans* and the *wathīqat al-madīnah,* we can see attempts of the IS to establish its visions of governance, through the provision of public services, public goods, infrastructure, and health care, for example, with political rights defined in law-like documents and enforceable in court. Indeed, in an attempt to portray the IS as sincerely concerned with order, justice and thus the elimination of injustice, the first issue of *Rumiyah* contains an interview with the 'Amir of the Central Office for Investigating Grievances', to encourage the citizens of the IS to report any wrongdoings and grievances from fellow citizens, soldiers or authorities (al-Hayat Media Center, 2016: 10–12). We can see here, then, that the IS have implemented mechanisms to establish social trust.

The IS operates a system of rule that is totalitarian and asymmetrical, initially fostering trust and goodwill before regulating every aspect of its subjects' lives. It is crucial to note that the limited rights outlined above only apply to Sunni Muslims. It has been reported that *dhimmi (*protection) has been granted to monotheistic non- Muslims – primarily Christians – as long as they pay a special tax known as the *jizya* and adhere to a number of strict regulations (Lister, 2014 : 26; Revkin, 2016a : 11). The IS's treatment of adherents of non-Abrahamic faiths such as the Yazidis, however, has proved unrelenting; the Yazidis' have experienced ongoing violations and persecution at the hands of the IS, subsequently resulting in the United Nations (UN) concluding that the IS is committing genocide (UN Human Rights Council, 2016). I find the international communities response and increased militarized action against the IS particularly striking, since the IS's delegitimization of the Yazidi's claims to land by rape, destruction, genocide mirrors the ongoing violence and genocide against indigenous peoples by settler colonial states such as the US, Australia and Israel.

Furthermore, a number of critiques have been directed towards liberal social contract theory. Pateman's *The Sexual Contract* (1988) and Mill's *The Racial Contract* (1997), for example, calls into question the supposed universality of the liberal subject at the centre of contract theory. For

Pateman, the liberal social contract is predicated upon the subordination and thus exclusion of women, whereby the "contract is the means through which modern patriarchy is constituted" (1988: 1). Characterised by a contractual relationship between men and women in that men have power over women, the basis of the modern liberal state is founded upon the sexual contract thereby disguising institutionalised oppression in the form of contractual 'freedom'.

Similarly, Mill (1997) argues that there exists a global 'racial contract' which presupposes the liberal social contract. Determining the personhood of "whites" and denying "non-whites" as fully-human, the 'racial contract' serves to sustain "the exploitation of their bodies, land, and resources, and the denial of equal socio-economic opportunities to them" (Mills, 1997: 11). Following Pateman's (1988) and Mill's (1997) analyses, then, Western political institutions are underpinned by the sexual and racial contracts resulting in the perpetual systematic exclusion of gendered, and racialized noncitizens.

Whilst the rights of women are severely curtailed within IS, the IS offers its own version of female 'empowerment' (Ahram, 2015). 'Bibliographical' accounts of the women in the IS include narratives by figures such as female Syrian IS scholar Dr. Iman Mustafa al-Bagha (Al-Tamimi, 2016: online). Of particular importance are the stories of Umm Fatima al-Rusiya, who is reported to have participated in an military operation against the Grozny, and Umm Khalid al-Wahjani, whose daughter carried out a suicide bombing in Ayn al-Islam (Al-Tamimi, 2016: online). The 'Stories of the Mujahideen', consequently serves to portray the numerous roles women can occupy within the IS, including military roles.

In queering the history of naturalization within the US, Somerville (2005: 663) has demonstrated how immigration and naturalization apparatus have produced citizens "historically […] encumbered with assumptions about a heterosexual, reproductive subject, and so tends to reinforce the model of an organic, sexually reproductive citizenry" demarked along the lines of race, gender, class and heteronormativity. Meanwhile, Mikadashi's (2014) analysis of sectarianism

within Lebanon highlights how sex, gender, class and sect are constitutive of formalized and institutionalised practices of citizenship. Therefore, I would argue that the IS regulates its subjects and offers provisions and services in the form of a social contract that in many ways is reminiscent of a 'legitimate' state. Indeed, 'legitimate' states regulate every aspect of the lives of its citizens, and as Mikdashi (2013: 350) argues "the citizen can only emerge as a legal and embodied subject position if its negation, the noncitizen is present". In much the same way, the IS's social contract delineates who is a citizen and a non-citizen along the markers of sexuality, gender, class, sect and religion.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter explored the key elements, processes and logics of the "state" and "statehood" within IR and the international state system. Having explored normative definitions of the 'state' as delineated by the Montevideo Convention (1933) and Weber ([1922] 1978), I argued for the detangling and thus denaturalization of the 'nation-state' in order to highlight the violence inherent in maintaining such 'myths'. I then traced elements of IS's state-building, namely, the construction of a global *ummah*, its territoriality, and the construction of a 'social contract', to demonstrate that IS's processes of state building *queer* notions of "stateness" and the functions that states should fulfil, against which 'legitimate' states are measured. In particular, by unsettling the stability of the 'state' and exploring the IS's 'social contract', I have demonstrated how certain practices of 'statehood' helped bring into being the very racial-sexual, heteropatriachal logics undergirding the international state order. Indeed, IS is constructed as the enemy, and thus antithesis, of the state, precisely because its 'stateness' exposes the exclusionary and violent mechanisms maintained by states regarded as legitimate, effectively still leaving us with the question: what makes a state a state?

CHAPTER 3: SOVEREIGNTY OR THE POLITICS OF KILLING

> The Peace of Westphalia, for better or worse, marks the end of an epoch and the opening of another. It represents the majestic portal which leads from the old into the new world [. . .] In the political field it marked man's abandonment of the idea of a hierarchical structure of society and his option for a new system characterized by a multitude of states, each sovereign within its territory, equal to one another, and free from any external sovereignty.
>
> (Gross, 1948 p: 28–29)

The end of the Thirty Years' War and the Treaties of Westphalia[12] (1648) are widely heralded as "the shift in Europe from the Medieval world to the modern international system" (Philpott, 2001 : 4) and thus the beginning of a sovereignty-based international order. Within this conception, the Westphalian model remains the benchmark against which developments in the international system are to be judged. Indeed, the pervasiveness of the Westphalian narrative and the centrality of the sovereign state abound within the orthodox IR canon. Morgenthau, for instance, states that "the treaty of Westphalia brought the religious wars to an end and made the territorial state the cornerstone of the modern state system" (1948a: 254). In a similar vein, Held asserts that the Peace of Westphalia "entrenched, for the first time, the principle of territorial sovereignty in inter-state affairs" (1995 : 77). Meanwhile Gross (1948), often considered as the most widely cited 'authority' on the Westphalian model and quoted above, echoes the principles of authority, non-intervention, and equality between sovereign states. At the core of the 'modern Westphalian system', then, lies the concept of sovereignty whereby authority is seen to be indivisible, culminating in a single apex (Krasner, 1999 : 11) and resting ultimately within each state.

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[12] Otherwise known as the Peace of Westphalia (1648) which refers to the Treaties of Münster and Osnabrück signed in 1648 to end the Thirty Years War. The Treaty of Münster was concluded between the Holy Roman Habsburg Emperor and the German Princes on the one hand, and the Protestant Queen of Sweden and her allies on the other. Meanwhile, the Treaty of Osnabrück was concluded between the Emperor and the Princes, on the one hand, and the Catholic King of France and his allies on the other (Beaulac, 2000: 162).

