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Beyond "Market" and "State" Feminism: Gender Knowledge at the Intersections of Marketization and Securitization

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This article assesses the implications of the shifting market-state relationship for feminism in the neoliberal era. In a case study of the private military and security industry as an actor that is uniquely positioned at the intersections of security governance and global markets, the analysis combines feminist security studies' critique of securitized gender discourses and feminist global political economy scholarship on corporate-led equality initiatives. Based on a critical discourse analysis of documents from industry and nongovernmental organizations, such as codes of conduct and policy recommendations, I argue that the discourses on gender put forward in the context of security privatization merge securitized and marketized discourses to the effect that the emancipatory potential of "gender" is further curtailed, raising new challenges for feminist knowledge in powerful organizations. The article thus contributes to the critical gender research on private security, debates on the neoliberalization and securitization of feminism, and the integration of feminist security studies and feminist global political economy.

Keywords: PMSCs, feminist knowledge, gender mainstreaming, feminist security studies, feminist global political economy, neoliberalization of feminism, private security, market-state relationship

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In the course of neoliberal restructuring, Western states have increasingly outsourced security functions associated with the state's monopoly on violence to private military and security companies (PMSCs) (Abrahamsen and Leander 2015; Abrahamsen and Williams 2011). As a result, PMSCs have grown into a global, multibillion-dollar industry with states and governments as their most important clients (Pingeot 2012, 14). Research has shown that security privatization is deeply gendered and constitutes a central element in the reconstruction of hierarchical gender relations in the neoliberal period (Chisholm 2014a, 2014b; Eichler 2013, 2014, 2015a, 2015b; Higate 2012; Joachim and Schneiker 2012b; Stachowitsch 2013; 2014; 2015). At the same time, PMSCs are beginning to make explicit concessions to gender equality in their codes of conduct and industry publications, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are advocating for the integration of a gender perspective into the industry.

This article contextualizes these industry and NGO approaches to gender and private security within widespread trends in both transnational business and global security to integrate gender mainstreaming and other equality initiatives into policy and business organizations. I start this contextualized analysis with a synthesis of feminist scholarship on global security governance and global political economy. By examining what happens when global security governance and business increasingly interact and overlap, this study contributes to (1) the critical gender research on PMSCs; (2) research on the securitization (Hansen 2000; MacKenzie 2009) and neoliberalization of feminism (Fraser 2013; Prügl 2015) as well as recent feminist reengagements with the concept of the co-optation (de Jong and Kimm 2017); and (3) the ongoing debate on (re)integrating feminist political economy and feminist security studies (Chisholm and Stachowitsch 2017b; Elias 2015).

I argue that gender discourses connect PMSCs to both "the market" and "global security" and thus are uniquely characterized by interactions between business rationales and global security framings. This combination further limits the emancipatory potential of gender knowledge, because it allows for the increasing convergence of political and corporate discourses. Hence, marketized security poses important questions for gender scholars with regard to whether and how to engage with new corporate actors in global governance.[1]

1. For this endeavor, it is necessary to refute a clear-cut distinction between "feminist" and "gender" knowledge. While the latter is assumed to be less critical and more open to organizational co-optation,

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The article is structured as follows: First, I review the research on feminist knowledge and its dissemination in global security and market contexts to highlight where this scholarship needs to be developed further with regard to the shifting state-market relationship in global security regimes. I explore feminist security studies and global political economy scholarship as particularly relevant for the case of private security. Second, I give an overview of the critical gender research on PMSCs and explain the significance of the case of private security for understanding the transformations of gender knowledge in neoliberal and securitized organizations. Third, I examine PMSC codes of conduct, articles in trade association journals, and "knowledge products" of NGOs, such as policy recommendations and "tools," for dominant gender discourses, that is, the prevalent problem definitions, rationales, and solutions presented with regard to gender issues. Finally, I conclude with an assessment of the challenges that feminist engagement with powerful security actors faces under the conditions of security privatization.

