3   The dynamics of "private" security strategies
     and their public consequences: transnational
     organizations in historical perspective

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It is commonly accepted that states – assumed to be public authorities – control violence and provide security to their citizens. But over the last twenty years the relationship between states, security, and the public has veered from this conception. A variety of actors – from extractive sector companies to humanitarian aid organizations to private military and security companies (PMSCs) – have generated security for themselves and sometimes others. Looking back through history reveals that this departure is not as unusual as it seems. Transnational organizations seeking to make money or seeking to "help" have secured themselves and their goals for centuries and their actions have been critical to understanding the dynamics of controlling violence and its relationship to what is seen as public.

What "public" means, what should be protected, and what violent practices are considered appropriate have varied over time and place in ways that contest the conventional wisdom. In what follows, we draw from secondary accounts to examine the relationship between Western profit-seeking, helping, and ruling organizations in the management of violence during nineteenth-century imperial expansion, late nineteenth-century modernity, the Cold War, and contemporary global governance. Using examples from these four moments, we illustrate how security practices have had consequences for what counts as public, who is part of the public, and which processes are deemed to be public in the management of violence.[1]

Practices, authority, and relationships

Rather than assuming that states are the dominant actors and the repository for all things public in the management of violence, we ask about

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[1] What constitutes security has been debated. Traditionalists have argued that it is wrapped up in the management of violence (Nye and Lynn-Jones 1988; Walt 1991) while others have suggested it can be attached to such things economic and environmental well-being (Buzan 1991; Mathews 1989). We do not take a position in this debate but here use the term security as defined more narrowly as the management of violence. See Best and Gheciu (Chapter 2, this volume) for a fuller description of these categories of public practice.

what practices different actors have had in security over time. If public practices are activities that reflect a societal understanding about common concerns, as Best and Gheciu argue (Chapter 2, this volume), then security is the quintessential arena in which to examine whether public practices have indeed changed because security always is assumed to be a common concern. Grounded in concern with contemporary changes, we focus on organizations that travel to other territories – either to make money or to help – and their interaction with rulers and communities. We attend to what choices these organizations make when faced with violence and what their practices tell us about the meaning of the public and the role of the state in security affairs.

We assume a relationship between how an organization gains authority and how we should expect them to behave (Avant, Finnemore, and Sell 2010). We define authority as the ability to induce deference in others. Authority is thus a social relationship, not a commodity.[2] It is created by recognition, even if only tacit or informal, by others. Generating deference (or gaining authority) confers power – having followers allows authorities to exert greater influence than would otherwise be the case. But the basis on which followers defer also constrains the authority. If their actions do not accord with the basis on which their followers defer, the legitimacy of the authority may be questioned and they may lose deference.

There are different bases of authority. In the stories we tell below, for instance, the King of England gains authority on the basis of his claim to be the sovereign – a claim that is tied to his embodiment of a nascent conception of the public. Both missionaries and then NGOs were accorded deference in the West because they represented ideals congruent with accepted norms in Western societies. British chartered companies were delegated authority by the Crown in order to pursue British interests abroad. And contemporary transnational corporations gain authority by virtue of their capacity to effectively provide outcomes (Avant, Finnemore, and Sell 2010).

Many actors rely on more than one source for their authority. Contemporary NGOs, for example, rely not only on their claim to represent ideals but also on their expertise and ability to accomplish goals. Claims to authority on the basis of ideals generate authority among individual contributors and the activist community, while claims to expertise and capacity matter more to donors. When different bases of authority work in tandem, they can lead to a greater amount of deference among a

Our definition draws on Barnett and Finnemore 2004 and our analysis here on Avant, Finnemore, and Sell 2010. See also Raz 1990.

wider audience. Many NGOs grew more powerful during the 1990s as their authority increased among activists, donors, and the general public. Different bases of authority can also lead to tensions, though, if the actions accord with one basis of authority but conflict with another. For instance, the compromises necessary for NGOs to be effective, particularly in the midst of violence – competing for donor money, providing services to particular groups and not others – have sometimes been seen to conflict with the ideals they represent (Avant 2004; Cooley and Ron 2002; Stein 2011).

The imperative to retain authority can be a source of behavioral change when the bases of authority conflict, when efficacy is undermined by failure, and when multiple actors seek to become authoritative over the same areas of concern. Tensions among different bases of authority are an important source of change. For instance, when a corporation is delegated authority to address humanitarian concerns but the goals of helping and profiting conflict, the organization must find some way to reconcile these. The organization may need to make new authority claims, cultivate different constituencies, ally with other authorities, or come up with new ideas. A related source of change is failure. In most cases followers defer to authorities not because of their claims alone but because the claims are related to achieving goals. Failure to make progress, particularly when lack of progress generates violence, is a particularly significant source of change. Tensions between different authorities whose work overlaps can be a source of failure, as competition between them undermines their ability to achieve their goals (Avant, Finnemore, and Sell 2010).