This chapter presents and discusses the concept of sovereignty. I consider the structuring of state and sovereignty as intimately bound, alongside dominant conceptions of state power, constituting the central analytical concerns within mainstream IR. I begin by deconstructing the Westphalian narrative to demonstrate its pervasiveness as a foundational myth upon which IR rests. I argue that the centrality of the Peace of Westphalia (1648) serves to maintain a eurocentrism that constructs a (hetero)normative dualism between European states as the 'seat of civilization' and non-European states as the 'seat of barbarism' and therefore sexual perversity. Moreover, the discursive construction of the IS as a state of abhorrent and exceptional violence serves to obscure the violence enacted by 'legitimate' states. In particular, I examine the IS's use of violence to interrogate how certain kinds of violence comes to be regarded as acceptable by certain actors, against particular bodies.

3.1 The Peace of Westphalia as Foundational Myth

The Westphalian narrative remains central to debates about sovereignty and the rise of the international state system. Discourses surrounding the state become entangled with the concept of sovereignty, with sovereignty seen as an attribute of the state or even its defining property. Yet discourses on sovereignty and the Treaties of Westphalia (1648) are far from homogenous, and revisionist scholars such as Osiander (2001), Beaulac (2000) and Teschke (2003) have argued that many of the norms attributed to the Treaties of Westphalia (1648) were a product of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Croxton (1999 : 577) argues that nowhere do the treaties mention the word 'sovereignty' itself, since there is no such word in Latin. Far from being accepted as universally applicable, attempts by the French to insert references of the concept into the treaties were immediately declined (Croxton, 1999: 587–588; Stirk, 2012: 645–646). Furthermore, as Osiander (2001) demonstrates, much of the Treaties of Westphalia (1648) were devoted to the internal affairs of the Holy Roman Empire. Rather than establishing autonomous sovereign states in the modern sense, the Treaties of Westphalia (1648) established "a system of mutual relations" (Osiander, 2001 : 270) among the political entities and estates of the Empire. Indeed, non-state

political entities such as the Holy Roman Empire continued to survive until the early nineteenth century (Beaulac, 2000; Kayaoglu, 2010; Krasner, 1999; Osiander, 2001) illustrating the hierarchical character of the international system. Finally, the claim that the Treaties of Westphalia (1648) marked the end of a universalist Christendom within Europe is greatly overstated. The principle of secularism - enshrined by the separation of church and state as well as religious tolerance – was rather a product of the nineteenth century (Kayaoglu, 2010).

Nevertheless, the continued resilience of the Westphalian narrative within IR has consolidated its status as a foundational myth (Osiander, 2001). As de Carvalho et al. state, "the ontology of IR, of course, starts with Westphalia" (de Carvalho et al., 2011 : 738) and the implications of this are two-fold. First of all, the Westphalian narrative purports a distorted and inaccurate view of the formation of modern 'sovereign' states and the international state-system in which they reside, thus naturalizing IR's referent unit of analysis. Second of all, the Westphalian myth is normative insofar as it produces a hierarchical understanding of progress within the international order, situated upon European exceptionalism (Kayaoglu, 2010 : 194). Adherents to the Westphalian narrative idealize 'civilized' Western Europe as the birthplace of the modern sovereign state vis-à-vis the 'uncivilized' periphery, revealing the intimate connections between notions of sovereignty and European imperialism (Anand, 2002). Furthermore, a queer analysis reveals how narratives such as 'Westphalia' are also predicated upon developmental and evolutionary narratives that inform the relationship between sexuality and 'barbarity'. It is no coincidence that European imperialism coincided with the 'discovery' of the "arrested development" of the homosexual body (Hoad, 2000) and thus the "queerness" of savages. As a founding myth, then, the Westphalian narrative functions to legitimize the 'international' (read: European) state system. In doing so, it not only provides an inaccurate account of history, but serves to obscure the ways in which the Westphalian narrative is invested in the labour of violently (re)producing and maintaining the (heteronormative) status quo.

3.2 Sovereignty as Hypocrisy

> The impression or ruse of homogenous or generic sovereign normality is maintained through acts of coercive violence, which create an impression of absolute territoriality and derogate the analysis of the operation of sovereignty. The acts of coercive violence center on representation: the mapping of territorial states with orderly identities.   (Rajaram, 2010 : 78)

The centrality of sovereign states within the international system is codified in Article 2(1) of the UN Charter (1945) which articulates the sovereign equality of all Members[13]. However, as we have seen, the concept of sovereign states is historically contingent. So what, exactly, is sovereignty? For Krasner (1999: 9) conventional understandings of sovereignty can be understood in four different ways: domestic sovereignty; interdependence sovereignty; international legal sovereignty and Westphalian sovereignty. The state-building efforts of the IS, I would suggest, can be seen as a challenge and structurally entangled within all four conceptions. Here, I focus predominantly on Westphalian sovereignty which, following from the discussion in the previous section, can be broadly understood as the *idea* that "states exist in specific territories, within which domestic political authorities are the sole arbiters of legitimate behaviour" (Krasner, 1999 : 20). The constellations of norms enshrined within the Westphalian model of sovereignty are the principles of non-intervention from external powers, territoriality, autonomy and authority. In other words, as Biswas and Nair suggest, "sovereignty makes a state the author of itself, a collective norm that individuates the state as an actor" (2010 : 4).

As I have argued in Chapter 2, the IS both reifies and unsettles state-building processes, by implementing governance and bureaucratic infrastructure within its controlled territories, as well as regulating certain forms of citizenship for inclusion and exclusion into its vision of a

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[13] Article 2(4) of the UN Charter (1945) continues: "All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations." Thus the UN Charter places great weight on the Westphalian model, codifying key principles such as non-intervention and non-interference. See also Article 2(7).

caliphate. According to Delahunty, the IS's vision of a caliphate threatens the 'Westphalian' state-centred international order precisely because "it represents an attempted reversion to or restoration of a pre-Westphalian order" (2016: 31). By pre-Westphalian it is meant pre-modern, and thus, harking back to a state of anarchy and savagery. In this view, the IS demands recognition whilst simultaneously rejecting the territorial sovereign state by seeking to transform and redraw boundaries along the lines of religious identity threatening the 'secular' modern state system. The threat the IS poses to the 'Westphalian' order has been espoused by both governmental officials and scholars alike. In 2015, for example, Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop suggested that the IS presented the biggest threat to the Westphalian nation-state system since the Cold War (Wroe, 2015).

A number of assumptions underpin the argument that the IS poses a threat to the Westphalian order. First of all, the primacy of the 'Westphalian world order' perpetuates a Eurocentric bias that enables neo-orientalist constructions of the IS as 'pre-modern savages' in need of civilizing, re-inscribing the very logic that allowed for the justification of imperialist control. For within the Westphalian system a "degree of civilization necessary to maintain international relations was considered as one of the conditions for statehood" (Hannum, 1990 : 16). The naturalized 'Westphalian' state-centric order was established globally through European colonialist expansion, whereby imperial powers violated the sovereignty of non-Western states under the guise of upholding sovereign order versus perverse, uncivilized and dangerous anarchy. Modernization narratives, developmentalist trajectories and discourses of 'lack' legitimized colonial rule and imperial plunder, and continues to inform neo-colonialist and neo-imperialist practices relegating "'rude' nations to an imaginary waiting room of history" (Chakrabarty, 2000 : 7) . In this way, the re-articulation of the Westphalian 'order' continues to reinscribe knowledge-power regimes that presents a linear conception of history and modernity that presupposes a normative sovereign (read: Western) subject. Consequently, remarks such as Bishop's (Wroe, 2015) position

Western states such as the US, UK and Australia as benevolent, enlightened, and superior in contrast to the brutality and barbarity of the enemy 'Other', the enemy in this case being the IS.