FEMINIST KNOWLEDGE IN POWERFUL SECURITY AND BUSINESS INSTITUTIONS: STATE OF THE ART

Extensive literatures have dealt with the inclusion, co-optation, successes, and failures of feminist knowledge, discourses, and practices in powerful organizations at the national and international levels (Bacchi and Eveline 2010; Bustelo, Ferguson, and Forest 2016; Çağlar, Prügl, and Zwingel 2013; de Jong and Kimm 2017; Hoard 2015; Prügl 2010; True 2003). For global governance, feminists have particularly recognized and critiqued the growing importance of gender discourse in the realm of global security and peacekeeping (Çağlar, Prügl, and Zwingel 2013). The United Nations (UN) women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda, which encompasses UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and

the former is usually defined through an understanding of gender inequalities as structural and systemic; the aim to be transformative of unequal power relations; a concept of knowledge as situated, plural, political, and contested; reflexivity and the recognition of multiple perspectives; and active engagement by feminist researchers, practitioners, and activists (Bustelo, Ferguson, and Forest 2016, 3ff.; see also Hoard 2015, 40). However, a rigid duality between "pure" and "co-opted" feminist knowledge has been found to be unsustainable (de Jong and Kimm 2017; Prügl 2011; Reeves 2012). While I do not wish to argue that PMSCs are "feminist" or that there is no difference between feminist and depoliticized gender discourses, I aim to show how different elements of feminist discourses are integrated into the discourses on gender and PMSCs and how this is an aspect of the contemporary transformations of feminism.

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seven subsequent resolutions, is central in calling for the integration of gender concerns into all aspects of security policy and conflict resolution.[2]

Feminist security studies (Sjoberg and Lobasz 2011; Wibben 2011) have explicitly gone beyond "a report on imperfect implementation" (Kirby and Shepherd 2016a, 374) and scrutinized the WPS agenda's wider gendered logics, discourses, and practices. Scholars have found that gender is becoming "securitized" in this context — a process through which masculinized, militarized, and state-centered definitions of "security" are promoted. These not only exclude but are detrimental to the security concerns of women and other marginalized groups (Enloe 1989; MacKenzie 2009; Tickner 1992; Wibben 2011). The deeper structural causes of inequality rooted in capitalism and (neo)colonialism (Pratt and Richter-Devroe 2011, 495) are often sidelined, leading to depoliticization of the gender-security nexus.

The literature highlights three discourses as particularly problematic in this regard. *First*, there are instrumentalist arguments for more women in security operations (e.g., as peacekeepers) and gender awareness training, which are both argued to improve operational effectiveness. These discourses promote essentialized images of women's unique qualities as peacemakers (Gibbings 2011; Reeves 2012) and largely see them as an "untapped resource" (Cohn 2008, 201) while leaving masculinist military cultures and structures unquestioned (Reeves 2012, 354). *Second*, there is a disproportionate focus on gender-based violence as the main gender-related security issue (True 2012), which leads to policy reorientation from empowerment to protection (Braunmühl 2013, 167) and obscures the intersections between gender and other structures of inequality (Shepherd 2011). *Third*, neocolonial discourses focus on the "Other," rendering the WPS agenda useful as a domination strategy and supporting the legitimacy of geopolitical hierarchies (Shepherd 2008; Pratt and Richter-Devroe 2011; Hudson 2012).

Despite these critiques, feminists have also concluded that the WPS agenda has had regulatory effects, that gender has been successfully integrated into security debates and operation directives, and that positive results are tenable in the establishment of gender statistics, training, efforts to recruit more women, gender units, advisers, and so on (Braunmühl 2013, 170). Feminists have thus remained committed to pointing out the conditions under which mainstreaming and WPS

2. See Kirby and Shepherd (2016b) for a detailed overview of the antecedents of the WPS agenda and the manifold debates on WPS.

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initiatives can be beneficial. Many foreground inclusion of feminist activists and NGOs as decisive (True and Parisi 2013; Walby 2005). Prügl suggests that gender experts cannot avoid the wielding of power (Prügl 2016, 30), but they can follow certain principles of ethical conduct. She identifies these principles as "rational deliberation across differences; noncoercion, equality and feminist social criticism; and reflexivity" (2016, 31ff.).

