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**Introduction<sup>1</sup> by Christopher Spearin, Canadian Forces College, Toronto, ON, Canada<sup>2</sup>**

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Since the start of the twenty-first century, military contractors such as Blackwater (now named Academi), Kellogg, Brown & Root, and SNC Lavalin have become household names in many countries. The reasons for their prominence vary from case to case. One is notoriety. Particular firms hold contracts valued in the millions if not billions of dollars, and the conduct of some firms has not been beyond reproach in terms of military effectiveness or their observance of human rights. A second reason is reliance. Contractors are needed to keep state military personnel fed and supplied, to maintain their machines, and in some cases even to protect them. Developed world states especially require them for warring, training, and simply operating given the limited numbers of available national military personnel, the increasing sophistication of military technologies, and the political ramifications of applying state forces overseas. In many states, contractors have therefore become part of the total national force. Yet another reason pertains to dedication and sacrifice. Many firms suffered significant levels of casualties during the long-term interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Thousands of contracted personnel have provided continuity over the long haul in often austere and intemperate conditions. All of this points to the considerable depth and scope of contractor involvement, which is arguably unprecedented in recent decades if not centuries. It also stands at odds with traditional conceptions of expensive state security sectors and their capabilities and responsibilities to manage and apply violence.

Without a doubt, then, contractors have played a significant, augmentative, and sometimes controversial role in the overseas endeavours of many countries. With the first decade of this century now over and the interventions it 'hosted' gradually fading into history, it is appropriate to consider, both by casting back and by looking forward, the evolving relationships between states and contractors. While there have been common pressures applied against contractor-employing states (especially related to the lure of neoliberal policies and the distinction between offensive and defensive violence), the national management of, and response to, those pressures have differed. Therefore, the following articles examine evolving national considerations and rationales for military contracting (including armed and unarmed contractors) based on recent experiences of selected Western states: the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Sweden. Among the national cases, the United Kingdom and the United States are presented first since these countries' interactions with the private sector are arguably the most substantial in a global sense. They are also the states on which other states often model their interactions with contractors. In contrast, Canada and Sweden are examined less frequently. They too, however, present their own unique dynamics. Canada often attempts to punch above its weight on the international stage despite (or because of) its military's relatively small size.

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<sup>1</sup> This introduction was originally published in slightly altered form in *International Journal* 69:4 (December 2014): 470-74. H-Diplo thanks the editors of *IJ* for granting us permission to reprint this piece.

<sup>2</sup> The views expressed in the article are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect those of the Canadian Department of National Defence or the Government of Canada.

Swedish defence policy is shifting its emphasis from territorial defence and national service to expeditionary operations with professional volunteer forces. To facilitate these states' efforts, policymakers have introduced contractors in a variety of ways.

The reader will note that not only does this introduction employ the fairly malleable word 'contractor,' but that the articles that follow use a number of different terms with several meanings. This catholic approach highlights debates within the field. But, keeping *International Journal's* audience in mind, the terminology also reflects the varying emphasis in the broad industry on 'teeth' aspects—those more closely associated with the use of force—and 'tail' aspects—those more closely associated with logistics, maintenance, and support. The variance also underscores the definitions laid out in national and international regulations and guidelines. Finally, many firms offer both teeth and tail services and/or have shifted their commercial offerings over time. By not strait-jacketing the authors into certain stances and definitions, the desire is that this collection will give the reader a contemporary understanding of this dynamic phenomenon.

The first article, by Ulrich Petersohn, sets the stage for how contractors have increasingly provided teeth functions during the twenty-first century so far.<sup>3</sup> Using a normative framework, Petersohn reveals that contractors did not have carte blanche. Contractor efforts to provide violence offensively met with the skepticism, if not hostility, of state and international officials. The so-called anti-mercenary norm held firm. Over time and from a bottom-up perspective, though, contractors were much more successful in linking individual self-defence to an industry that had a defensive orientation writ large. From a top-down perspective, prominent voices in the United States, the United Kingdom, and the United Nations were much more receptive to this defensive approach. As such, Petersohn argues that the anti-mercenary norm's focus has become much tighter, thus providing contractors with considerable operational and commercial space.

In contradistinction to Petersohn's piece, Christopher Kinsey's contribution is tightly focused on the tail, with its consideration of technical and support services for the United Kingdom's overseas military operations.<sup>4</sup> Here the rationale for contracting rests, in part, on the desire to save money by embracing and capitalizing upon neoliberal ideas that favour the market over the state. While Kinsey makes plain that military contracting is not necessarily new, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's demand not to exempt the armed forces from her government's market-oriented policies provided the impetus for the significant dependence on the private sector that is evident today. The intimacy of this relationship is reflected not just in terms of operational reliance but also in long-term procurement partnerships for expensive equipment such as tanker transport aircraft. But

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<sup>3</sup> Ulrich Petersohn, "Reframing the Anti-Mercenary Norm: Private Military and Security Companies and Mercenarism," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 475-493.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Kinsey, "Transforming War Supply: Considerations and Rationales behind Contractor Support to UK Overseas Military Operations in the Twenty-First Century," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 494-509.

Kinsey reminds the reader that contracting also rests simply on the rationale of need. The marketplace seemingly offers services and personnel that allow the United Kingdom's government to maintain its international ambition on politically feasible and economically favourable (although not necessarily or solely at lowest cost) terms. As military technology continues to increase in importance and becomes more regularly linked to maintaining said ambition, the reliance on contractors will no doubt expand.

Molly Dunigan's analysis of the United States' use of contractors also focuses on the reasons for increased reliance, but Dunigan stresses shifts caused partly by the interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan that helped spark a vast contractor presence.<sup>5</sup> While she, like Kinsey, notes that a private presence is nothing new, the absolute numbers she presents at the article's start alongside relative comparisons with U.S. forces are truly staggering; things are indeed different. In future, the nature of the U.S. use of contractors will likely reflect the war weariness of the U.S. military, political officials, and the public alike. Rather than working alongside U.S. forces in massive numbers, contractors are likely to go where U.S. forces are not present or have just departed. There they will perform training, logistics, security, and consulting tasks (i.e., both teeth and tail functions). Their goal will be to increase capacity in hosting states, although the guests themselves will not be wearing state military uniforms.

Christopher Spearin's consideration of the Canadian example reveals a much smaller contractor footprint relative to the previous two cases, but it is one that was politically and militarily important, although not necessarily uncontroversial, in sustaining military operations in Afghanistan.<sup>6</sup> Spearin argues that contracting became less and less about saving money and more about value for money, given resource limitations and operational requirements in the following areas: logistics and support personnel, equipment, training, and defensive security. In particular, contracting for deployed operations provided the Canadian government and armed forces with a great deal of flexibility, but there were unintended consequences pertaining to the growth and professionalization of the Afghan security sector. Ironically, contractor use both made the Afghan mission politically palatable and hindered the achievement of objectives deemed politically and operationally important milestones.