Herein lies the hypocrisy of the Westphalian myth and sovereignty itself. The irony should not be lost that the US-led coalition against IS is spearheaded by settler-colonial states such as the US and Australia, alongside historically imperialist states such as the UK, France and Germany. Settler colonialism refers to a distinct colonial and imperial formation whereby "people come to a land inhabited by (indigenous) people and declare that land to be their new home" (Rowe and Tuck, 2017 : 4). Settler colonialism is therefore premised on the occupation and elimination of indigenous peoples, and is "a persistent societal structure, not just an historical event or origin story for a nation-state" (Rowe and Tuck, 2017 : 4). This is significant, insofar as 'Indian' or 'Injun Country' is commonly used as a metaphor by US military personnel to refer to "hostile, unpacified territories in active war zones" (Silliman, 2008 : 4), as in the US-led invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq (Kaplan, 2004), where the racialized brown bodies of Muslims are subsequently referred to as 'Injuns' (Thobani, 2014 : xvii). The codename assigned to the killing of Bin Laden in 2011, for example, was the name of the legendary Native American Apache leader 'Geronimo' in the nineteenth century (Westcott, 2011). This is striking because as figures such as the native 'savage', the original enemy, and now, the Muslim 'terrorist' are consigned to the "horizon of death" (da Silva, 2009: 51) since sovereign states require the construction of the 'Other' in order to establish and naturalize their existence.

3.3 Sovereignty as 'Legitimate' Violence

> Some lives are grievable. And others are not; the differential allocation of grievability that decides what kind of subject is and must be grieved, and which kind of subject must not, operates to produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of who is normatively human: what counts as a livable life and a grievable death. (Butler, 2004: xiv–xv)

IR theory and state sovereignty are predominantly characterised by an internal/external binary. However, the distinction between the 'domestic' and the 'international' are highly problematic (Enloe, 1989). Indeed, as Enloe suggests "the personal is international" and that "the international is personal"(1989: 196). The continuities of colonial, racial, and sexual conquest both internally and externally have been recapitulated in the war against the IS. Whilst discourses on territory, authority, population, recognition and legitimacy are important aspects of sovereignty, in this section I examine the intersecting relationship between violence and sovereignty and the racial-sexual logics that underpin both. I do so because the IS's acts of extreme violence enables the 'international' community to securitize the IS as an imminent, exceptional threat, thereby eliciting a highly militarized response. Indeed, as Thobani has argued, invasions, occupations, "targeted assassinations, racial profiling, extraordinary rendition, indefinite detention, security certificates, torture and collective punishment" (2012 : 2) have emerged as central to global politics and the governance of racialized, and in particular Muslim, bodies worldwide. To be clear, I am not advocating for the legitimization of the IS nor do I condone the IS's use of violence. Rather I am led by questions regarding who possesses sovereignty and under what circumstances? Why is the monopoly of murderous violence justifiable for certain actors and not others? In other words, how do we understand sovereignty as marked by modalities of gender(ed), racial(ized) and sexual(ized) violence and thus queerness?

For Thobani (2014: xv11) sovereignty is not abstract but rather "it has a particular name, a face, an address, a geographical coordinate. Its face is white, it remains housed in white bodies, it is located in Westernity". As I have argued in Chapter 2, within IR sovereign states as regarded as the legitimate actor within the international state system whereas the IS is configured as an illegitimate non-state actor. Therefore, 'unsanctioned' violence enacted by the likes of IS, who have neither international recognition, legitimacy, nor sovereignty, threatens the state's monopoly on violence. The notion of sovereignty-as-whiteness and therefore as the justified politics of killing, allows us to see how sexual-racial figures such as the Native and the Muslim have been constituted

as killable and disposable, justified by the self-preservation of the sovereign state. Figure 2, features an infographic from Rumiyah magazine, issue 5 which details what to do in case of a sarin gas attack highlighting the precarity and frequency of state sanctioned attacks.
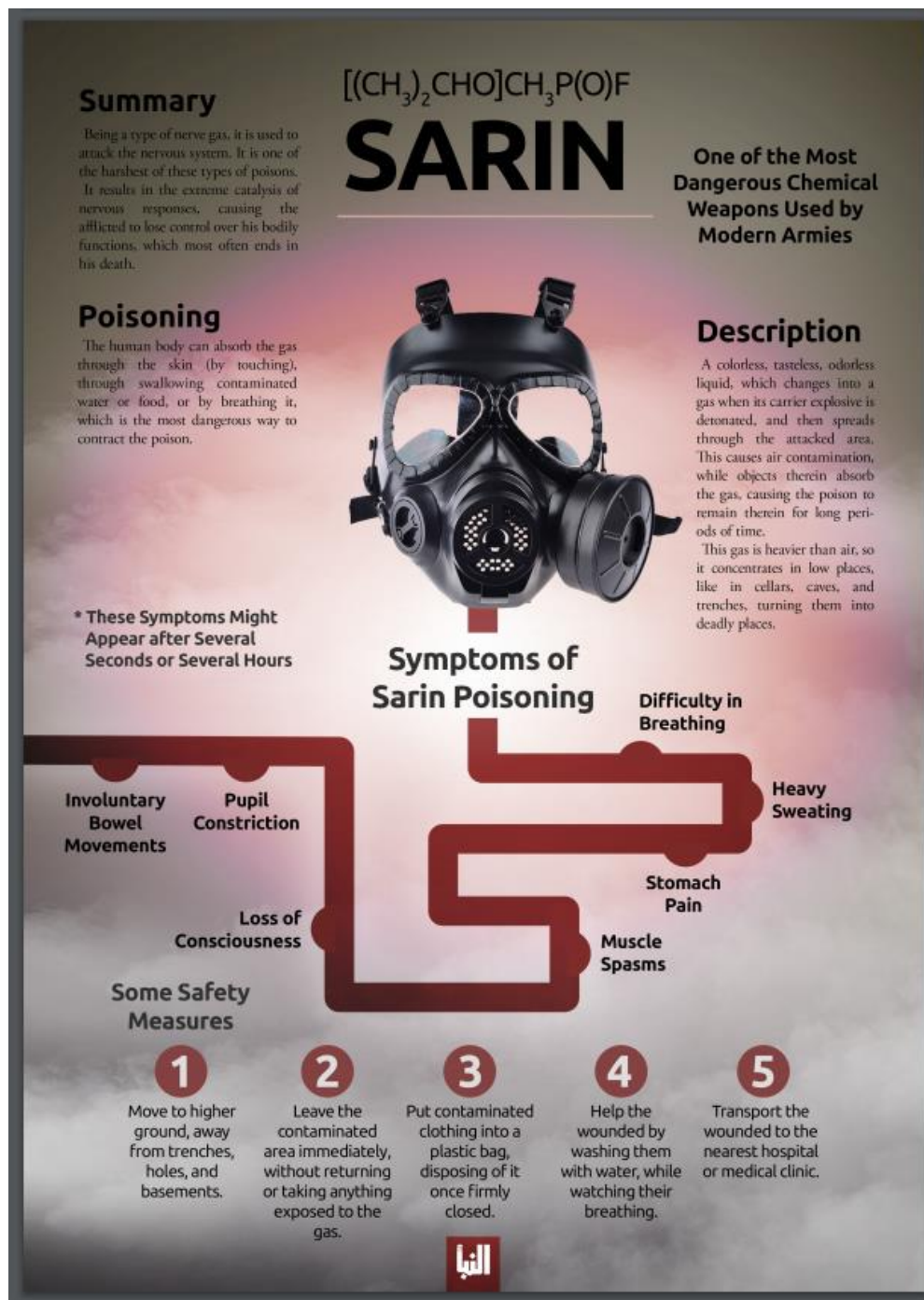
Figure 2: Sarin gas infographic from Rumiyah issue 5 (al-Ḥayāt Media Center, 2017: 21)