Feminists have also criticized the integration of gender into the business sector and managerial strategies, such as corporate social responsibility and diversity management, for their depoliticizing effects and legitimization of problematic business practices (Grosser and Moon 2005; Prügl 2011). These critiques have foregrounded the use of gender in corporate actors' legitimacy production, highlighting the danger of "stakeholder capture," a situation in which gender mainstreaming becomes a one-sided transfer of information, which companies use to claim legitimacy (Grosser and Moon 2005, 544). In the wake of recent and ongoing economic crises (Hozić and True 2016), for instance, corporate discourses on gender equality have been employed to restore the public image of capitalist (finance) institutions (Elias 2013; Prügl 2012, 2016; Roberts 2015; Roberts and Soederberg 2012; True 2016).

Aside from corporate initiatives, market logics are also enjoying increasing leverage within policy frameworks. This is most obvious in global economic governance organizations such as the World Trade Organization (Williams 2013), the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank (Bedford 2013; Calkin 2016), which have solidified the link between market-oriented strategies and the promotion of women's economic empowerment. At the national level as well, "state feminism" has transformed into a more market-oriented variant (Kantola and Squires 2012, 382). In global security institutions, too, the "neoliberal imperatives" of economic growth and competitiveness have become increasingly relevant and combined with a militarized focus on state security (Krook and True 2012, 121).

Recent global political economy scholarship has additionally highlighted that not only are market logics entering the political domain, but also corporate actors are becoming more powerful in shaping global equality policies, particularly through public-private partnerships (Prügl and True 2014) and funding for international organizations dedicated to women's empowerment (Ferguson and Moreno Alarcón 2013). Corporate actors are indeed becoming important producers of "particular business-oriented and market-based knowledges about

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women and gender relations" (Roberts 2015, 210). While the overall feminist assessment of these initiatives has been more critical than of gender knowledge in global security, scholars have not advocated for complete disengagement. Prügl and True (2014, 1143–44), for example, have suggested several criteria for evaluating the potential usefulness of partnerships with the private sector: inclusiveness, public transparency and accountability, reflexivity, and operational effectiveness.

Alongside the growing relevance of corporate equality initiatives, the changing conditions for feminist knowledge production and dissemination (Prügl 2011) have promoted the "NGOization" (Lang 1997) and professionalization of the women's movement. NGOs, in turn, have become more dependent on private foundations (Lang 1997, 383) and more accountable to funding bodies (387), and they are increasingly engaging directly with the private business sector (Grosser and Moon 2005, 532ff.). As a result, gender knowledge is being commodified — that is, structurally and discursively subjected to market logics (Ferree and Verloo 2016, xiii) — deepening the trend toward evidence-based claims of expertise instead of rights-based claims of equality and justice (Laforest and Orsini 2005).

Taken together, feminist security studies and global political economy have produced insightful critiques of equality initiatives in their respective fields. Yet the former has not systematically addressed the workings of the market and neoliberal outsourcing practices in global security, and the latter has not considered the specifics of securitized environments, in which private actors are increasingly fulfilling statutory functions on behalf of the state. The analysis of gender expertise produced for and taken up by private security companies thus contributes to the integration of the above critiques by addressing the increasing convergence of security and market discourses in the neoliberal era and its effects on feminist knowledge.