Like Spearin, Joakim Berndtsson examines, in his words, a less conspicuous or visible national case. Sweden has long been associated with a domestically prominent and intervening state apparatus and an international status of neutrality.<sup>7</sup> Because defence contracting is relatively less prominent, the reader can measure the intrusion of

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<sup>5</sup> Molly Dunigan, "The Future of US Military Contracting: Current Trends and Future Implications," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 510-524.

<sup>6</sup> Christopher Spearin, "Canada and Contracted War: Afghanistan and beyond," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 525-541.

<sup>7</sup> Joakim Berndtsson, "Realizing the 'Market-State'? Military Transformation and Security Outsourcing in Sweden," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 542-558.

contracting in a more embryonic form. In an instrumental sense, expansion is more likely as Sweden integrates further with its European neighbours and embraces the continental trend toward downsizing, specialization, and trans-nationalization alongside developing an expeditionary mindset. Its gradual abandonment of neutrality is making Sweden a lot like other European states looking for ways to make an impact internationally under austere financial conditions. In addition, Sweden's embrace of whole of government solutions has introduced even more contractors, since Swedish police and military forces are not formally tasked with the protection of other government personnel. It is worth noting that there is nothing natural about this transition. The entrance of market dynamics, in the important field of defence no less, is a departure from the status quo. Contracting is backstopped by neoliberal rationales. In fact, Berndtsson assesses Sweden as transitioning from a nation state to a 'market state,' echoing Kinsey's points on neoliberalism.

All of the national case studies offer speculations that should provoke analysts and policymakers alike. They relate, more often than not, to deepening interaction, regulation, and control. For Kinsey, the likelihood of the United Kingdom's increased reliance on military contractors puts into sharp relief the metrics, or the lack thereof, pertaining to cost effectiveness. The increasing coziness between government and industry suggests that more, rather than fewer, questions and assumptions need to be addressed so that the public interest, rather than the private interest, is best served. At the same time, however, the United Kingdom's armed forces must further integrate and protect contractors so that operational effectiveness is better ensured. This is no easy tightrope to walk.

While Dunigan's article is the most future oriented in this collection, her worries about the forthcoming employment of contractors by the United States are rooted in the experiences of the twenty-first century's first decade. There were problems related to transparency and accountability that had ethical and legal ramifications. In the present day, a contractor presence in states not hosting a substantial U.S. military contingent (and thus more likely outside the public and political glare) might make these challenges acute. For Dunigan, the risks might be reduced by how the United States embraces and integrates three regulatory endeavours ongoing since 2008: the Montreux Document, the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers, and the PSC.1 Standard.

Spearin's considerations of the future relate particularly to one of these regulatory efforts—the Montreux Document—and the degree to which Canada has incorporated it into contracting policy. On the one hand, Canada has taken great strides both in assisting with the development of the Montreux Document and in creating related contractor-specific guidance. Thus, the Spearin article considers at length the draft National Defence Directive on the Selection and Use of Private Military and Security Contractors on Deployed Operations. On the other hand, Spearin worries that the directive might be sidelined because of its unsigned status and the potential contradictions and problems regarding recent contingency contracting.

With the Swedish case in mind, Berndtsson also frets about the future implications of government and the private sector making security together. For him, aloofness and a lack of political interest are troublesome, given the growing political willingness to commit to

expeditionary operations. For instance, contractors possessing diplomatic credentials are now important cogs in the organization and management of embassy security functions; they are security governors. How might this impact upon how Swedish embassy officials interact with the guest country? If contractors are security governors, can they be appropriately managed to better ensure that Sweden is not embarrassed should there be any problems or wrongdoing? As for logistics and support services, important functions rest in contractor hands, but similar to Kinsey's and Spearin's assessments, there is uncertainty about the degree to which the military has control.

### **Participants:**

**Christopher Spearin** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Defence Studies of the Royal Military College of Canada located at the Canadian Forces College in Toronto. His research concerns change in militaries, global security governance, non-state actors and conflict, mercenaries, the privatization of security, piracy, and Canadian foreign and defence policy

**Birthe Anders** completed her Ph.D. in War Studies in spring 2014 and is now a Teaching Fellow in the Department of War Studies, King's College London. She teaches on the causes of war and issues of conflict, security and development. Her research has been published in *Small Wars & Insurgencies* and *Parameters* and focuses on Private Military and Security Companies, especially on non-state contracting and regulation of the industry.

**Mark Erbel** completed his Ph.D. in War Studies on the causes, politics, and future of military outsourcing at King's College London. He is a Senior Lecturer in Defence and International Affairs at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Forthcoming publications include "The Politics of Outsourcing Military Support Services" in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Outsourcing Security*, and, with Christopher Kinsey, "Privatizing Military Logistics: Considerations and Implications of Outsourcing the Supply of War in the 21st Century," in *Routledge Handbook of Private Security Studies*. His future research will examine among others the supply of US global power as well as military dimensions of the "Arab Spring."



In the past two decades, Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs) have become a constant feature in war zones around the globe. The companies provide an extensive range of services, from logistics and maintenance to military training and armed security, for assets and personnel. Among their biggest clients are Western governments, who use PMSCs to supplement and sometimes substitute military capacity. While the companies are also employed by non-state clients such as oil and gas and shipping companies, as well as NGOs and the UN, much scholarly debate has focused on state contracting, especially that of the United States and the United Kingdom.

*International Journal's* forum, "Contemporary Military Contracting and the Future: Teeth, Tails, and Concerns," luckily goes beyond the traditional focus and includes case studies not only on the UK and U.S., but also Sweden and Canada, both of which have recently increased their use of contractors. A fifth essay asks how PMSCs established themselves as legitimate actors and how they circumvent the (unwritten) anti-mercenary norm. As guest editor Christopher Spearin writes in his introduction, the broad scope is intentional, as contributors deal with the "teeth" of contracting (especially armed security services) as well as with the "tail" (logistics and support services such as transport and catering). However, articles also address differing aspects of a country's PMSC contracting, from past cases and political pressures to operational necessity and future defence expenditure - a very ambitious but also somewhat incoherent approach. This review will first discuss the individual papers before coming back to the question of what the forum tells us about the future of PMSC contracting.