Through our examination of who defers to what claims on security issues over time and why, we uncover changes in who is part of the public, what part of managing violence counts as public, and what processes are deemed public. Our main argument is with the conventional wisdom that casts the state as the unchanging representation of the public and exclusive manager of security. By demonstrating changes in the role of the state and the meaning of public, and by establishing the role of non-state actors in these changes, we cast doubt on this widespread assumption.

The trajectory of change we uncover also reveals difficulties with the private authority approach to understanding governance. The separation of actors into the categories of "private" and "public" is not helpful when nominally private organizations act on behalf of the state, or when different types of actors provide protection for the benefit of an entire community and not just a part of it. Once they claim to be pursuing public goals, it becomes problematic to characterize them as "private"

actors. Thinking of the public as a set of social practices allows us to more accurately chart the various public logics over time.

We examine the last two centuries to capture a broad sweep of time. Demonstrating the way in which non-state actors have been involved in security historically, and the degree to which states have pursued narrow interests, challenges the assumption that states alone provide security as a matter of common concern. Examining instances in which transnational actors generate security also provides insight into contestations over what is public in (often contested) transnational public spaces. The public is sometimes defined relative to the home society of these organizations, other times to the local society in which they are embedded, and occasionally relative to a transnational public.[3] Our selection of specific instances is meant to be illustrative, not representative, and is largely based on the secondary record, and our reinterpretation of well-known cases comes from a practice-oriented perspective.

As we begin our examination, we see vestiges of the Crown as the embodiment of the body politic, reflecting remnants of sovereignty's origins in the western divine right of kings (Philpott 1995). Practices among Western states at the beginning of the nineteenth century reflected increasing concentration of authority in the hands of the Westphalian state, but only hazy distinctions between public and private. The state and the Crown were not completely distinguishable, which left little logic for differentiating between actions taken for the Crown's personal desires and those that were in the state's interests. What we think of today as "private" actors often were associated with the Crown (e.g. chartered companies) or represented values accepted by the Crown (e.g. missionaries). What constituted state interests or "public" in actions abroad was often the glory or financial gain of the Crown. A loose association between the state and the management of violence was apparent. Thus when royal authorities joined forces with others during this era and delegated authority to act on their behalf abroad, it often included using violence if necessary.

What we understand as the conventional wisdom came into being among Western states at the end of the nineteenth century and reached its height during the Cold War, spreading beyond the West to become taken for granted in many parts of the world (Abrahamson and Williams 2011, 310). During this time the modern state consolidated its authority

[3] See Best and Gheciu (Chapter 2, this volume). Critical theory tends to associate the public with a domestic sphere in a Westphalian state-system, but we find some evidence of a transnational public sphere, particularly in the contemporary era; see Fraser 2007; Ruggie 2004.

over violence concomitant with the construction of separate public and private spheres. By the end of the nineteenth century deference to rulers as the embodiment of the public by their subjects was gone in the West. Instead many rulers claimed to be public authorities because they represented the collective interest of their citizens, which entailed a monopoly over the management of violence. The management of violence was seen as public, public was associated with the state, and states took on responsibility for protecting their citizens both at home and abroad (Thomson 1994).

During this time, there emerged clearly differentiated roles and behavior for actors on the basis of whether they were designated public (part of the state) or private (not part of the state) in the security realm. Control over violence was reserved for state actors and often assumed to be in the national (public) interest. In Western states, security practices were embedded within a public sphere dominated by liberal values of deliberation, participation, publicity and transparency (Fraser 2007). Who and what got protected was determined by who had rights within the domestic system. Both commercial organizations and humanitarians generally deferred to state authority (the state where they operated, the state from which they hailed, or rebels seeking control of the state) to protect them from violence or authorize the use of violence on their behalf.

In the first decade of the post-Cold War era another rearticulation of security and the public began. The exclusive association of public with the state, and the state with security, began to break down. The relationship between security and the public, however, remained and strengthened in many spaces. As non-state actors adopted security practices deemed relevant to the public they also became subject to demands that they respect public values – to operate through deliberative, participatory, and transparent processes and to respect the rights of those affected by their actions. This change has opened space for actors previously labeled "private" to play "public" roles, potentially transforming the modern relationship between states, security, and the public. A pattern of discourse that has separated the meaning of the public from the state has also enabled claims that to be legitimately sovereign, states must also be responsive to public concerns, expressed in arguments about the responsibility to protect.[4] By implication, the meaning of public has begun to shift to what an actor does (respect public norms) rather than who they are (part of a state or not).

[4] See Evans and Sahnoun 2002; also http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility.shtml.

In the following sections, we elaborate on this brief summary. By examining who defers to whom, for what ends, and on what basis we shed light on the changing security practices of Western transnational commercial and humanitarian organizations relative to states and the different visions of the public they animate.