THE CASE OF PRIVATE SECURITY: A NEW SPHERE OF INTERACTION BETWEEN GENDER KNOWLEDGE, GLOBAL POLITICS, AND CORPORATE INTERESTS

The growing market for private security is evidence of the manifold rearrangements in the relationship between policy and business spheres (Abrahamsen and Leander 2015). A booming multibillion-dollar industry, PMSCs provide a wide range of services, including armed contracting, convoy and base protection, personal protection, unarmed

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security functions, security consultancy and policy advice, and logistic and infrastructure support services (Chisholm and Stachowitsch 2017a). Many of these companies "entirely depend on their host country for contracts" and view "themselves as extensions of their government's policies and interests" (Pingeot 2012, 14). Feminist approaches to PMSCs have identified security outsourcing as a gendered and racialized political project in neoliberalism that marginalizes women and racialized Others and reinvigorates masculinism (Barker 2009; Chisholm 2014a, 2014b; Chisholm and Stachowitsch 2016; Eichler 2013, 2014, 2015a; Stachowitsch 2013, 2014, 2015).

This research has also addressed the manifold ways in which gender implicitly and explicitly matters in the private security industry's strategies for dealing with their "hypermasculine" image and increasing public criticism for human rights abuses and nontransparent conduct of business. As a consequence, PMSCs have altered their earlier, more militarized self-representations toward a more professionalized and even "humanitarian" appearance (Joachim and Schneiker 2012a, 2012b), drawing on notions of masculinity associated with capitalist market economy and/or global governance (Stachowitsch 2014). In addition to these implicit gendering strategies, the industry is also increasingly making explicit references to gender issues.

While the processes through which "gender" has entered industry documents and publications are not the primary concern of this article, it is necessary to note that concessions to gender equality in this sector can be traced to (self-)regulatory processes[3] and the involvement of NGOs within these. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) have been particularly active in advocating for regulation and "good governance" in the private security sector. Together with the government of Switzerland, the ICRC was pivotal in launching the Montreux Document on Private Military and Security Companies (ICRC 2008), a nonbinding intergovernmental agreement promoting the regulation of PMSCs in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Equally active in this area is DCAF, a leading NGO in advising governments and other international actors on issues pertaining to security sector governance and reform. One of DCAF's main areas of

3. For an overview of PMSC regulation, see Schaub and Kelty (2016).

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activity and expertise is gender and security on which it provides various "knowledge products," such as policy tools and best practice manuals (DCAF 2016, 19). DCAF is also active in private security regulation. It serves as the Secretariat of the Montreux Document Forum, "a venue for informal consultation … coordination and communication among Montreux Document (MD) participants" (Montreux Document Forum 2014), for which it has developed implementation tools (DCAF 2016, 37). DCAF was also instrumental in creating the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC) (ICoCA 2010) and continues to support its implementation in the International Code of Conduct Association through outreach events and advice (DCAF 2016, 36). DCAF's policy tool on gender and private security (Schultz and Yeung 2008) has been a central document in the debate and was also extensively referenced in the journal of the International Stability Operations Association (ISOA) (Reeves and Doherty 2012). These NGOs' "knowledge products" thus make up the central part of the text corpus analyzed below.

Citing some of the same evidence as this article, Maya Eichler (2013, 2015a) has studied the policy recommendations on gender and private security put forward by NGOs and has productively developed a critical feminist research agenda in opposition to this "problem-solving" literature (Eichler 2015b, 159). This article builds on Eichler's programmatic intervention, but it seeks to further develop theoretical understandings of discourses on gender and private security as a particular case of the simultaneous neoliberalization and securitization of gender knowledge. For this purpose, the gender-sensitive research on private security is synthesized with the feminist critiques of global governance and corporate equality initiatives, which complicate the distinction between problem-solving and critical approaches.

The realm of private security is uniquely positioned for such an analysis because in this sphere, security *is* business, and hence security provision and transnational business rationales are most intimately connected. PMSCs are an example of profit-driven actors that "have entered the realm of public policy making and are participating in making rules and implementing policies in the name of the public interest" (Prügl and True 2014, 1141). Because they fulfill tasks traditionally associated with the state's monopoly on violence, however, state and market are more deeply interwoven in security outsourcing than in regular public-private partnerships. Companies are not only catering to the demands of a marketized policy setting; they also act as policy agents that carry out and

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define national and global security agendas. PMSCs thus have a need to be perceived as politically legitimate. Political actors as their largest clients have a pivotal role in granting this legitimacy and turning it into real business advantage. As PMSCs expand their client base to the UN and NGOs (Pingeot 2012, 15), which have largely embraced the notion of a gender-security nexus, gender increasingly enters into their legitimizing strategies.