In her contribution, Molly Dunigan focuses on future U.S. military contracting.<sup>1</sup> At the moment, the U.S. government is the biggest PMSC customer in the world. She contends that two aspects of U.S. contracting will change in the future. First, the volume of contracting will decrease. Second, there will be a change in the services used. In contrast to the extensive contracting during the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, PMSCs will no longer be primarily employed alongside the U.S. military. Instead, they will increasingly be contracted either after U.S. troops have left, for example, for the security of diplomatic personnel, or even replace them, as with the contractors who currently train African forces to fight Al Shabab.

Dunigan convincingly argues two points. First, with the wartime surge of contracting (in Iraq and Afghanistan) over, PMSCs will move from these environments to post- and pre-war environments. Second, this 'relative pause' could be a vital opportunity to further develop and strengthen PMSC regulation before a potential new surge. It thus makes sense for her to examine the three main regulatory instruments: the Montreux Document,<sup>2</sup> the

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<sup>1</sup> Molly Dunigan, "The Future of US Military Contracting: Current Trends and Future Implications," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 510-524.

<sup>2</sup> Short for 'Montreux Document on Pertinent International Legal Obligations and Good Practices for States related to Operations of Private Military and Security Companies during Armed Conflict'. Available at

International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC) and the so-called ANSI/PSC.1 standard. Each of these instruments has a different focus. The Montreux Document emphasizes existing responsibilities of states under international law in regard to PMSCs, be they home (where a PMSC is headquartered), territorial (where a PMSC is operating) or contracting states (i.e. clients). The ICoC is a voluntary code of conduct for companies. More than 700 companies have signed on to the code.<sup>3</sup> The ANSI/PSC.1 standard lays out standards of behavior for contractors and a quality management system for security companies, for example, that contractors be trained in human rights law and medical and psychological health training, care, and support.<sup>4</sup> Crucially, the standard includes a compliance and auditing mechanism. However, as of mid-2014 only one auditing body and one company had been certified. Do these complementary but not yet fully functional regulations then make any difference to company behaviour? Dunigan's answer is yes, as they could improve accountability of the industry and reduce risks to the U.S. (as a client). Thus, policymakers and industry officials should use the current pause in contracting to strengthen the above-mentioned regulations.

Christopher Kinsey writes about UK military contracting for technical and support services during expeditionary operations, as well as rationales behind outsourcing and issues for policymakers.<sup>5</sup> The focus is thus on the "tail" of contracting. He begins with an overview of pre-Cold War contracting to confound the perception that contracting is a new phenomenon. In the UK, military contracting has its root in neoliberal politics from the Thatcher era. The UK military has also adopted a core competence model and relies on contractors to carry out 'non-core' functions. The first of these are technical services, including the maintenance of weapons systems and IT systems. Second, the UK military contracts so-called support functions as the construction and maintenance of camps, catering, and waste management. Kinsey contends that a number of reasons exist for this outsourcing, most prominently political, economic, and operational imperatives. One example is the use of local contractors to transport supplies through Pakistan, which enabled the military to keep a low operational profile. He concludes that it is unlikely for the UK military to return to a self-sufficient model in the near future. In fact, contracting can be expected to grow. This leads to two challenges. The first is how to measure a contractor's cost-effectiveness, a method for which is still missing. The second challenge is setting boundaries and defining which functions a contractor can and cannot perform - this

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<https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/misc/montreux-document-170908.htm>. Accessed 12 December 2014.

<sup>3</sup> For current numbers see <http://www.icoc-psp.org/>. An association has been set up to provide certification, monitoring and reporting on signatory company performance, but is not fully operational yet.

<sup>4</sup> Available at [http://www.acq.osd.mil/log/PS/p\\_vault/item\\_1997-PSC\\_1\\_STD.PDF](http://www.acq.osd.mil/log/PS/p_vault/item_1997-PSC_1_STD.PDF), Accessed 28 December 2014.

<sup>5</sup> Christopher Kinsey, "Transforming War Supply: Considerations and Rationales behind Contractor Support to UK Overseas Military Operations in the Twenty-First Century," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 494-509.



question goes back to one of the key issues in PMSC research: do the companies challenge the state's monopoly on legitimate violence? Finally, Kinsey raises an interesting point that has been largely missing from debates about PMSCs: the security of individual contractors and the military's role in protecting them.

Joakim Berndtsson writes that Sweden has changed its position on PMSCs in recent years from reluctance towards not only acceptance but what he calls an 'institutionalization' of their use.<sup>6</sup> He argues that this is part of the wider trend of security outsourcing, but that it is also due to shifts in foreign and security policies and military reform such as the establishment of an all-volunteer force in 2010. To make his case he first outlines the Swedish military transformation in the past decades and the move away from neutrality to what has been called 'post-neutrality,' meaning the participation in international collaborative military operations. This leads to an examination of Sweden's involvement in Afghanistan since 2006, the most combat-intensive operation for the country since its involvement in the Congo in the 1960s. Sweden has used PMSCs for services such as site management, transport, unarmed guards, as well as to provide security staff at embassies in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Sudan. How then has contracting become institutionalized? Most importantly, market models and business management strategies are now used across military and security policy, leading to PMSCs being contracted more routinely and more willingly. Their use has also added a new component to traditional civil-military relations, which can lead to friction over who has control, the military or the contractors.

In his article on the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), Christopher Spearin examines contracting in Afghanistan as well as domestic regulation for PMSCs.<sup>7</sup> His key finding is that contractors "will continue to work in the name of Canada abroad; there will be no plausible deniability" (540). Thus, policymakers should think about how best to govern this public-private relationship. To come to this conclusion, Spearin gives an extensive account of CAF contracting in Afghanistan in four areas: logistics and support personnel, equipment, training, and defensive security. A primary objective for the CAF is to free up military personnel. For example, PMSCs can be used in relatively stable environments, leaving unstable environments for CAF personnel with military training. Spearin quotes a Forward Operating Base commander as saying contracting gave him flexibility: "If it was not for the private security, it would not be possible for me to do the next operation" (533). In contrast to most other countries, Canada has drafted national regulations for PMSCs. In 2008 the Department of National Defence created a directive containing detailed instructions of what can be outsourced and how. However, as of November 2014 the directive was not yet operational.

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<sup>6</sup> Joakim Berndtsson, "Realizing the 'market-state'? Military Transformation and Security Outsourcing in Sweden," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 542-558.

<sup>7</sup> Christopher Spearin, "Canada and Contracted War: Afghanistan and beyond," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 525-541.