On the 4th April 2017, for example, more than 80 people were killed in a chemical attack, allegedly carried out by the Syrian Government on rebel-controlled areas (BBC News, 2017).

Figure 3: Message written on British RAF Paveway IV guided bomb (Farmer, 2017)

Figure 3, above, features a British RAF Paveway IV guided bomb with the message "Love from Manchester" following the suicide bombing at Manchester arena on the 22ⁿᵈ May 2017 (Farmer, 2017; Dodd et al., 2017).

The figures demonstrate that the construction of IS as an abhorrent exceptional state of violence eclipses the brutality of state sanctioned violence on 'disposable' populations consigned to death, demarking whose lives are worthy and whose lives are unworthy (Butler, 2004a; 2009). In particular, those threatening to penetrate the sovereignty of the state, such as the IS and Syrian rebels, are constructed as figures of queer monstrosity, specifically the "terrorist-monster [who] is pure evil and must be destroyed" (Puar and Rai, 2002: 118).

3.4 The IS's use of 'Illegitimate' Violence

In November 2014, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) released a report entitled *Rule of Terror: Living Under ISIS in Syria,* detailing the range of violations, abuses and violent acts perpetrated by IS (UN, 2014). Whilst the report and list of violations is extensive, I focus on the following two acts of violence: (1) beheadings; and (2) sexual violence.

3.4.1 Beheadings

During the summer of 2014, videos of live beheadings appeared on various sites[14] throughout the internet. The first video, entitled "A Message to America" condemned the President of the United States for ordering air strikes in Iraq on the 7th August 2014 (SITE Intelligence, 2014b; SITE Intelligence, 2014a). In the videos, a black-clad IS member is seen wielding a knife over a kneeling hostage before the video cuts to show a beheaded victim and a severed head. The publicised executions of American journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff, British aid workers David Haines and Alan Herring and American Aid worker Abdul-Rahman Kassig became a spectacle of the 'barbarity' of the IS, eliciting condemnation from multiple governmental institutions and given great significance in foreign policy responses (Friis, 2015). The IS's beheading videos were not unprecedented, however, but echoed the execution of American journalist Daniel Pearl in Pakistan in 2002 or instances of publicised beheadings during the first Chechen War (Taylor, 2014).

Nevertheless, the hypervisibility of the beheadings and the widespread circulation of the videos has been utilized by US and UK governments as evidence and for their construction of the IS as exceptionally evil. Rhetoric surrounding beheadings portrays the act as a particularly insidious and exceptional act of violence, which in turn generates claims about the identity of those who carry out the practice. Obama, for example, condemned the beheadings as "an act of violence that shocks the conscience of the entire world" (2014b), whilst for Cameron the "brutal murder[s] […] shows just how barbaric and repulsive these terrorists are" (2014b). The moralistic language used by political leaders serves to distinguish and separate their own actions and their subjectivities from

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[14] Sites included social networking platform Diaspora, Russian social networking platform vKontakte, as well as YouTube.com

those of the IS, whilst also critically reframing the IS as a national security threat requiring a militarized response (Obama, 2014a; Cameron, 2014a; Friis, 2015).

Yet despite all the rhetoric condemning the inhumaneness and cruelty of the IS's beheadings, the practice, which has a long history (Tracy and Massey, 2012), remains a state sanctioned form of execution in Saudi Arabia, a US ally, where it is reported that at least 157 executions were carried out in 2015 (The Guardian, 2016) and at least 154 in 2016 (Amnesty International, 2017). This is significant since the US, specifically the Trump administration, has recently signed a record breaking arms deal worth approximately $110bn with Saudi Arabia (Al Jazeera, 2017), demonstrating that this is not about beheadings as a form of killing or even 'exceptional' violence, but rather about regulating certain identities and subjectivities within the state system.

Furthermore, it seems to me to, once again, bring to the fore the question of whose lives are more grievable. The beheadings perpetrated by IS elicit a highly securitized response and narratives of 'evil' and 'barbarity' because their victims are citizens from Western states, whereas those executed by Saudi Arabia are the state's own citizens. As Butler argues "a life has to be intelligible *as a life,* has to conform to certain conceptions of what life is, in order to become recognizable" (Butler, 2009: 5). Within the economy of queerness and anti-blackness (Agathangelou, 2013), lives within the Middle East do not fit into the normative conception of sovereign subject-hood and are therefore unrecognizable as lives worth living. Thus, not only are some bodies prone to erasure, but indeed actively assigned to death.

3.4.2 Sexual Violence

> In a region that has known so much bloodshed, these terrorists are unique in
> their brutality. They execute captured prisoners. They kill children. They
> enslave, rape, and force women into marriage. They threatened a religious
> minority with genocide.   (Obama, 2014c)

The oppressed Muslim women-in-need-of-saving, or "white men saving brown women from brown men" (Spivak, 2010: 50) trope, has long been deployed to support military intervention as part of the fight against terrorism. As illustrated by the quote above from Obama (2014c), the protection of women, children and religious minorities was given as a fundamental justification for conducting airstrikes and intensifying military efforts against the IS[15]. According to Ahram, the IS's "sexual violence emulates practices that have been endemic for decades in Iraq and Syria" (2015 : 58). State repression within the Iraqi and Syrian states, particularly under Saddam Hussein and the Assad dynasty, instrumentalized sexual violence as a means to sustain ethnic and sectarian hierarchies. Therefore, the IS's use of sexual violence needs to be understood in light of the violent history underpinning Iraq and Syria's socio-political environments.