Transnational security in historical perspective

In the early nineteenth century, trading companies sought out contact with distant peoples to trade goods and gain access to raw materials. At the same time, missionaries seeking either to serve the needs of their brethren, or convert people who were not Christian, made contact with peoples in far-off lands (Etherington 2005). Though neither chartered companies nor missionaries had inherently violent missions, the pursuit of their goals often caused others to react violently. These organizations adopted different security practices that reflected their constituencies and relations with other authorities. We illustrate our points here by examining transnational missionary and business enterprises based in Britain.

Chartered companies were, as the name implies, authorized by royal charter. The British Crown delegated areas of foreign policy to the company. It did this due to the capacities of these organizations to carry out commercial ventures. Delegated authority plus successful performance gained the deference of those they traded with. If deference waned and violence erupted, though, these companies sometimes raised military forces in their own defense.

Missionary organizations were less clearly authorized by the British government. Instead, missionary groups gained authority from their constituents in Britain due to their work on behalf of religious and humanitarian goals. Reflecting norms prominent in Western societies at the time, they were taking on the "white man's burden," and civilizing barbarous lands.[5] But they also gained deference from those they were attempting to "help" when they successfully carried out their religious and humanitarian works. Their authority among local populations resulted from their capacity to provide valuable services, and links to other Western actors. If deference was not forthcoming, missionaries rarely raised arms but instead allied with others for defense.

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[5] Rudyard Kipling's poem, "The White Man's Burden" was published in *McClure's Magazine* in 1899 and was seen as justifying cultural "development" of non-Western societies.

Commercial organizations: from chartered monopolies to imperial rule

The precursors to modern corporations were companies founded through the delegation of royal authority via grant or charter, starting in the sixteenth century (Carlos and Nicholas 1988). Companies such as the British East India Company promised profits while simultaneously extending the Crown's reach. Pursuing the Crown's interest was, in some sense, public. By obtaining a Royal Charter, these companies acquired delegated authority and exerted influence over what was considered "public" in Britain, and extended this abroad. Reflecting an association between sovereignty and controlling violence, this delegated authority extended to the raising of military forces when necessary.

Consider the British East India Company, which first began operations in 1601. It had a Royal Charter which awarded it a monopoly on trade with the East, but as a joint-stock company it did not rely solely on royal coffers to support its operations. It was neither public nor private in the modern sense of these terms. Through its Royal Charter, it had authority to operate around the world as a representative of the interests of its shareholders (primarily members of the ruling class). It could pursue its own interests, which were seen as congruent with those of the Crown.

The company's response to hostility (from local communities and colonial competitors) was to raise its own armed forces. It also could call upon British forces to help. Indeed, its ability to rely on the British state for reinforcement was one key to its success relative to the Dutch and other chartered companies (Winius and Vink 1991). After extinguishing its European rivals in India, the company built a local army as an instrument for defense and territorial control, revenue collection, policing, and pacification of local populations (Bowen 2006). In subduing much of India, the Company took advantage of its ambiguous status. It successfully emphasized its sovereign authority (rather than its delegated quality) when it wished to avoid contractual debts to local rulers, but asked for protection by British military forces when it needed to, putting itself clearly under the Crown's wing (McLean 2003).

Over time, it became difficult for the Company to balance relationships with the Crown, the Parliament (which was gaining political influence), its board of directors, and local rulers. By the mid-nineteenth century, all of the Company's bases of authority – its ties to the Crown, its expertise and capacity, and its claims to represent the public interest – were under assault. The financial costs of administering the huge Indian Territory threatened failure, which was a concern for the board of directors and the Crown (Brown 2009; Litvin 2003). The growing power of Parliament relative to the state, and its openness to new voices,

allowed for a redefinition of the British public interest. New interests ranged from claims from rival companies wanting a piece of the monopoly, to increasingly vocal outrage from religious groups arguing the government had a responsibility to the welfare of citizens both at home and abroad (Litvin 2003; Bowen 2006).

Parliament reacted by establishing more oversight of the Company, claiming sovereignty for the British Crown over the lands the Company controlled, and opening India to missionaries (Litvin 2003). The Indian Rebellion in 1857 demonstrated the degree to which the Company had lost authority among the local population. Arguing for a national (public) interest in maintaining control over Indian territories, the British government established direct dominion in 1858, took over its military forces, and dissolved the Company in 1874.

The security practices of the British English East Company responded to the violence it encountered as it pursued overseas trade. The Company drew upon its own capacity and called on the British state to support it. These practices incrementally evolved in response to more violence and were taken for granted until they began to fail. The more the Company called upon the state to defend it from violence, the less it was imbued with public authority.

Missionary organizations and imperial expansion

There was an explosion of Christian missionaries and mission societies in the nineteenth century (Etherington 2005), including the London Missionary Society (mixed denominations). These missionaries aimed to help foreigners by saving souls. Their authority in western societies was based on their service to God, and delegated to them by various churches.