ANALYSIS: GENDER IN PRIVATE SECURITY DISCOURSES

The analysis of gender discourses on/of private security proceeds in two steps. In a first and more descriptive step, the study examines whether and how the self-regulatory documents of major professional and trade organizations in private security and regulatory intergovernmental documents have addressed gender issues. The most important of these documents are the Montreux Document on Private Military and Security Companies (ICRC 2008); the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoCA 2010); the International Stability Operations Association Code of Conduct (ISOA 2013); the Sarajevo Code of Conduct for Private Security Companies (SEESAC 2006); and the Maritime Security Professionals Voluntary Professional Code of Practice (International Association of Maritime Security Professionals (n.d.). While not all companies (or states) are members of these agreements, signatories represent the most influential players in the field and therefore are indicative of a wider trend in the governance of private security and the associated industry.

The second and central part of the analysis looks at NGO documents advocating for a gender perspective in private security, including a coedited paper by DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, and UN-INSTRAW primarily addressing international policy audiences concerned with gender mainstreaming in postconflict reconstruction and security sector reform (Schultz and Yeung 2008) and a paper coedited by DCAF and the ICRC that primarily advises companies in the extractive sector, particularly in mining, on how to work with both the public and the private security sector in their sites of business (ICRC/DCAF n.d.). This paper specifically seeks to provide relevant information for governments and PMSCs. The analysis further draws on a feature on gender and PMSCs in the ISOA's *Journal of International Peace Operations* (ISOA 2012).

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The textual analysis employs a critical discourse analysis (CDA), an approach that emphasizes the role of language in the construction of social power relations (van Dijk 1993; Wodak 2009). CDA foregrounds discourses as frames that support strategies of institutional self-legitimization (Fairclough 2001, 2003) and focuses on the ways in which systems of oppressions, such as sexism and racism, are perpetuated through language, text, and images (Bhabha 1994; Gentry 2016; Said 1978). Drawing on this framework, the study makes sense of discourses on gender and/in private security by linking the analyzed documents to the wider gender discourses in global security and the corporate world.

The analysis of the codes of conduct provides evidence that NGOs have been successful at lobbying PMSCs to emphasize responsibility toward female employees, local women, host populations, and an increasingly critical public. The ICoC includes sexual and gender-based violence in the list of crimes that signatory companies and their personnel must not participate in or benefit from. Sexual exploitation, prostitution, rape, sexual harassment, or any other form of abuse, the code demands, have to be reported (ICoCA 2010, 7–9). The ISOA Code of Conduct states that there must be no wage difference on "racial, gender and ethnic grounds" (ISOA 2013, 1). The Sarajevo Code of Conduct suggests that training should be provided on international and national law, cultural sensitivity, first aid, and gender issues (SEESAC 2006, 2). The Montreux Document states that personnel are to be instructed in "religious, gender, and cultural issues, and respect for the local population" (ICRC 2008, 19). The Maritime Security Code of Practice forbids "discrimination against clients, colleagues or fellow members of the maritime security industry (on the grounds of) race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability" (n.d., 2).

The examined policy papers and articles present more comprehensive arguments for how and why gender matters or should matter in private security provision as well as recommendations for how best to deal with gendered challenges. As the following analysis details, these documents selectively draw on securitized and marketized discourses of global security governance and transnational business. By combining feminist critiques of securitized and marketized gender discourses, the following analysis shows that not only do both critiques apply, but that policy and business discourses are combined, merged, and made interchangeable in the context of private security in a way that further narrows the emancipatory potential of gender knowledge.