Within Syria and Iraq, sexual violence was used as a means to re-assert power in the face of weakening state authority and consolidate sectarian hegemony. In Iraq following the 1991 Gulf War, for example, Saddam Hussein's regime fostered a culture of gender-based violence as a means to re-establish control over the boundaries of the nation (Smiles, 2008). Meanwhile in Syria a UN Human Rights Council (HRC) report on the 2011 protests depicted gross human rights violations by state institutions. Testimonies of sexual torture inflicted on male prisoners included being forced to perform oral sex, rape and threats of rape (UN Human Rights Council, 2011 : 14). Thus, in much the same way, the IS can be said to use "sexual violence to construct a distinctive form of hyper-masculine Islamic state" (Ahram, 2015 : 59). I draw upon Hooper (2001) and Maruska (2010) in defining hypermasculinity as a configuration of gendered power relations whereby hypermasculinity is "the sensationalistic endorsement of elements of masculinity, such as rigid

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[15] We see the same gendered discourse that positions military action and war as an appropriate response in Laura Bush's speech following the 11th September 2001: "The severe repression and brutality against women in Afghanistan is not a matter of legitimate religious practice […] The plight of women and children in Afghanistan is a matter of deliberate human cruelty, carried out by those who seek to intimidate and control[…]The fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women" (Bush, 2001).

gender roles, vengeful and militarized reactions and obsession with order, power and control" (Nayak, 2006 : 43). Moreover, it is *reactionary* and in the case of the IS, adopting hypermasculine characteristics allows for the construction of Self that emulates statehood whilst lacking international recognition.

Often obscured within these securitized narratives is the sexual violence the IS commits against men and boys (UN Iraq, 2014). According to Ahram (2015: 68) the effect of sexual violence perpetrated against male victims "are largely analogous to those on females: besides the sheer physical harm, they induce shame, guilt and feelings of dishonour in the victim". Adopting a feminist political economy framework, Meger (forthcoming) develops this further, arguing that whilst the effects may be similar, sexual violence against men and boys serves a different function to sexual violence perpetrated against women. Specifically, male victims tend to be targeted for strategic value and material gains (Meger, forthcoming). Furthermore, Meger (forthcoming) draws attention to the location of sexual violence perpetrated against men and boys. Often, men are automatically cast as the perpetrators, and women deemed non-combatants and therefore portrayed victims. The sexual abuse and torture enacted by US soldiers at the detention centre in Abu Ghraib in 2003, for example, involved the participation of both male and female-identified soldiers. For Richter-Montpetit (2007: 40), however, the sexual torture at Abu Ghraib "were acts of colonial violence, firmly rooted in a continuum of racialized, (hetero)sexualized, classed violence". Such an analysis point to the multiple gendered, racialized and sexualized scripts inherent in violence that reproduce practices of exploitation and oppression.

Moreover, there have been reports that the IS utilize 'gang rapes' as a form of initiation for new recruits (AINA, 2014). In his study of sexuality and military masculinity in the US Armed forces, Belkin describes being told that "male students at the Naval Academy rape each other 'all of the time'"(2012: 79). Initiation and hazing rituals involved the penetration and insertion of objects into bodily orifices. Belkin (2012: 80) identifies that for some such acts marked "inclusion,

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welcoming and membership", whilst for others it signified weakness, infantilization and lack of control. Indeed, some "construct it as central to what it means to be a real man" (Belkin, 2012: 80) therefore suggesting the multiple discursive meanings that violence, and in particular sexual violence, can occupy.

3.5 Conclusion

The purpose of the above discussion is to illustrate how dominant discourses portray the IS's use of violence as exceptional and obscene, and therefore barbaric and perverse. I have argued that the Westphalian conception of sovereignty is a myth that serves to legitimise and naturalise a heteronormative, Eurocentric world order that results in the ongoing, violent (re)production of a civilization versus barbarity narrative. As we have seen, violence has instrumental value and functionality and is employed by numerous actors including, and especially, 'sovereign' states. Agathangelou et al suggest that "the demonization and demolition of the racially and sexually aberrant other must be performed again and again" (2008: 123). Indeed, to reconsolidate itself as whiteness and therefore as legitimate violence, sovereignty requires the simultaneous production and destruction of certain ways of being, desiring and knowing. Consequently, sovereign power and social order is predicated upon contingent formations that set the terms for lives which are deemed liveable. Violence enacted by 'illegal' entities always threatens to unmask the violence inherent in every political formation, and the ambiguous foundations of its authority, raising fundamental questions about the validity of the distinction between legitimate sovereign violence and illegitimate 'terror'.

CHAPTER 4: A QUESTION OF POWER

"International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power."

(Morgenthau, 1948a: 13)

The concept of power is central to the discipline of IR. Indeed, most definitions of politics involve power, and how power is conceived arguably defines the political. It is no surprise, then, that discussions centring on power hark back as far as Thucydides (431AD) and Machiavelli ([1532](1988), and continue right up to the present day. For Gilpin, the concept of power is "one of the most troublesome in the field of international relations" (1981: 13) meanwhile Waltz asserts that power's "proper definition remains a matter of controversy" (1986: 333). As such, power remains an "essentially contested concept" (Gallie, 1955) whereby the form, nature and character of power continues to be debated and reconfigured.

In what follows, I complicate the state-sovereignty-power nexus in order to explicate how the deployment of sexuality, race, gender and violence inform technologies of power. Building upon Chapter 3, I move away from the 'Westphalian' model of sovereignty to articulate a form of sovereign, necropolitical (Mbembé, 2003) power that underpins "unequal regimes of living and dying" (Luibhéid, 2008: 190) and the imaginaries of legitimate sovereign violence. I begin by outlining how power has traditionally been conceived in mainstream IR to suggest that the centrality of state power is inadequate. I then proceed to sketch out Foucault's (1975; 1978; 1980; 2003) analytics of power, particularly focusing on his concept of biopower before exploring Mbembé's (2003) elaboration of "necropolitics" in relation to the IS's foreign fighters and use of suicide attacks.

4.1 Situating Power in International Relations

Despite its long history, mainstream IR continues to be informed by a realist conception of power, that is, state power defined as "the ability of states to use material resources to get others to do what they otherwise would not" (Barnett and Duvall, 2005: 40). Advanced by classical realists

such as Morgenthau (1948a) and later by the likes of Waltz (1979) and Mearsheimer (1990), underpinning this view is the notion that power is possessed and exercised. Here, power is envisioned as an entity or as a metaphysical commodity, primarily understood in terms of military, economic or technological might. For neo-realists, such as Waltz (1979), Gilpin (1981), and Krasner (1978), the anarchical state system determines international politics and state behaviour whereby "structures are defined by not all of the actors that flourish within them but by the major ones" (Waltz, 1979: 93). Power is configured as domination, coercion, and therefore top-down, or in other words, as power *over,* dependent on the link between state capabilities and desired outcome.

In this view, power is intimately bound up with notions of the state, sovereignty, hierarchy and order. However, as Tickner (1988b) has shown, the realist conception of power is androcentric, undergirded by masculinist, rationalist and universalist notions. Furthermore, as Chowdry and Nair argue classical state-centric power analysis "pays no attention to the ways in which power is constituted and produced, or the role of history, ideology, and culture in shaping state power or practices in [IR]" (2002: 4). As we have witnessed time and time again, states with bountiful resources or 'power'– such as military strength and money –do not always succeed against 'weaker' opponents. Indeed, the rise and the continued survival of IS is a prime example of this. As such, the emergence of non-state actors, international institutions, as well as transnational movements organized along social, religious, cultural and nationalist lines point to the ways in which traditional understandings of power are limited. The state-centric conception of power as domination and power-maximisation consequently gives rise to a static notion of power.