Missionary organizations had a less structured relationship with the Crown than chartered companies did. The London Missionary Society's administrative structure at one point, for instance, relied on the work of salaried officials such as the Home Secretary and the Foreign Secretary.[6] But this society could by no means be equated with the British government and received little aid or support from the Crown in its early years. Even those who equate missionary work with imperialism acknowledge that it was often imperialism that followed missionaries rather than the reverse (Dachs 1972).

In addition to seeking converts, missionaries sought to provide humanitarian aid: education, health care, and public works. This array of services, and the links they developed between local communities and

[6] See www.mundus.ac.uk/cats/4/251.htm.

their European supporters, provided a rationale for their authority among local populations. While they offered welfare benefits, they also aimed to transform the societies they ventured into, creating tensions between its bases of authority (Dachs 1972).

Violent reaction by local groups signaled rejection of their presence, their goals, and their authority. In an extreme example, John Williams's work on behalf of the London Missionary Society came to an abrupt end in 1839 when he was killed and eaten by cannibals on the island of Erromango.[7] To avoid such violence, missionaries often entered into agreements with local rulers who wanted access to goods and services, or they only entered territories with stable local rule (Comaroff and Comaroff 1986; Dachs 1972; Simensen 1986). The multiplicity of authorities in Africa meant there were a variety of security associations available to missionaries. For instance, missionaries in South Africa in the late nineteenth century could cooperate with various indigenous rulers, the Boers, the British South Africa Company, or other colonial authorities on the ground, or with the British imperial authorities in London.

The different choices of Joseph Ludorf and John Mackenzie in South Africa demonstrate this variety. In response to a violent land dispute generated by the discovery of diamonds at Hopetown in 1867, Reverend Ludorf urged indigenous local rulers to unite to form an independent confederation of Tswana states as the only way to avoid both Boer oppression and absorption into the British Empire. He saw protecting the Tswana from Boer enslavement, tribal wars, and unscrupulous freebooters as vital to the mission (Comaroff and Comaroff 1986). In contrast, John Mackenzie of the London Missionary Society endorsed imperial rule by the British, since he thought the colonial authorities on the ground were poor choices. Unlike his contemporaries, he saw the ultimate political solution as one where blacks would gain equal rights in a federated, non-racial South Africa (Comaroff and Comaroff 1986). London eventually established a protectorate in Bechuanaland and asked Mackenzie to become the resident Deputy Commander.

Mackenzie's story has led some to argue that missionaries were simply an arm of imperialism (Dachs 1972). This equation, however, misses the fissures within Britain itself, and between imperialists in London and colonists on the ground. It also misses the degree to which Mackenzie saw himself – at least at first – as representative of the black public in southern Africa rather than the white public in London (Comaroff and Comaroff 1986).

[7] See www.mundus.ac.uk/cats/4/251.htm.

Pursuing religious and humanitarian quests, missionaries from Britain unsettled the existing order, which led to violence. In the face of violence, they often joined forces with others who had violent capacities. They cast these alliances as consistent with their principles, religious or humanitarian, and thus in keeping with their basis of authority. Over the course of the century, missionaries made arguments that appealed to public notions as we define them in this volume; their civilizing mission was said to hold benefits for both Western and local publics. As alliances with local rulers, colonists, and even the British South Africa Company proved unable to provide these benefits or keep a lid on violence, missionaries such as Mackenzie sought – and thus contributed to – the extension of British imperial rule.

Like the chartered companies, British missionaries entered foreign lands in ways that disrupted existing societies. They sought out associations with others to enhance their security, but drew closer to the British state as other choices became less effective. The failure of both companies and missionaries to cap violence increasingly drew the British government into protecting their foreign investments and their Christian brethren abroad, leading to colonization and imperial rule. By the end of the century, the government was the primary source of security for its British commercial and humanitarian enterprises abroad, reinforcing the model of the state as protector of its citizens (Spruyt 2000; Thomson 1994). While the security practices adopted by chartered firms and missionaries affected common concerns in Africa, their "public" role was fragile and eventually overturned.

Transnational security in the twentieth century

At the turn of the century, Western states consolidated control over violence. Non-state actors increasingly deferred to state authority in the security realm. At the same time a different relationship between rulers and ruled was developing. Sovereignty was no longer synonymous with personal rule by the Crown but, at least in some countries, a function of citizen participation (Bendix 1980). People within a territory were seen less as subjects to be ruled and more as citizens to be represented. With this came a greater rationale for distinguishing public interests from private ones (Elshtain 1981). The state came to be seen as the relevant public actor and control of legitimate violence as one of its key components.