In a departure from the country case studies in the forum, Ulrich Petersohn's article asks why PMSCs are widely perceived as legitimate actors today.<sup>8</sup> He argues that the companies are no longer included in the anti-mercenary norm as they were in the 1990s, but have successfully established themselves as outsiders to the norm who only use force in self-defence. The most influential work on the anti-mercenary norm was done by Sarah Percy. In her 2007 book she argued that weak laws against mercenaries were balanced by a strong norm against their use.<sup>9</sup> PMSCs are not mercenaries in her view, as they are linked to their home states either by a direct contract or by having contracts approved by them. Petersohn disputes this, as tight state control of PMSCs is not a given in his view. For him, PMSCs resemble mercenaries, even if they no longer fall under the anti-mercenary norm. The author traces the self-defence argument back to the 1990s and the controversial engagement of the British company Sandline International and the South African company Executive Outcomes in Sierra Leone. Company representatives argued that force was only used in self-defence. These efforts were then supported in later years by the UK and U.S. governments by opposing not PMSCs themselves, but only their potential involvement in combat. Almost ironically, the UN Working Group on Mercenaries also helped PMSCs to become more legitimate by overstating a link between PMSCs, mercenaries, and terrorism. The article provides an interesting addition to the discussion of whether or not PMSCs can be seen as mercenaries. However, from a legal perspective they are not, and the article could have linked norms against mercenaries to laws against their use.

Despite the multitude of foci in these articles, consent exists between authors that the countries examined - the UK, the U.S., Canada, and Sweden - will not reverse their use of PMSCs. Policies might be changed, new regulation adopted, and the scope of contracting decreased, but contracting will not be reversed altogether. If we accept this as true then Dunigan's point about improving regulation while contracting has slowed down should be taken especially seriously. From a scholarly point of view the forum opens up new questions: Are there states that do not follow the UK and U.S. models of increased outsourcing and, if so, why? Can research on state contracting speak to research on non-state contracting, for example on questions of cost-effectiveness and control? And is contracting really irreversible?

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<sup>8</sup> Ulrich Petersohn, "Reframing the Anti-Mercenary Norm: Private Military and Security Companies and Mercenarism," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 475-493.

<sup>9</sup> Sarah Percy, (2007): "Mercenaries. The History of a Norm in International Relations. Oxford: Oxford University Press."

The editors of this special issue of *International Journal* on “Contemporary Military Contracting and the Future” set out to accomplish two things. First, they aim to critically revisit the historical record of military outsourcing as the overseas deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq are coming to an end after thirteen years. Second, they intend to look forward and offer views on the likely future practice of and concerns about military contracting well beyond these operations.<sup>2</sup> The first article revisits the debate on mercenarism and military outsourcing and makes a valuable addition to that debate. The other four articles each examine one country case – the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (U.S.), Canada, and Sweden – and draw on both the “teeth” (combat) and the “tail” (support) components of military functions.

Overall, the articles achieve the objectives the editors had set while also highlighting a few directions in which future research ought to move. The special issue offers scholars an up-to-date appraisal by five authorities in the field of key concepts, issues, cases, and developments surrounding military contracting that have figured prominently in the literature so far.<sup>3</sup> At the same time it also invites scholars to identify ways forward for the next ‘wave’ of research, and takes some first steps in those directions. The latter is particularly important if the literature is to continue expanding beyond a selection of recurring countries and regions (the U.S., UK, and the West more generally), concerns (especially civil-military relations and regulation), seminal texts in the field,<sup>4</sup> and notions (especially the possibly outdated classical distinction between public and private spheres)<sup>5</sup> that had such a strong impact and left a lasting impression on the existing literature.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed in this review are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect those of the UK Ministry of Defence or the UK government.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Spearin, “Contemporary Military Contracting and the Future: Teeth, Tails, and Concerns,” *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 470.

<sup>3</sup> These are in particular the drivers and trajectory of contractorization as well as key regulatory, oversight, and civil-military issues.

<sup>4</sup> P.W. Singer, *Corporate Warriors: the Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (Upd edn Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 2008); Deborah D. Avant, *The Market for Force: the Consequences of Privatizing Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Christopher Kinsey, *Corporate Soldiers and International Security: The Rise of Private Military Companies* (London: Routledge, 2006); and Elke Krahmman, *States, Citizens and the Privatization of Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> See Patricia Owens, “Distinctions, Distinctions: ‘Public’ and ‘Private’ Force?” *International Affairs* 84:5 (2008): 977–990.

<sup>6</sup> The journal *STAIR* (St Antony’s International Review) 9:2 (2014) contained a section entitled “A Re-examination of Private Military and Security Companies” with articles on newer research themes, in particular sociological analyses and private maritime security.

Ulrich Petersohn's article departs from the premise that the questions of "[who] is permitted to use force, and for what purpose, are fundamental questions every society has to address" (476).<sup>7</sup> Petersohn's article addresses the question of how private military and security contractors (PMSCs) which provide security services became legitimate actors. He approaches the topic via the anti-mercenary norm, and traces how the industry contributed to and ultimately benefited from a 'reframing' of the norm.<sup>8</sup> Petersohn begins by refuting Sarah Percy's claim that PMSCs associated themselves with larger causes, were under tight state control, and thus were not mercenaries, and then sets out to examine why and how PMSCs are nonetheless not (or no longer) considered mercenaries (480-481).<sup>9</sup>

Petersohn argues that the anti-mercenary norm was narrowed to cover only offensive force, effectively legitimating defensive force by non-uniformed individuals.<sup>10</sup> He departs from the understanding that "the most credible argument for associating or disassociating [a] new practice to a specific norm will prevail" (478). Accordingly, he traces the reframing of the anti-mercenary norm by evaluating the efforts, practices, and ultimately the acceptance of/by 'crucial actors' – the UK, United Nations (UN), and U.S. – which occurred across three cycles in which PMSCs first failed, then succeeded in their endeavour to disassociate themselves from mercenarism, and in which this new frame was ultimately affirmed. He shows how Eben Barlow and Tim Spicer – the founders of the private military companies Executive Outcomes (EO) and Sandline, respectively – initially failed in their attempts in the late 1990s to disassociate PMSCs from mercenarism by arguing, respectively, that PMSCs used force only defensively and that PMSCs were serving higher group causes. Conducting a discursive and policy analysis of parliamentary records and UN reports, Petersohn shows that the Foreign Affairs Committee of the UK Parliament bought into neither argument in light of the Sandline and "Arms to Africa" affairs as well as EO's combat operations in Angola, while the UN's rapporteur on mercenaries was not called out

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<sup>7</sup> Ulrich Petersohn, "Reframing the Anti-Mercenary Norm: Private Military and Security Companies and Mercenarism," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 475-493.