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Securitizing Gender

Three central discourses can be identified in the analyzed documents with regard to the connection between gender and security: (1) women's unique contribution to operational effectiveness, (2) the alleviation of (gender-based) violence through women's integration, and (3) women's privileged position to overcome "cultural differences." In the first instance, it is argued that integrating women and a "gender perspective" will "improv(e) operational effectiveness" (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 4) through women's "different experiences, needs, and understandings of security and justice" (3). Women's unique capabilities are closely connected to the second line of argument, namely, women's alleged ability to alleviate two forms of violence: gender-based violence within host communities, which female contractors would be able to identify through their greater sensitivity, and violence (gender-based and other) perpetrated by male contractors, which women could mitigate through their presence. Such arguments state that women bring to bear a "different approach in the detection of security risks, thereby potentially enhancing identification" of gender- and culture-specific risks (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 4) and that they "may be able to provide different levels of attention to specific vulnerable groups and may also help avoid gender-based violence by their presence" (ICRC/DCAF n.d., 34).[4]

Finally, and most prominently, the documents feature numerous references to "cultural differences." In some of the codes of conduct, gender is closely tied to training requirements on religious and "cultural sensitivity" (SEESAC 2006, 2) and "respect for local populations" (ICRC 2008, 19). In policy documents, gender issues are most often brought up in the context of explanations for why and how PMSCs should analyze local contexts and the qualifications of personnel required for this. In a similar vein, they suggest that contractors be trained in "[r]eligious, gender, and cultural issues, and respect for the local population" (ICRC/DCAF n.d., 116). They are to be "gender-sensitive and, if possible, … familiar with community and/or ethnic or tribal dynamics, and language" (139). They should be aware of "[s]ocial structures, in particular the different roles of women and men within the social and cultural context, including the division of labour and the

4. Note that this particular quote is from the section on public forces in the analyzed document. It nevertheless gives insight into the rationales for applying a gender perspective in the private sector.

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different rights and obligations within the household and the broader community" (117). With this understanding of fundamental cultural differences expressed in gender relations comes the imagination that women are particularly prone to overcoming these differences and that a gender perspective is a way to prevent "culturally inappropriate" security practices (117). Consequently, the rationale for including female staff is that "particularly in traditional indigenous communities, men will generally be more comfortable engaging with male representatives of a company, and women with female representatives" (121).

This line of argument highlights the "specific types of danger that women are exposed to in host societies" (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 4), particularly that it may be "dangerous (for local women) to be seen speaking to male security personnel". Female contractors would thus be able to get more access to local women for the purpose of both intelligence gathering and for strengthening acceptance of PMSCs. Additionally, female contractors are expected to serve as "positive role models for local women" (4).

Contextualizing the analyzed documents within the WPS agenda and the critiques formulated in the feminist security studies literature reveals that the gender/private security discourse largely mirrors the WPS discourse but intensifies its depoliticizing effects by selectively foregrounding its most problematic elements: (1) essentialized and stereotypical representations of women's skills and capabilities, (2) a narrow focus on (gender-based) violence, and (3) neocolonial notions of "cultural difference."

In the *first* instance, stereotypical representations of female contractors are reaffirmed through claims about their unique capabilities — that is, feminized and "soft" skills that are traditionally undervalued in securitized environments. As shown in the feminist security studies literature, such a focus on women and their alleged abilities inhibits a serious critique of masculinist organizational structures and culture in security organizations (Reeves 2012). While "violent forms of masculinity" (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 5) and "macho subcultures" in which "men test their masculinity" and "must repeatedly reconstitute their bravado" (4) are identified as the source of violent behavior, the solution is not seen in addressing these masculinities but in recruiting more women. Female contractors are expected to mitigate these problems because they are assumed to be "more approachable and less threatening," to play a "placatory role" (4) and to be "less likely to use excessive force" and therefore able to "defuse tension" (9). It is these

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"feminine" capabilities that justify their greater integration and appreciation in the security sector.

Second, the analyzed discourses narrow gender inequalities down to the issue of violence, which is addressed either as a security risk or as a legitimacy problem for PMSCs. In this way, violence is depoliticized by obscuring its socioeconomic root causes (True 2012), and allegations of misconduct are mitigated, contributing to the overall legitimization of commercial security actors.