In this context, appropriate behavior for transnational organizations in response to violence was more restricted. While firms could call on the state for protection, raising private armies was not seen as a legitimate activity. In the philanthropic world, humanitarians developed ways to

assist others without infringing on the authority of states by remaining neutral. What we now know as the International Committee of the Red Cross developed the principle of "acceptance," under which they could provide help to individuals even in the midst of war so long as they were accepted by all sides. "Purely commercial" and "neutral" became the claims necessary to legitimate the actions of profit seeking and helping organizations – now seen as private actors.

Commercial organizations dependent on states

By the end of the nineteenth century, modern multinational companies came to replace trading companies as the dominant form of overseas enterprise. These companies did not have the official delegation of authority given to the earlier chartered companies. Their authority was based on commercial success and the benefits that might accord to populations. As such, their actions were more restricted. If they met with violence, they called on a state for help – either their home country, or the host state in which they operated. In the early twentieth century the extension of security by Western states to their companies operating in the developing world was not particularly controversial. Over the course of the century, however, such "gunboat diplomacy" became less acceptable and companies relied more on their host states for security (Litvin 2003). The security practices of firms reinforced understandings of the public as associated with the state, even as they redirected their deference from home state to host states.

Security, the public, and corporate behavior intersected most obviously in the exploitation of oil around the globe. Western states endorsed the activities of multinational oil companies as tools for ensuring access to oil – a commodity vital for industrial growth and power (Sampson 1975; Yergin 2008). In return, governments increasingly facilitated access for companies to foreign supplies and, when violence erupted, provided security for oil companies. Though the relationship between states and companies was no less cozy than in the past century, states claimed a monopoly over violence and thus there was a greater division of labor between them.

The struggle between British and American firms over oil in Mexico is illustrative. The British company Aguila gained oil concessions in Mexico in 1910. Aguila developed close links with the Diaz regime, and assisted Diaz when he resigned from office and fled to France in the wake of revolutionary upheaval.[8] There is speculation that Standard

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[8] General José de la Cruz Porfirio Díaz Mori ruled Mexico with an iron fist beginning in 1877. He resigned and fled in 1911.

Oil, an American firm, may have helped the rebels as a way to get access to Mexican oil. As the Mexican Revolution unfolded, US and British oil companies vied for position, and drew in their respective governments as protectors. American officials believed that British policy in Mexico directly reflected their oil interests, and pursued policies that laid the foundation for an "oil war" between the USA and Great Britain after 1918, fostering increasing instability within Mexico (Venn 1986). This type of dynamic was repeated in other oil-rich areas of the world throughout the early twentieth century.

After World War II, American multinationals expanded their investments in the developing world, reflecting the increased global power of the USA. This was also the era when decolonization spread the Western model of the state. From the end of World War II to the 1980s, leaders of new states (or the rebel movements that fought them) saw their national interests differently than did western corporations and nationalized or expropriated foreign investments (Kobrin 1984; Moran 1973; Truitt 1970). The American state used its military to protect US firms as part of both Cold War balancing and for the security of American citizens abroad. The USA sought to maintain its hegemony, protect its national interests (which included cheap oil), and support US foreign investors. Local elites who wanted the economic benefits access to foreign investors brought often shared the perspective of the US government and US firms (Cardoso and Faletto 1979).

One of the best-known examples comes not from the oil sector, but from agriculture. In the post-World War II years, the United Fruit Company (now Chiquita Brands) developed strong ties to the US government, but protected its foreign investments mainly by allying with friendly dictators in Central America. The United Fruit Company played such a dominant role in the politics of many Latin American countries that they became known as "banana republics." The company professed to have only commercial interests – it did not create a private army, acquire territory, or take on administrative functions as the earlier chartered companies had.

The tension between United Fruit's political influence and commercial activities eventually led to changes. In Guatemala, the company supported an oppressive regime and local elites against a leftist reform movement. The Guatemalan government valued the ties the company had with the US government. As the reform movement became more threatening, the US government and disaffected local military leaders launched an anti-reform coup in 1954 that benefited company interests. During the civil war that followed, United Fruit relied on the local regime for security, with the specter of US intervention always a

possibility. Company security practices were tied to state interests, and an understanding of the public was synonymous with government.

By the 1970s, critics challenged the acceptability of US protection of corporate interests overseas. They argued that the US should not equate corporate concerns with the public interest nor trample on the rights of foreign publics. The relationship between the US intelligence community and US firms in the overthrow of Allende in Chile brought particular outrage, and led to congressional hearings in 1974. Thus began a weakening of the close security ties between the US government and American firms abroad.[9]

Throughout this era, companies declared a policy of staying within commercial bounds. Though their investments and ties with their home countries had political effects, they relied on states to manage violence on their behalf. The authority of states was tied to their sovereign claims, but just what was in the national (or public) interest was subject to pressure from a variety of domestic groups. In the USA, these pressures changed the articulation of the public interest, leading to less acceptance of government practices of providing security to foreign investors. Without state partners, companies had no legitimate claim to violent capacities and often chose to withdraw.