<sup>8</sup> This is a useful angle as not only the popular literature since the bestseller *Blackwater* by Jeremy Scahill, but also the academic debate has consistently featured voices that applied (usually wrongly) the mercenary label to contractors. See Jeremy Scahill, *Blackwater: the Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army* (New York: Nation Books, 2007). This was despite the fact that it applied only to a few, now-defunct exceptions in the 1990s but not to the companies providing services worth hundreds of billions of dollars over the past decades in overseas theatres of operation. There was no shortage of attempts to clarify the issue, with Abrahamsen and Williams insightfully writing about the "mercenary misconception". See Rita Abrahamsen and Michael C. Williams, *Security beyond the State: Private Security in International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 24-30.

<sup>9</sup> See also Sarah Percy, *Mercenaries: the History of a Norm in International Relations* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>10</sup> This confirms findings by Krahnmann who argued that normative change meant that the definition of mercenarism shifted from individuals to specific actions. See Elke Krahnmann, "From 'Mercenaries' to 'Private Security Contractors': The (Re)Construction of Armed Security Providers in International Legal Discourses." *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 40:2 (2012): 343-363, at 363.

for his own overstretched use of the mercenary label (which included virtually all armed non-state actors) because of the discrepancies between proposed frames and the historical record (482-485). Next, Petersohn confirms the view of others that the 2002 UK Green Paper's represented a crucial departure point from the wide understanding of mercenarism which had effectively de-legitimated PMSCs until then.<sup>11</sup> It signalled a move towards legitimating a much more limited version of the practice by suggesting that the use of contractors *can* be legitimate within constraints. Petersohn digs again into Foreign Office, UK Parliament, and UN archives to show how these crucial actors gradually adopted the differentiation of defensive and offensive uses of force, against which the UN rapporteur's exaggerated claims of mercenarism could no longer hold sway (and which were later discarded by his successor). In effect, the anti-mercenary norm was limited to offensive force, while the norm of self-defence was widened to include defensive force (485-489).<sup>12</sup> Petersohn closes his analysis with an examination of how the narrowed version of the anti-mercenary norm withstood pressures in the U.S. Congress, not least in the hearings of the Commission on Wartime Contracting, to become further entrenched and ultimately "confirmed" (489-491).<sup>13</sup>

The article applies a useful conceptual approach to the debate about mercenarism and PMSCs,<sup>14</sup> and is backed up with relevant, partly little studied primary source material from the UK and industry figures that highlights their previously less well-known contribution to normative change regarding PMSCs. At the same time, there remain some issues that future research should address in order to further support and shore up the argument. First, while the case selection makes sense in general, with the U.S. and UK being the foremost users of contractors and the UN holding exceptional levels of normative capital, the article makes no mention of South Africa, i.e. the country from where EO originated, which – given its history – also holds significant normative capital regarding mercenarism, and which has taken a very firm stand *against* the security industry in the past decade. Was the narrowed anti-mercenary norm pushed through against South Africa's resistance? If so, this would strengthen Petersohn's argument since the normative change would have been successfully realised against the resistance of yet another relevant actor, and the developing international regulatory environment in the context of the Montreux document suggests that it may well have been. Also, the sequencing of the analysis provokes the question of whether the U.S. was 'absent' from the first two cycles despite being the main customer of

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Kinsey, *Corporate Soldiers*, 90.

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that this turn fell into a time when the likes of EO had ceased to exist, and the use of PMSCs surged dramatically in Afghanistan and Iraq, reflecting in practice if not in principle this very distinction.

<sup>13</sup> It is worth noting that even the Commission, possibly the most anti-outsourcing endeavour in recent years, departed from the view that outsourcing was to be improved, not abolished.

<sup>14</sup> This has also been usefully applied e.g. in Jutta Joachim and Andrea Schneiker, "New Humanitarians? Frame Appropriation through Private Military and Security Companies." *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 40:2 (2012): 365-388.

PMSCs since the 1990s. To what extent did it engage with or affect the reframing during the first two cycles in the UK and UN? Elke Krahmman's research suggests that the U.S. was in fact as much leading from the front as this article shows the UK to have been.<sup>15</sup> Petersohn's article thus complements other research with a fresh perspective and useful evidence in particular from the UK and industry figures. In future, an examination of cross-country influences on the policy-level would add an important, new dimension to the literature on norm change and PMSCs.

Christopher Kinsey's is the first of four self-contained country case studies.<sup>16</sup> His work deserves credit not only for having put the "tail" on the research agenda, but for underscoring its prime relevance to military outsourcing more generally.<sup>17</sup> This is reiterated in this article but still remains peripheral in the literature which too often seeks to generalize about military outsourcing from observations made about security contracting. Kinsey centres his analysis on the sweep of neoliberalism,<sup>18</sup> which by the 1980s had firmly established itself as *the* political-economic model of the country. This proves useful in so far as many driving forces and the overarching concerns discussed in the article – cost efficiency and operational effectiveness – fit neatly under this headline.<sup>19</sup> The article first conducts a *tour de force* of key drivers of technical support and support services contractorization. Kinsey surveys and then synthesises a range of political, economic, operational, and technological factors into quite a comprehensive picture that the literature had not yet seen to date.<sup>20</sup> He shows how they gradually pushed military outsourcing from the home base ever-nearer to the front line, in the process turning contractorization from an *ad hoc* to a standardised activity. Regarding politics, Kinsey joins the few authors who take the strategic posture and objectives of the contracting state into

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<sup>15</sup> Elke Krahmman, "The United States, PMSCs and the state monopoly on violence: Leading the way towards norm change." *Security Dialogue* 44:1 (2013): 53–71.

<sup>16</sup> Christopher Kinsey, "Transforming War Supply: Considerations and Rationales behind Contractor Support to UK Overseas Military Operations in the Twenty-First Century," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 494-509.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Christopher Kinsey, *Private Contractors and the Reconstruction of Iraq: Transforming Military Logistics* (London, New York, NY: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>18</sup> This was most extensively examined in Elke Krahmman, *States, Citizens and the Privatization of Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>19</sup> E.g. creating a leaner, meaner, "core competency" military force while focusing on cost and other quantifiable markers; and delivering value for money without compromising operational effectiveness or public values, respectively.