Third, the analyzed discourses promote racialized constructions of non-Western women and their communities by drawing on Orientalist tropes of the "oppressive Other" (Spivak 1999; see also Dyvik 2014; Khalid 2011; McBride and Wibben 2012; Shepherd 2006). In the analyzed documents, these elements are present in the descriptions of gender-related challenges in the host communities and in the image of the emancipated female contractor in opposition to "oppressed" local women. These discourses reflect neocolonial imaginations about women from the global South as being in need of Western protection from non-Western men (Harrington 2011). By constructing women as "cultural ambassadors," they conceal political, socioeconomic, religious, or ethnic differences and conflicts between women and within societies. Furthermore, women's equality is conflated with Western ideals. Sexism and discrimination in Western societies as well as the West's agency in unequal gender relations around the globe are thereby obscured (Harrington 2011, 567). This framing of "women's rights" is an important tool for legitimizing Western military intervention that is now being extended to the private security industry. By selectively drawing on the WPS discourse, the examined documents underscore the legitimacy of PMSCs as global security actors and obscure how military privatization as a political process and the practices of PMSCs are deeply implicated in the reproduction of global gendered power relations.

Marketizing Gendered Security

The critiques that feminist security studies have formulated with regard to securitized equality initiatives, however, are not enough to fully grasp the gender discourses of/on private security, because these discourses function at a particular intersection of securitized and marketized logics. By further contextualizing the examined documents within corporate discourses on gender equality and by drawing on global political

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economy critiques of such discourses, additional layers of meaning can be revealed.

By drawing on discourses associated with corporate social responsibility and diversity management, the analyzed documents define problems and solutions in a way that is compatible with the industry's interests. As such, gender integration is prominently argued to be beneficial for PMSCs by making them more "representative, open and inclusive from an institutional perspective" (Cordell 2012, 12). In this context, the three securitized gender tropes discussed earlier (women's unique capabilities, violence, and cultural differences) are reconstructed through a marketized framework: women's difference is reframed as a company asset toward delivering a better product. Consequently, it is argued that the exclusion of women and their alleged "female skills" is to the disadvantage of the industry and that PMSCs and the industry as a whole would "benefit enormously" from integrating a gender perspective (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 3). Gender-based and other forms of violence as a problem in peacekeeping and postconflict reconstruction are also reframed through market discourse, as it is claimed that such violence leads to a "concomitant loss of revenue and reputation" (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 4; see also Cordell 2012, 12). "[S]exual assault, abuse or the exploitation of local women" are presented not only as security risks for clients and contractors but also as a liability issue and a potential harm to reputation (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 5). Violence thus is understood as a managerial problem and competitive disadvantage for companies. The "culturalist" aspects of securitized gender ideologies also attain a marketized meaning. Women's ability to make PMSC more "culturally appropriate" in local environments is understood as an improvement of commercial security services:

> In traditional societies, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, it is dangerous for a local woman to be seen speaking to male security personnel; she could, however, talk to a woman. Therefore, the employment of female staff can ensure a better utilisation of resources; the extraction/gathering of information may be more effective and the analysis of issues affecting local communities more accurate (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 4).

Within these framings, operational effectiveness and legitimacy are seen in light of profit enhancement. This further depoliticizes the male norm in militarized/securitized organizations, which not only leaves institutional practices and discourses undisturbed but is also functional because it leaves masculinism intact as marketing tool and competitive advantage.

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As Chisholm (2014a) and Joachim and Schneiker (2012b) have shown, drawing on ideals of hegemonic masculinities is an important strategy for PMSCs to market themselves as providing the "proper" masculinities required for modern security operations. Hence, gender is framed in a way that does not interfere with these self-promotions.