Missionary and humanitarian organizations

In the late nineteenth century, missionaries were joined in "helping" by specifically humanitarian organizations: the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and its affiliated national Red Cross societies. Its founders were inspired by religious faith similar to missionaries, but their claim to authority was derived from their humanitarian goals – they undertook to deliver humanitarian aid to soldiers wounded in battle, to civilize war.

The ICRC's aims drew humanitarians directly into war zones. Founder Henry Dunant and his colleagues appealed to the warring states and professed neutrality in order to gain safe access to the wounded. They argued it was in the interest of states to have their wounded cared for and that ensuring humane standards of treatment was a basic concern that united all human beings. If medical personnel confined their activities to humanitarian care and pledged to treat wounded soldiers from all sides, they posed no challenge to sovereign authority and could serve

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[9] International organizations such as the ILO and OECD developed codes of conduct for multinational corporations in the 1970s, revealing cracks in state–firm relations.

both national and humanitarian interests. The ICRC asked that states accept – and agree not to target – medical personnel on the battlefield.

This principle of neutrality reflected the primary role of states in controlling violence, but also distinguished a category of action for private actors to serve humanitarian needs even in the midst of war. Transnational organizations such as the ICRC did not rely on alliances with states nor did they acquire the means to use or repel violence themselves. Instead, they pursued what was called an "acceptance" strategy to establish roles in which private non-combatants were not to be targeted, even when they were on a battlefield. Practices of neutrality reinforced deference to state control of violence and the tie between states and security. By identifying rights to protection rooted outside of the state, it also laid the foundation for challenging the connection between the state and the public.

During the Cold War, many humanitarian organizations built explicitly on this acceptance strategy, including religious organizations such as the London Missionary Society (now the World Council of Churches), secular organizations including diverse NGOs, and United Nations agencies. Following the logic of the ICRC, they deferred to state control of violence but claimed authority on the basis of their worthy goals and their neutrality. Despite this pledged neutrality, many became recipients of donor government aid money as states delegated implementation of programs to NGOs.[10] In unstable areas, humanitarian organizations depended on local governments for security.

Concerns over violence were greatest in areas influenced by superpower rivalry. In Central America, for instance, Honduran camps housed refugees from US-backed regimes in El Salvador and Guatemala, as well as those fleeing the Soviet-backed Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Despite organizational charters that proclaimed neutrality, many NGOs aided one side over another and relied on that side for protection. Sometimes NGOs were used by governments for express political purposes. When the US Congress banned aid to the Contra guerilla forces in Honduras, President Reagan supported them covertly – one prong of which was mobilization of "private" American organizations in the guise of relief (Terry 2002). Even if they did not intend to, NGOs that assisted one side in a conflict were tainted by their choice. Those NGOs that

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[10] The Carnegie Corporation published a report in 1966 expressing concern about the future of the independent NGO. "Is the non-governmental organization of the future to be simply an auxiliary of the state, a kind of willing but not very resourceful handmaiden? Or is it to be a strong, independent adjunct that provides government with a type of capability it cannot provide for itself" (Pifer 1966).

supported the Nicaraguan refugees received considerable security protection from the US and the Honduran security forces. Those working with the other side were not protected, and suffered from violence against refugees and aid workers (Terry 2002). When violence became too great or their government patrons could not protect them, NGOs, like companies, withdrew.

Similar to multinational corporations, NGOs during the Cold War depended on governments for protection. Some NGOs were less comfortable than their corporate counterparts relying on this protection. Their commitment to neutrality was sometimes in considerable tension with goals that focused on matters of common concern, and thus could be construed as "public" even though they were not equated with states. Though NGOs were less likely to align themselves with national interests than corporations, they became conduits for government money in their pursuit of broad humanitarian or development goals. This laid the groundwork for what we investigate in the next section: the increasing association of NGOs and global civil society more generally with the "public."

At the beginning of the twentieth century, both commercial and humanitarian transnational actors generally relied on Western states for protection, but increasingly looked to their host states for protection too. Allying with these states (or rebels aiming to be states) was cast as deference to their authority over managing violence. Thus security practices generally reinforced the equation of the state with both the public and with security – an equation that would change by the beginning of the new century.