However, power is multifaceted and traditional conceptions that rely solely on state power, and thus the centrality of the taken-for-granted sovereign-state, are inadequate and fail to capture how power operates within society and politics. For Barnett and Duvall, the failure to recognize the numerous forms and effects of power, and thus develop multiple conceptions, greatly limits

the ability of IR scholars "to understand how global outcomes are produced and how actors are differentially enabled and constrained to determine their fates (2005: 41). To this end, they develop a taxonomy organized upon four concepts of power: compulsory, institutional, structural, and productive. Here, power is understood as "the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their own circumstances and fates" (Barnett and Duvall, 2005: 3). The typology of power as articulated by Barnett and Duvall (2005) highlights the polymorphous complexity of power, as well as the entangled relationships between and across different forms of power.

4.2 From Cutting off the King's Head To Biopolitics

"We still have not cut off the head of the king"

(Foucault, 1978: 88–89)

The rethinking and recasting of operations of power as productive and diffuse can provide a deeper understanding of global politics and global regime of security. In particular, such a framework demonstrates the ways in which knowledge production in IR plays a significant role in shaping and constituting the conditions of security/insecurity, and therefore the formation of the seemingly deviant and perverse identities of the IS. It allows us to recognize how the marking of gendered, racialized and sexualized bodies are central to, and negotiated through, divided geographies of power.

According to Foucault (1978) power is ubiquitous. In this conception, power is not reducible to the sovereign-juridical model emanating from a central locus, rather power is dispersed, pervasive, discursive, constitutive and embodied. Thus, in stark contrast to the state-centric conceptions of power in which power is wielded by an actor, a foucaultian analytics of power views power as emanating from everywhere, producing and constituting subjects through "regimes of truth"(Foucault, 1975; 1980) . The idea that power is possessed by a 'sovereign'

authority and as solely oppressive is challenged, thereby 'cutting off the king's head' to suggest power is decentralized and multidirectional (Foucault, 2003).

Biopolitics has emerged as a critical framework from which to analyse contemporary forms of global (read: neoliberal) governance as well as offering novel ways of thinking about power relations and security practices. Understood as a "new technology of power" (Foucault, 2003: 243), biopower is rendered as a:

> Technology which brings together the mass effects characteristics of a population, which tries to control the series of random events that can occur in a living mass, a technology which tries to predict the probability of those events […] This is a technology which aims to establish a sort of homeostasis, not by training individuals, but by achieving an overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole from internal dangers.   (Foucault, 2003: 249)

Replacing the sovereign right to "take life and let live," biopolitics entails the power "to make live and to let die" (Foucault, 2003: 241; Sheth, 2011: 53). Concerned primarily with bodies as population, biopolitics therefore governs individuals and populations through regulatory measures and technologies of self (Richter-Montpetit, 2014).

Foucault's analytics of biopolitics and the capillaries of power have reconfigured our understandings of international order and subjectivity. On one level, rather than being a unified actor as traditionally conceived, the state is cast as only one site amongst a multiplicity in which power operates. On another level, it allows us to see how, within the European sovereign-nation-state system, 'liberal' rule has "reproduced itself […] through technologies of neglect, marginalization, exclusion, medicalization, capture and brute acts of force" (Richter-Montpetit, 2014: 44). Consequently, those considered as threatening to the population are cast as enemies and relegated to elimination.

4.2.1 Foreign Fighters: The Threat From Within

> Underlying much of world politics has been the violent division of the world into domestic and international, the centre and the periphery, the developed and the underdeveloped worlds, the masculine from the feminine, the state

territorial space from the anarchic and violent world.

(Aganthangelou and Turcotte 2010: 49)

Drawing upon Weber (2016b: 42), it seems to me that the biopolitical figurations of the "normal homosexual' and the "perverse homosexual" can be added to these seemingly opposed dichotomies within global politics. According to Weber, within contemporary Western discourses the 'perverse homosexual' is often inhabited by, and articulated through, the "unwanted im/migrant", and the "terrorist" (2016b: 74). In the case of the IS, I would suggest that the figure of the 'foreign fighter' is deeply tied to all three corporealities. Most significant, then, is that the emergence of the IS and the scope of its reach has demonstrated not only the instability and the anxious labour put into the maintenance of the false dichotomies articulated above, but that it also serves as a concrete example of how these 'binaries' intersect, are deeply entwined and are relationally constitutive as the boundaries become increasingly blurred.

Indeed, the IS's foreign fighters are a case in point. As of 2016, it is estimated that over 27,000 people from at least 85 countries have travelled to Iraq and Syria to fight on behalf of IS since 2011 (Kirk, 2016). Foreign fighters have travelled from as far as the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, as well as from most of the European states, including the UK, France and Germany, and countries within the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region), such as Jordan, Libya and Saudi Arabia. It is in this sense that the recruitment of foreign fighters by the IS unsettles the distinction between the domestic and the international, the centre and the periphery, the developed and undeveloped, the masculine and the feminine, the sovereign state from the anarchic and violent world (Agathangelou and Turcotte, 2010: 49). Ultimately, it is the danger of the indistinguishable that renders these figurations so perverse.

Signifiers such as "moderate", "extremist" and "fundamentalist" attributed to those read as Muslim (read: black and brown bodies) are reflected in counter-terrorism measures such as the Prevent Strategy in the UK (2011). Part of the UK's broader counterterrorism strategy "Contest", the Prevent policy is designed to "stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism" (UK

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Home Office, 2011: 6) by addressing the ideological 'challenges' presented by extremism. Specifically, the Prevent policy extends surveillance to the entire population through healthcare and education, in conjunction to faith sectors. Thus, educators, health care staff, and faith leaders, for example, have a legal duty to refer individuals suspected of radicalization to local Prevent centers. Teachers, doctors and nurses, subsequently become active participants in mass surveillance and government counter-terrorism measures. Whilst the Prevent policy posits that *all* citizens within the national body politic are at risk of radicalization, the reality of the strategy is that Muslim communities and racialized bodies are discriminately targeted. This is starkly illustrated by instances where children of colour, under the age of 10, have been threatened with de-radicalisation programmes (see, for example, Quinn, 2016). The deployment of deradicalization strategies such as Prevent in the UK thus serves to shape the subjectivity, behavior and ethics of individuals and the population at large.

By viewing 'deradicalization' strategies as a technique for biopower, it allows us to view how internal enemies are constituted "against whom society must defend itself" (Stoler, 1995: 59). 'Good' Muslims bodies are posited in opposition to 'Bad' Muslim bodies, 'terrorists' versus 'law-abiding citizens', 'foreign fighters' versus 'the patriot', the 'unknowable' versus the 'knowable'. According to Puar, there are "historical convergences" between queerness and terror:

> [F]ailed and perverse, these emasculated bodies always have femininity as their reference point of malfunction, and are metonymically tied to all sorts of pathologies of the mind and body -homosexuality, incest, pedophilia, madness, and disease. (2007: xxiii)

If we take Puar's (2007a) observation seriously, the queerness of terrorists and foreign fighters, both women and men, lies precisely in their seemingly failed heterosexuality, traitors to both the nation and their gender, conceived as bodies that are inherently deviant and perverse, a failure of psyche and thus morally incomprehensible monstrosities.

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4.3 Necropolitics and Death Worlds

"Civilian casualties are a fact of life in this sort of situation."