<sup>20</sup> Two exceptions are the recent very strong article by Andreas Kruck, "Theorising the Use of Private Military and Security Companies: a Synthetic Perspective," in *Journal of International Relations and Development* 17, no. 1 (2013): 112–141, and Trevor Taylor, "Contractors on Deployed Operations and Equipment Support." *Defence Studies* 4:2 (Summer 2004): 184-198.



account as underlying drivers of contractorization.<sup>21</sup> In brief, consistently high levels of military deployments and expansive strategic objectives generate consistently high levels of military requirements. Coupled with economic and budgetary pressures, and the rapidly increasing sophistication (and thus cost and support requirements) of military equipment drove the UK's move towards outsourcing support functions even in hostile operational environments.<sup>22</sup> Kinsey also highlights previously little-examined geopolitical factors and the difficulty of generating strategic access and capability, such as the sensitivity of running supply lines through territory unwelcoming of UK troops (e.g. supply routes from Pakistan into Afghanistan which practically forced the UK to opt for contractors).<sup>23</sup> It is, however, questionable whether or to which degree the "body-bag syndrome" actually informed decisions to outsource military responsibilities (501) – i.e. outsourcing in order to reduce the number of military casualties – as governments would be hard pressed to justify such a cynical motivation and approach to risk transfer. The reduced 'body-bag effect' may instead be a (politically welcome?) side-effect of the increased use of contractors. It is this part of the article that most clearly indicates the direction of travel – more of the same, ever closer to the front line – and offers the most original insights.

The absence of viable cost comparison mechanisms pointed out by Kinsey has frustrated policy-makers for decades and yet it remains unresolved.<sup>24</sup> The same applies to the problem of assured capability, i.e. the military's limited ability to force contract delivery in warzones, and relatedly the impact of the high level of dependency on military effectiveness and efficiency. Yet only recently have they been studied in more depth, with Petersohn for instance suggesting counter-intuitively that security contractors may not have had a negative impact on operational effectiveness in Iraq when compared to poorly trained local forces or even, in some cases, highly trained U.S. troops – provided they were overseen well. Molly Dunigan, meanwhile, finds in *Victory for Hire* that contractors have an ambivalent impact on effectiveness – impacting integration negatively regardless of who they are working for, but potentially helping or harming responsiveness, skill, and quality

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<sup>21</sup> See Taylor, "Contractors on Deployed Operations and Equipment Support". This author develops the strategic underpinning and impact of differently expansive defence postures on outsourcing in detail, see Mark Erbel, *Contractors and Defence Policy-Making: Examining the Drivers, Process, and Future of Military Outsourcing* (PhD Dissertation, King's College London, 2015).

<sup>22</sup> See Erbel, *Contractors and Defence Policy-Making* for how a gap between commitments and resources underlies the history of military outsourcing in the UK and the USA.

<sup>23</sup> On the general importance of logistics to strategy the seminal work is Martin van Creveld, *Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton*. First published in 1977. 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>24</sup> For an ongoing attempt by one of the thought leaders and political heavyweights in the field, former Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Dr Jacques S. Gansler, see Jacques S. Gansler, William Lucyshyn, and John Rigilano, *Toward a Valid Comparison of Contractor and Government Costs*, (College Park, MD, 2011).

depending on whether they serve the U.S. military or a 'weaker' foreign force.<sup>25</sup> This author's research has traced in depth the balance of interests in the policy process and the potential impact of outsourcing on the government's workforce, identifying a strong "bias towards business" of the entire process and defence enterprise, as well as some potentially problematic aspects of seeking a private sector career after government service.<sup>26</sup> Assured service delivery has not yet become a dramatic problem, and – as the point on dependency already indicated – cost comparisons are often no longer of key relevance (or even possible) given the absence of choice regarding whether to outsource or not in light of industry's ownership of intellectual property rights and technologies and the often low numbers (or even absence) or competitors. Rather, it is rapidly becoming increasingly less feasible and accurate to divide public from private workforces as the formal integration of the support workforces into a joint defence logistics enterprise accelerates.<sup>27</sup>

Molly Dunigan's article similarly treads some familiar ground first before offering insights into the newest trends of U.S. contracting after the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as its implications for regulating the security industry.<sup>28</sup> Given the massive scale of contracting during the conflicts – contractors outnumbered regular troops in both areas of operation for many years – and the understanding that neither conflict was the exemplar of the most likely next deployments, the question of what comes 'after Iraq and Afghanistan' has been a pressing one for industry, government, and academia. Dunigan offers several answers to this question. She presents the evolving considerations behind the outsourcing of security functions on deployed operations by the U.S. military, departing from what was the case during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to the changed, current drivers and areas of military outsourcing, and closes with prospects for strengthened regulatory efforts during the current lull in contracting.

Dunigan surveys U.S. Department of Defense statistics to show a decline in absolute numbers of contractors across the spectrum of services. The contracts that remain are

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<sup>25</sup> Ulrich Petersohn, "Effectiveness of Contracted Coalitions: Private Security Contractors of Iraq," *Armed Forces & Society* 39:3 (2013): 467-488, and Molly Dunigan, *Victory for Hire: Private Military Companies' Impact on Military Effectiveness* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 153-154.

<sup>26</sup> Mark Erbel, "The Politics of Outsourcing Military Support Services," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Outsourcing Security: The Role of the Market in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Warfare*, eds. Christopher Kinsey and Joakim Berndtsson (Farnham: Ashgate, forthcoming in 2015), and Erbel, *Contractors and Defence Policy-Making*, chapter 6.

<sup>27</sup> The key developments here are the development of the "Total Support Force" in the UK, which unites military and contractor workforces in one force structure for support to deployed operations, as well as the – in development – "Joint Logistics Enterprise" in the USA which closely resembles the UK's construct. See UK Ministry of Defence, *Contractor Support to Operations. Tiger Team Final Report* (2010); and U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Operation of the Logistics Enterprise in Complex Emergencies* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> Molly Dunigan, "The Future of US Military Contracting: Current Trends and Future Implications," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 510-524.

smaller and often serve to replace U.S. troops after their withdrawal. Their tasks accordingly comprise in particular diplomatic security – which in Iraq was delivered by approximately 5,000 private contractors with their own air fleet after the United States’ withdrawal – but also training, advisory, and security sector reform services (which, it should be noted, already during the wars were in their majority provided by contractors). Dunigan aptly picks out one U.S. Army programme that encapsulates that move, Building Partner Capacity (BPC).<sup>29</sup> It is representative of the U.S. government’s appreciation that it “cannot kill or capture its way to victory”, in the words of former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates,<sup>30</sup> and that trying to do so is not only operationally flawed, possibly politically unviable (thereby confirming the point made by Kinsey regarding some of the political imperatives underlying outsourcing), but also financially untenable. Dunigan outlines convincingly how especially in Africa, through the training of peacekeepers and other forces, the U.S. is maintaining a presence without or with only very few boots on the ground. She thereby confirms other research that identified this strategic motivating factor in past outsourcing of such functions, for instance in the Balkans and Liberia.<sup>31</sup> Also, industry has understood this trend and reoriented its efforts accordingly in recent years.<sup>32</sup>

The article suggests that (a probably very small part of) the shortfall in government contracts is compensated for by the growing contract volumes from non-state customers, in particular opening up the private-private and non-state—private nexus involving humanitarian organisations, private businesses (in particular natural resource companies), and private security companies. These topics are garnering a more sustained interest among a new ‘wave’ of researchers,<sup>33</sup> and Dunigan’s article further underscores the importance of the use of security contractors entirely beyond the remit of the state and thus its examination by academics well into the future.