Transnational security in the contemporary era

Even during the Cold War there were changes affecting state authority and its relationship to the public. Globalization created economic links among peoples and increasing social and political ties. NGOs became prominent advocates for causes of common concern that spanned the borders of states, from opposition to nuclear weapons to the protection of human rights. The end of the Cold War amplified global economic and social connections. Both commercial and non-commercial actors sought to take advantage of the new-found freedom to move beyond the spheres of action defined by the rivalry between the USA and the Soviets. As in the past, however, the extension of commercial and humanitarian activities to new areas sometimes generated violence. Transnational corporations and NGOs found themselves operating in the midst of violence at the same time as their relationships with states

on security issues were increasingly complicated. Part of the complication was a change in attitudes toward states. Rather than assuming congruence between states and the public interest, attention focused on whether states were responsive to their citizens. This is most clearly articulated in the "Responsibility to Protect," a doctrine that imputes state responsibility to protect its people from violence, and an international responsibility to intervene when states fail in this duty (Evans and Sahnoun 2002). At the same time, more attention was focused on the security consequences of non-state behavior. Transnational activists questioned companies' claims to be purely commercial when their investments were associated with repressive local forces. Meanwhile, when opportunistic actors siphoned off humanitarian resources and used them to fund violence, critics also questioned the claim that humanitarians were neutral. As both commercial and humanitarian choices were seen to have political – and sometimes violent – consequences, their security practices were seen to have public import.

Both corporations and NGOs began experimenting with new practices to address violence and they adopted similar approaches. They sought to build relationships with an array of local and international stakeholders, and commit to processes that promised to reduce violence. In approaching security this way, both corporations and humanitarians increasingly associate their behavior with the public. By broadly engaging with many constituents both locally and globally, they reflected developing ideas about what is the public and helped redefine who counts as the public in particular situations. Their actions suggest a conception of the public as defined by what actors do rather than who they are – thus reconstituting what is public as process or action rather than as a particular actor or sphere (Gheciu and Best, Chapter 2, this volume).

Commercial organizations

In the 1990s, governments in the developing world welcomed foreign investors, reflecting a consensus on economic liberalization in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet model. We see the emerging set of corporate security practices this entailed clearly in the extractive sector. As demand for natural resources grew along with the world economy, extractive companies developed new sources that were located in areas beset by violence. They were welcomed for their financial resources, technical expertise, and links to global markets. Sometimes they relied on host governments for security but when host governments were incapable or unwilling, they allied with other local forces or even hired from the growing private security sector to manage force themselves.

Companies encountered increasing criticism for their association with repressive host governments. Observers argued that extractive resources created a "resource curse," leading to repression by local governments, intractable conflicts, and underdevelopement (de Soysa 2000; Karl 1997; Ross 1999). Transnational activists campaigned against companies that were allied with abusive regimes, arguing that they were indirectly complicit with the violent actions of the government (Spar 1998; Zandvliet and Anderson 2009).

Oil companies came under intense scrutiny for their security practices, with Shell Oil in Nigeria gaining particular notoriety. The unequal distribution of oil benefits along with devastating environmental consequences of oil extraction in the Niger Delta led to a "petro-movement" that incited rebellion and violence against the state and oil facilities. In the early 1990s, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People protested the devastation wrought by oil development. The Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha took steps to break up the movement, arrested the leadership, and in 1995 hanged the leaders for their activities (Frynas 1998; Litvin 2003). The result was an international outcry against Shell for not acting against the Abacha regime. In response, Shell undertook a worldwide campaign to engage with stakeholders, both transnationally with activists and locally with the communities where it worked. In 1998 it held regular meetings with key institutional investors to discuss non-financial issues such as human rights and the environment, and in the next year engaged with local communities in ninety-one countries.[11] The company also supported broader multi-stakeholder processes such as the United Nations' Global Compact and the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights.[12] Its efforts to rehabilitate its reputation, however, have not been successful among Nigerians or the wider international community.

Shell's reaction corresponded with the growth of a larger corporate social responsibility movement. Business leaders increasingly recognized the importance of a "social license to operate." (Zandvliet and Anderson 2009). Company claims to be "purely commercial" are not as well received today as they were during the Cold War. To avoid being cast as part of the problem, corporate leaders have tried to adopt new practices and negotiate new relationships that are more responsive to the public (Haufler 2001). This is particularly true in situations where states are unable or unwilling to accomplish what are taken to be public ends.

[11] See www.shell.com/home/Framework?siteId=home.   [12] Freeman 2002.

Humanitarian non-governmental organizations

Many NGOs also expanded their areas of operation after the Cold War. Western constituents continued to defer to them based on the values they represented, but they garnered delegated authority from Western states and other donors and began to develop expert authority over the delivery of services. The tension between their traditional neutral stance and their new authority bases became particularly acute in violent areas. Some NGO activities fed into violence even as they sought to address its consequences. Concerns about diversion of resources to support violent actors, NGO vulnerability to manipulation, and the safety of NGO workers led some humanitarians to revisit the acceptance strategy.[13] This revisiting took three main forms: (1) some NGOs reiterated their commitment to acceptance or withdrawal, (2) others endorsed taking sides either to ensure humanitarian space or protect human rights, and (3) some sought to develop practices that would allow NGOs to remain in the field while remaining true to the classic acceptance doctrine (Barnett and Snyder 2009). These approaches have different consequences for NGOs as public actors.