(Mattis and CBS News, 2017)

Still, biopolitics does not adequately capture the intersecting and oscillating relationship between sovereignty and power, life and death. Mbembé's critique of biopolitics highlights the fundamental omission of the role of death:

> Is the notion of biopower sufficient to account for the contemporary ways in which the political, under the guise of war, of resistance, or of the fight against terror makes the murder of the enemy its primary and absolute objective? Imagining politics as a form of war, we must ask: what place is given to life, death and the human body (in particular the wound or slain body)? How are they inscribed in the order of power? (2003: 12)

For Mbembé, the concept of necropolitics, that is, the "contemporary forms of subjugation of life to the power of death"(Mbembé, 2003: 39) enriches biopolitical analyses, accounting for bodies which are ascribed to death, marked as already dead, and how necropolitics is enacted by a 'sovereign being' making war. The concept of necropolitics, then, reminds us that power as dispersed is never completely divorced from the modality of sovereign power, since "the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides […] in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die" (2003: 11). In this conception, zones of death and regimes of killing become the dominant logic. It is in this way that US Secretary of Defense James Mattis can declare that US policy against the IS has shifted to 'annihilation', where the "intention is that the foreign fighters do not survive the fight to return home to North Africa, to Europe, to America, to Asia, to Africa" (Mattis and CBS News, 2017: online). The destruction and death of the enemy is conceived as the preservation of sovereign life itself.

The denial of humanity to the IS constitutes it as an ungovernable space and therefore as a "state of exception" (Mbembé, 2003: 12) which justifies a state of permanent war (Mikdashi and Puar, 2016). It is in this way that Mattis (2017) can claim civilian deaths "are a fact of life" and as necessary collateral damage in US-led airstrikes, despite an airstrike resulting in over 100 civilian

deaths in March (Shugerman, 2017). Moreover, it allows us to understand how 'liberals' celebrated

Trump's order to drop the 'Mother of All Bombs' (MOAB) on Eastern Afghanistan (Rasmussen,

2017). Mikdashi and Puar highlight that

> The men, women, and children in these countries and regions have been made for killing, brutalization, and debilitation partly through sexualized, gendered, classed, and racialized transnational discourses about Islam, Arabs and the Middle East (2016: 221).

Indeed, these hypocritical encounters between the mechanisms of life and death, and thus

biopolitics and necropolitics, are not lost on the IS. IS also justify the killing of women and children

as collateral damage as "necessary" in Rumiyah magazine issue 5 (al-Hayat Media Center, 2017b:

6). Furthermore, within his speech, al-Baghdadi highlights the hypocrisy of how states regarded as

legitimate define terrorism:

> But terrorism does not include the killing of Muslims in Burma and the burning of their homes. Terrorism does not include the dismembering and disemboweling of the Muslims in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Kashmir. Terrorism does not include the killing of Muslims in the Caucasus and expelling them from their lands. Terrorism does not include making mass graves for the Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the slaughtering of their children […] all this is not terrorism. Rather it is freedom, democracy, peace, security, and tolerance! (2014: 4–5)

What is particularly striking about the above is that it exposes how the 'state of exception'

is not exceptional for these bodies consigned to death, because murderous violence, death,

brutalisation, expulsion, slaughter, oppression, war and genocide are featured as part of their daily

existence. I should reiterate that I aim to neither to condone nor downplay the violence enacted

by IS, but rather aim to demonstrate the ways in which a highly-securitized discourse of the state

of exception, and therefore narratives of good versus evil, and civilized versus uncivilized, serves

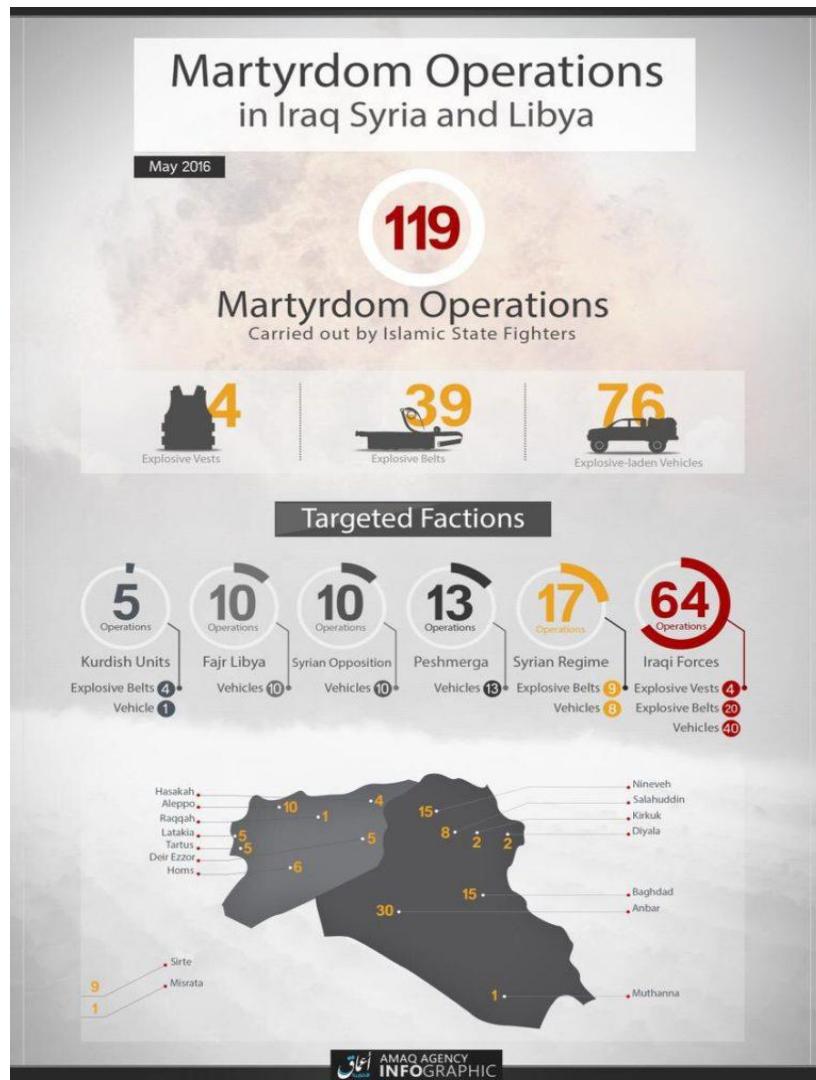to obscure the production of ordinary death worlds (Mbembé, 2003).

Figure 4: IS Amaq News Agency infographic of 'martyrdom operations' (Joscelyn, 2016)

4.3.1 The IS's 'Martyrdom' Machine

I want to turn now to a modest discussion of IS's use of death, by focusing on their use of suicide attacks and specifically suicide bombing. Much has been written on the 'logic' and motivations of 'suicide terrorism' (Atran, 2003; Azam, 2005; Braun and Genkin, 2014; Brym and Araj, 2006; Crenshaw, 2007; Pape, 2006; Reuter, 2006; Corte and Giménez-Salinas, 2010). Downplaying the role of religious fundamentalism Pape (2006: 36), for instance, argues that suicide terrorism is predominantly a product of foreign occupation. Whilst the use of suicide bombing has

been used by numerous groups[16], the IS's use of suicide attacks appears to be an almost daily occurrence, particularly in Iraq and Syria. In a report for the Hague's International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT), Winter (2017: 3) argues that the IS has "militarised suicide more sustainably than any other non-state actor to date". In 2016, IS claimed to have carried out at least 1,141 suicide attacks in Iraq, Libya and Syria (Joscelyn, 2017a). Meanwhile in the past month there have been reports of: a suicide bombing in Baghdad during Ramadan (Joscelyn, 2017b); a suicide bombing in Jakarta (Rachman, 2017); a suicide bombing in Manchester (Dodd et al., 2017) a suicide van and knife attack in London (BBC, 2017), and most recently IS have claimed responsibility for the suicide bombing and gunmen attack on Iran's parliament (Sharafedin, 2017). In Figure 4 we see the normalcy, and pride assigned to 'Martyrdom operations' by the IS.