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<sup>29</sup> See Erbel, *Contractors and Defence Policy-Making*, chapter 5, for more details on outsourcing of BPC-related and similar services.

<sup>30</sup> Robert M. Gates, “A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age.” *Foreign Affairs* 88:1 (2009): 28–40, at 29.

<sup>31</sup> Marcus Mohlin, *The Strategic Use of Military Contractors: American Commercial Military Service Providers in Bosnia and Liberia, 1995-2009* (Helsinki: Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu, Strategian laitos, 2012), 226.

<sup>32</sup> See Sandra I. Erwin, “After a Decade at War, ‘Soft Power’ Industry Returns to Its Roots.” *National Defense – the NDIA’s Business and Technology Magazine*, <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=743> (accessed November 15, 2014).

<sup>33</sup> See e.g. Birthe Anders, “Tree-Huggers and Baby-Killers: The Relationship between NGOs and PMSCs and its Impact on Coordinating Actors in Complex Operations.” *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 24, no. 2 (2013): 278–294, and Birthe Anders, *Contracting for Security in the Humanitarian Space. A study on the relationship between NGOs and PMSCs* (PhD Dissertation, King’s College London, 2014).

In an outlook on the future, Dunigan closes the article with a somewhat sharp turn towards opportunities for regulation which may impact the as yet tentative trend in contracting outlined earlier. While the article argues convincingly that such a lull presents a strong opportunity to forge ahead with regulatory practice and tidying up the international patchwork of various regulatory schemes (presumably because, for once, it does not have to catch up with events on the ground), the expected impact on future contracting is not really discussed. Also, while the conclusion about the reduced prospects for support service contracting is certainly true insofar as the fewer and much smaller U.S. deployments for the foreseeable future are concerned, many of the contracts the article cites – such as BPC-related work – in fact contain significant support elements for the delivery, installation, operation, and maintenance of equipment for the various partners' armed forces.<sup>34</sup> Thus, even though these contracts are politically BPC-related, the implications for the future of the support services industry are not as dire as the overall trend may have suggested at first glance.

Christopher Spearin's article on Canada's use of contractors in Afghanistan and beyond and Joakim Berndtsson's article on Sweden's rapidly expanding contractorization cover a similar range of questions as Kinsey and Dunigan – types, causes, evolution, and implications of contracting – but do so in reference to two much-less studied country cases.<sup>35</sup> Together, they enable scholars to compare existing findings with cases that are both similar to and different from the predominantly studied cases of the U.S. and the UK. Both are Western, advanced economies. Canada is a founding member of NATO, while Sweden – despite a history of neutrality – belongs to the Western camp. Both were engaged in Afghanistan, though Canada was much more deeply involved in heavy combat operations. Most importantly, both are much smaller states in terms of population, the armed services, and the scope of global military deployments than the U.S. and also the UK, with Canada larger than Sweden. Overall, this enables scholars to plot them along a spectrum and test assumptions about the drivers and scope of military outsourcing that depend on the size and scope of a country's armed forces, economy, the role of its defence industry in supplying the armed forces, and military commitments.<sup>36</sup>

Spearin argues that contingency contracting in Canada was about the sustainability of a small military's operation in a distant theatre of war. Spearin's article implies that Canada's long history of relying on military contractors – not unlike that of the U.S. and the UK – developed from choice to necessity on a similar trajectory that saw the Canadian forces

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<sup>34</sup> See Erbel, *Contractors and Defence Policy-Making*, chapter 5.

<sup>35</sup> Christopher Spearin, "Canada and Contracted War: Afghanistan and beyond," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 525-541; Joakim Berndtsson, "Realizing the 'Market-State'? Military Transformation and Security Outsourcing in Sweden," *International Journal* 69:4 (2014): 542-558.

<sup>36</sup> Erbel, *Contractors and Defence Policy-Making*, chapters 5 and 6 identify how the US and UK reacted differently to overstretch and resource constraints due to their different sizes. For instance, the UK focuses its defence dollars much more directly on the immediate benefit of its own forces, whereas the US spends considerably to the primary benefit of its partners, allies, and defence industry.

move from formalising outsourcing in vehicles such as the Canadian Forces Contractor Augmentation Program (CANCAP), similar to the Logistics Civilian Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) in the U.S and Contractor Logistics (CONLOG) in the UK, that facilitate but do not mandate outsourcing especially in stable environments, towards a situation where contractors are more deeply integrated into the force structure up to the ill-defined front line of contemporary conflicts. Spearin not only confirms that equipment acquisition now usually includes a sizeable contractor component for training, support, operations, and maintenance, but also that security contracting very practically followed along the lines of Petersohn's findings in that the Canadian government in practice went to great lengths to demonstrate the defensive rather than offensive nature of these contracts. Similarly, Spearin shows that the political imperative of small military footprints, demonstrated by Kinsey to increase the propensity to outsource in the UK, equally applies in Canada. In this context, Spearin reveals how this also meant that the Canadian military gradually expanded the scope of contractor involvement to include ever more non-combat functions. Canada is also shown to be one of the states pushing ahead with regulating the industry in the spirit of the Montreux Document, suggesting that the country may be yet another valuable case study in the fortification of the narrower anti-mercenary norm through international regulation. The article closes, not unlike the others, with the tentative identification of concerns on oversight, accountability, and state autonomy in constructing security. Here it would have been useful to have pointed to other states' experience with these very concerns to suggest the likely direction of travel in Canada, whose trajectory of contracting out military responsibilities displays significant similarities with that of the U.S. and UK.<sup>37</sup>

Berndtsson's article is conceptually convincing, clearly structured and argued, and rounds up the special issue well by concluding some of the arguments discussed above. Sweden's case allows the analyst to observe, in a compressed timeline, the entire past, present, and likely future trajectory of military outsourcing. Berndtsson centres his analysis on Sweden's "transition from the nation-state to the 'market-state'," (545) thereby providing a direct conceptual link to Kinsey's article that focuses on the UK's embrace of neoliberalism since the 1980s, as well as placing his analysis within wider, general trends towards security fragmentation, privatisation, devolution of functions to the private sector, and the delinking of the state from security activities in Europe and the West.