The third approach is interesting for its attempt to smooth over or reconfigure the authority tensions we identify above. These new practices caution against "politicization" or enmity in practice, and recommend that NGOs avoid taking a position as friend or foe. Instead, NGOs should develop a pragmatic plan to ensure their safety that rests on "dialogue with all actors involved in or affecting the outcome of a given situation of conflict…"[14] In the increasingly polarized environment of contemporary conflicts, NGOs sought to avoid either being rejected or instrumentalized.[15] Rejection was often a product of the perceived association between NGO staff and political entities. Instrumentalization occurred when humanitarian aid was siphoned off to support combatants, or when humanitarian language was adopted by militaries and governments in ways that blurred the lines between purely humanitarian and politically motivated actions (Krahenbuhl 2004). Rejection and instrumentalization both threatened to cut to the heart of NGO authority, which is to do good works in a way that is free from the political world of states.

The new security practices prompted by this rethinking were dubbed the "security triangle." They retained acceptance, but added protection and deterrence (Martin 1999; Van Brabant 1997). Those who advocated this approach also developed policies of security management to address both global issues and the interaction between an organization and other actors in the field. The ICRC was instrumental in these developments, as were a number of individual NGOs (including World Vision and CARE) and InterAction (a consortium of American NGOs).

Security practices of NGOs increasingly focus on engaging with all actors relevant to violence. They seek to gain the consent of belligerent parties (including government authorities), as well as developing a community stake in programs and increasing working relationships with other interested international actors. Advocates of this approach claim that the mission of an organization needs to be clear and transparent to facilitate both acceptance and a community stake in the project, and NGO personnel need to adjust their behavior to local perceptions (Anderson 1999; Van Brabant 1997).[16] Communication and information sharing is seen as important for ensuring good working relations with other organizations (Schafer and Murphy 2010).

The debate among humanitarians about appropriate security strategies continues today (Nordland 2010). Even among NGOs that adopt security triangle practices there are debates about what strategies to pursue in particular instances. Their practices, however, increasingly transform the meaning of security – associating it more closely with the public, but less closely with the state.

Though there are differences between the security practices of corporations and humanitarians, the language both use is strikingly similar: security for their "missions," engaging "stakeholders," coordinating with others through effective "management," being "transparent." These practices evoke a new conceptualization of the public not defined by who an actor is, but by how they act and whether their activities are in concert with public aims and in accordance with commonly recognized public processes.

Redefining public authority through security practices

This examination of the security practices of non-state organizations reveals the gradual shifting of practices from those that support and reinforce the equation of the state with the public, to patterns that have the potential to transform the public sphere in security affairs. Both humanitarian and business enterprises today seek to integrate local and

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[13] Interview with Michael O'Neill, Director of Security, Save the Children, Washington, D.C. August 15, 2006.
[14] Krahenbuhl 2004.
[15] Interview with Michael O'Neill, Director of Security, Save the Children, August 2006.

[16] Interview with Michael O'Neill, Director of Security, Save the Children, August 2006.

transnational communities into their deliberations, adopting practices of transparency and consultation. By doing so, they redefine the relevant publics from states and citizens in home countries, to people directly affected by their operations. This is captured by the increasing use of the "stakeholder" language in policy arenas. Security practices became a public issue, debated in global policy arenas and subject to an increasing array of international rules, norms, and laws. Both NGOs and companies today are held accountable for their security practices, and in response have adopted new practices that reflect the potential for a transnational public.

At the beginning of the history we examine, there was no distinctive boundary between public and private. Only over time did the state and private actors come to be viewed as operating in separate spheres. By the start of the twenty-first century, the public and private were once again merging – but in a new way, in which the state is no longer equated with the public. This may presage a transformation of the public through the manner in which security is provided – through transparent and accountable processes. What those who provide security do, rather than who they are, is increasingly important for organizations claiming to be acting on behalf of the public.

The interaction between profit-seeking, helping, and ruling organizations has been instrumental in constructing different meanings of the public over time. In the early years of the nineteenth century the violence caused by profit-seeking and helping organizations was an instigator of formal imperialism. As corporations and humanitarians deferred to states and their monopoly role in the management of violence in the twentieth century, they contributed to the solidification of the modern association of states and security. In the contemporary era, the efforts of corporations and NGOs to manage tensions in their respective bases of authority have led each to articulate security practices that support a new meaning of security – one that challenges the modern public/private divide (Avant 2007).

The distinctions between public and private in the security realm are not nearly so settled and uniquely focused on the state as traditional theorizing in international relations would have us think. A private authority approach cannot quite make sense of the trajectory we have described because as profit-seeking and helping organizations have appealed to public principles they have become less clearly "private." Instead, we find it more useful to examine the practices of both public and private in the security realm. We find these practices have shifted over time, and that profit-seeking, helping, and ruling organizations have played different roles at different times in influencing what counts as a public issue, who is part of the public, and what processes are deemed public.

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