Rather than addressing the causality or reason behind suicide attacks, a queer necropolitical analysis allows us to understand the fear and revulsion that suicide attacks incites. The location of warfare has shifted from the Global North to the Global South (Meger, 2017). Thus within the Western imaginary, the Global North is marked by the promise and protection of life, whilst the Global South is characterised by the onslaught of death. The use of suicide attacks, particularly against civilians in the Global North, extends 'war zones' to everyday spaces, no longer confined to "the dark corners of the earth" (Richter-Montpetit, 2007: 46; McClintock, 1995: 23). Within the Global North death remains an unspeakable topic, yet as Fanon argues "the terrorist, from the moment he undertakes an assignment, allows death to enter his soul" (Fanon, 1965: 57). The suicide attacker queerly desires and incorporates death, indeed their success is dependent on it. The suicide attacker is sexually pathological, their desire of death is excessive yet regressive, monstrous and almost virus like.

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[16] For instance, suicide attacks were a key tactic used by The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE or Tamil Tigers) who were a Marxist, secessionist, militant group in Sri Lanka (Pape, 2006)

The perverse and the monstrous therefore collide and collude in the figure of the suicide attacker as the desire of the destruction of the Self and the destruction of the Other immortalises both. The boundaries of the body become infused with the boundaries of others, body fused to body, blurring the distinction between suicide bomber and victim. In the words of Murray (2017: 207):

> Victims of suicide attacks are not merely […] cloaked in the exploded body of the bomber. They are penetrated by it. The attackers body is literally weaponized. Shards of bone become human shrapnel. The body of the bomber and the bodies of his or her victims become inextricable; it is impossible to separate one from the other […] not only are these bodies in pieces but it will be impossible to determine where one body ends and the other begins.

Because of the nature of the death and the self-immolation of the attacker, death and destruction are inextricably interwoven with the becoming of the 'martyr' and thus eternity. Suicide attacks are therefore acts of "survival" (2003: 36) through killing, shared death and the spatial and temporal collapse of the sanctity of the body and the rational and irrational. For Puar (2007a: 221), as well as Mbembé (2003) and Murray (2017) albeit inadvertently, "queerness is constitutive of the suicide bomber" insofar as queerness is "delinked from sexual identity to signal instead temporal, spatial and corporeal schisms". The IS's suicide attackers disrupt the distinction between victim and attacker, military and civilian, normal and deviant, and in this sense mirrors the necropolitical strategies of states who do likewise, indiscriminately killing oppositional military and civilian targets.

4.4 Conclusion

I began this chapter by situating the concept of power in IR, conceptualised primarily as state power. The discipline's venerating of power as possessed and solely as coercive functions to reify and naturalise the state as the legitimate actor within global politics. In addition, I suggest that the centrality of state-centric notions of power fail to adequately capture how the different technologies and modalities of power operate. To the extent that power is ubiquitous, queering the concepts of biopolitics and necropolitics highlights the myriad of ways in which power shapes

gendered, sexualised and racialized bodies and encounters. In the case of IS, the deviant figures of the foreign fighter and suicide attacker demonstrate the attempts to confine deathworlds and racialized deathly desires to the Global South.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis I allude to the perversity of queerness and the queerness of perversity. Queerness, then, is not normative nor antinormative, not an identity nor a refutation of identity. Rather, queerness underscores the often-contradictory hypervisibility of racialized, gendered and sexualized processes inherent in the realpolitik of IR and international political formations. In the case of IS, dominant understandings of state, sovereignty and state power in IR not only obfuscate these processes as always already present, but such a disavowal serves to ensure that modernist and civilizational paradigms, promulgated by the discipline, endure.

Beginning by tracing the contours of what is now known as Queer IR, I demonstrated that mainstream IR is marked by raciality, coloniality and is inexplicably tied to capitialist-patriarchy. In light of this, Queer IR has proliferated in an effort to recast and re-examine previously stable concepts and structures of understanding within IR. Expanding the notion of queer, I suggested that queer, as used in this thesis, is not conceived as necessarily transgressive, but rather as a modality of inquiry that captures how normativities and perversions, and thus its complicities, are already entwined within international formations of power. Having presented four frameworks within which IS has been predominantly conceived in security studies, I argued that such representations are not only pathologizing but also limited, in that they significantly reduce the complexities of IS and the geopolitical order in which it resides. I then provided a brief overview of the history of IS's evolution as well as its ideology, to provide a foundation from which to depart.

Considered the most significant actor in world politics, I interrogated mainstream IR's central unit of analysis: the state. Constructed as unitary, rational and masculine within mainstream IR, I suggested that a Queer IR framework demonstrates how the concepts of 'state' and 'statehood' are rendered intelligible through intersecting discursive regimes of gender, sexuality and race, as well as hegemonic structures of domination such as (neo)colonialism and

neoliberalism. An examination of the hegemonic conceptions of the state through a queer lens allows us to analyse the ways in which IS's processes of state-building expose the gendered racialised-sexualised logics that underpin notions of 'stateness'. In particular, the IS's vision of a social contract causes us to interrogate the inclusions and exclusions inherent in the conditionality of citizenship pertaining to states we consider to be legitimate.

Underpinning notions of statehood is the concept of sovereignty, primarily conceived as Westphalian sovereignty. The myth of the Westphalian narrative, I suggested, functions to maintain a heteronormative, Eurocentricism that naturalises a civilised/barbaric dualism between the West and the 'Rest'. Indeed, the Westphalian narrative also serves to sustain a developmentalist trajectory in which the queerness of the savage and the savagery of the queer constructs IS's as an abhorrent state of exceptional violence. This is particularly stark when examining the IS's use of beheadings and sexual violence, which makes it possible to frame IS as inherently perverse, deviant and dangerous. Taking seriously the racialized, sexualized and gendered modalities of sovereignty brings to light the murderous violence of states deemed sovereign and thus legitimate.

Finally, my focus on the concept of power moved beyond narrow conceptions of state power, and the Westphalian model of sovereignty, to view power as ubiquitous and the sovereign as embodying the state of exception. Apart from highlighting the shortcomings of the imaginaries of state-centricism, the theorization of biopolitics underscores the regimes of living, killing and survival in the figure of the foreign fighter. Meanwhile, the deathly game against IS entails the necropolitical slaughtering of civilians, as well as the fear and the revulsion of the suicide attacker, as deathworlds are no longer confined to their boundaries.

Ultimately, advancing a Queer(itical) IR framework to analysing IS demands recognizing that scholars of IR and security studies are inherently actors intervening and disseminating a particular 'knowledge' in, and of, international politics. To do otherwise and treat the discipline of IR and security studies as 'neutral' is not only false, but also serves to depoliticize and obscure our

complicity in structuring how 'normal' and 'perverse' global subjectivities should be, and indeed have been, conceived.

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