Berndtsson argues convincingly that the rapidly expanding practice of military outsourcing in Sweden is closely tied to the wider transformation of the Swedish state from the ideal-typical national welfare state to a neoliberal market state. Interestingly, Berndtsson also points out that Sweden's strategic posture has shifted considerably since the 1990s. The country had "long been a loyal contributor to traditional 'Blue Helmet' peacekeeping missions" but has more recently been showing "an increased political willingness ... to commit Swedish military forces to international expeditionary operations" such as in the enforcement of a no-fly zone over Libya in 2011 or the country's troop contributions to ISAF in Afghanistan since 2002. (549) The country also cancelled conscription, outsourced logistics support, and – an important but often neglected factor – privatized its defence

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, chapters 3-6.



industry. Together, the three last actions mean that a smaller professional force was supplied by companies from the international marketplace, closely resembling the UK's attempts to bridge the divide between resources and strategic commitments since the 1960s.<sup>38</sup> He concludes convincingly that reversing these developments – i.e. insourcing – is unlikely precisely because military outsourcing is part of a much wider transformation of how Sweden conducts its business and makes policy more generally, i.e. also beyond the defence enterprise, and because there is thus no political interest in turning back the tide. As other research shows, the longer the status quo remains unchallenged, the more insourcing will gradually fall outside the political agenda, while politicians will work towards *improving*, not fundamentally challenging or reversing outsourcing.<sup>39</sup> The gradual formalisation of outsourcing and the nascent integration of contractors into the Swedish defence enterprise and force structure – similar to the other countries studied here – is testament to that.

While these developments are well captured by the market-state paradigm, the reader is left wondering about the underlying causes of these shifts and their interrelation. Was logistics outsourced simply as a result of buying into the market-state paradigm, or did the growing military commitments create a gap between resources and commitments? Similarly, why did Sweden's grand strategic posture change? Was it part of a more assertive European policy, a result of the end of the Cold War, or maybe an indication that – for Sweden – buying more heavily into the market-state paradigm entailed taking on a more active role within the international system whose operating principles are heavily determined by market principles? How stable is this strategic shift?

Overall, the special issue is testament to the strong influence of P.W Singer, Deborah Avant, Kinsey, and Krahmman. Their work on the newest wave of military outsourcing focuses most consistently on security contracting by the U.S. and the UK (bar Kinsey), and identifies numerous issues of state control over force and civil-military relations. Explicitly or implicitly, their work centred on the distinction between (formerly) public and private spaces, responsibilities, and practices. The articles in this special issue both conform to this view, at times hinting at a number of known concerns, but also take steps in other directions. Kinsey's examinations of logistics are important reminders of this domain's possibly superior relevance to and generalizability for the phenomenon of military service contracting as opposed to the 'sexier' outsourcing of security functions.<sup>40</sup> Dunigan's article takes an important step beyond the use of contractors in the active warzones in Iraq and Afghanistan to separate the temporary from the longer-term of those experiences. Spearin and Berndtsson offer valuable introductions to and overviews of much less studied country

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid, chapter 3.

<sup>39</sup> See Erbel, "Politics of Outsourcing."

<sup>40</sup> See also Mark Erbel and Christopher Kinsey, "Privatizing Military Logistics: Considerations and Implications of Outsourcing the Supply of War in the 21st Century," in *Routledge Handbook of Private Security Studies*, eds. Anna Leander and Rita Abrahamsen (Abingdon: Routledge, forthcoming in 2015).



cases that enable scholars to test some of their assumptions that were derived from the large states of the U.S., UK, and sometimes Germany, in reference to smaller states. Petersohn, finally, further strengthens our understanding of how and why PMSCs are not (or no longer considered) mercenaries.

Future research now faces the challenge of how to benefit from and capitalise on the existing wealth of knowledge which has been put on display here while simultaneously moving beyond the concerns of the foundational texts of this area of research, i.e. without throwing the baby out with the bath water. Scholars should sustain the surging interest in new domains, from post-colonial, gender, and sociological perspectives on security contracting to the politics of military-service contracting.<sup>41</sup> Also, the literature should expand on the strategic element of contracting and place the phenomenon more clearly within the discipline of international relations and security. For instance, this author's ongoing research asks to what extent BPC-style efforts can be understood as parts of an imperial grand strategy within a capitalist world order. The literature should also devote more attention to country cases that do not share as many contextual characteristics with the U.S. and the UK that basically apply to each of the four states examined in this special issue (political economy, security environment, alliances, joint operations [ISAF], joint defence-industrial research, development, production, and acquisition). In other words, states outside NATO such as Brazil, Russia, China, India, Jordan, and Israel, which do not share most of these characteristics but have sizeable defence enterprises and industries, would provide a strong test of the causal relationships between strategy, economics, industry, and ideology and military contracting.<sup>42</sup> The same applies to 'weaker' states that may rely more existentially on industry's capabilities and services. More fundamentally still, scholars are encouraged to revisit and possibly overcome the still-strong public-private dichotomy around which debate is organised despite some reasons to go beyond it, for instance the merger of forces and interests that question the viability, feasibility, and accuracy of this divide into the future.<sup>43</sup> In other words, in the first instances, scholars should start using different paradigms when studying the 'old' cases, or begin with the old

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<sup>41</sup> See e.g. Paul Higate, "'Cowboys and Professionals': the Politics of Identity Work in the Private and Military Security Company," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 40:2 (2012): 321-341, Amanda Chisholm, "The Silenced and Indispensable: Gurkhas in Private Military Security Companies," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 16:1 (2013): 1-22, Alison Hawks, "I've Got Soul but I'm not a Soldier", *St Antony's International Review* 9:2 (2014): 71-88, and this author (cited above).

<sup>42</sup> At the time of writing, the following book containing chapters on various Latin American, East European (including Russia) states, Afghanistan, and China was not yet published and therefore could not be included in this review. Given the authority of the contributing authors and editors (three of whom contributed to the special issue reviewed here) it promises to make an important contribution in the spirit of the argument made above. See Molly Dunigan, Ulrich Petersohn, *The Markets for Force: Privatization of Security Across World Regions* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).

<sup>43</sup> For a critical-theoretical appraisal of dying, soldiers, and mercenaries that transcends the established public-private divide see Malte Riemann, "Conceptualising the Dichotomy between Private Military Contractors and Soldiers amid 'Society'." *Political Perspectives* 8:3 (2014): 1-15.

paradigms when studying 'new' cases in order to cumulate the body of knowledge on the use of private military and security companies.