The market framing also affects the suggested remedies for a lack of gender perspective. Gender training is the most often cited tool for increasing adaptation and acceptance and for preventing the "aggressive institutional cultures" that foster human rights abuses and the exclusion of "women's skills" (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 4). The market discourse leads to an understanding of training as a commodity that can be bought from NGOs or consultancies without having to further question institutional practices and culture. Rather, it is invoked as a tool for making the industry realize how gender contributes to their business advantage:

> [C]ompanies need to recognise that a real business advantage can be gained from the implementation of standards, including with regards to gender issues. Gender training in particular would ensure a better understanding of the benefits of gender mainstreaming for a company's operations (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 10).

Though some governmental involvement is deemed necessary, the market discourse also promotes a strong emphasis on self-regulation through internal company codes of conduct:

> Self-regulation provides a unique opportunity to introduce gender issues in the private security industry because the standards-setting process is inclusive and bottom-up. Moreover, the self-regulatory body knows the members of the Association and can discuss advantages and problems of gender mainstreaming on a bilateral basis if necessary (Schultz and Yeung 2008, 10).

The existing codes of conduct, at the same time, are extremely low on accountability and gender mostly appears in random lists of "soft" issues ranging from first aid to respect for local populations. Demands for raising female representation in the field to a substantial level or for more women in decision-making processes and leadership positions, usually a standard in gender mainstreaming, are almost completely absent in the overall discourse. The usefulness of women in the field is the dominant topic.

The market context also determines the role assigned to gender scholarship in relation to powerful commercial actors. Most documents call for "more research" (Cordell 2012, 13; Schultz and

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Yeung 2008, 17), but researchers are addressed as service providers to get involved in the industry's problem-solving through "[q]uality research and analysis, identification of gaps and best practices and practical policy options and novel partnerships for implementation" (Cordell 2012, 12). Their job is defined as finding "possibilities for retention" of women and "looking for meaningful output from women's inclusion across operations" (12).

The NGOs examined as providers of gender knowledge in this study make a rather narrow case for a gender perspective characterized by a focus on technocratic solutions, the absence of representational demands, the prevalence of the "use-value" argument, and strong emphasis on culturalist differentiation. Equality makes no appearance in these documents, and concrete forms of discrimination other than gender-based violence — that is, differential payment on the basis of gender (ICRC/DCAF n.d., 105) — are rarely mentioned.

CONCLUSIONS

The foregoing analysis shows that studying the private security industry offers new insights into the intersections of securitized and neoliberalized gender discourses and their effects on the emancipatory potential of feminist knowledge and expertise. Empirically, the analysis has shown that "gender" is increasingly argued as a way for PMSCs to solidify their image as legitimate security actors by drawing on both global security discourse and market ideology. This is functional in terms of changing client structures and increasing public criticism. While gender equality initiatives have been established as an instrument for business and policy organizations to mitigate scandals involving gender-based violence or crisis-prone business practices — often combined with allegations of "hypermasculinity" — PMSCs take a similar approach to scandals involving sexualized violence (Sperling 2015) and problematic labor sourcing strategies (Chisholm 2014a, 2014b).

The study has further shown that understandings of gender issues in this context are characterized by a particular merger of "market/business feminism" and securitized gender narratives in which "gender" facilitates the conceptualization of profit enhancement and effective security provision as mutually enhancing goals. This extremely narrow discourse reconciles market and policy logics, making them increasingly indistinguishable in the process and curtailing the emancipatory

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potential of feminist knowledge by leaving no political reference point (i.e., in/equality) anymore.

These findings contribute to our understandings of how feminism is implicated in the evolution of neoliberal security governance and the shifting boundaries between policy and market spheres that characterize the contemporary political moment. While scholars have repeatedly argued that feminism cannot afford not to engage with powerful market and security organizations (True 2003, 368), the special combination of security and business agendas in the private security sector (and elsewhere) complicates these assessments. At the intersections of securitization and marketization, often-cited counterstrategies to preserve the emancipatory potential of mainstreaming efforts, such as reinserting political meaning and the workings of power into concepts of gender (Eveline and Bacchi 2005; Prügl 2009; Zalewski 2010) and conceptualizing mainstreaming as a process of contestation (Benschop and Verloo 2006, 30), could become increasingly difficult to realize. Prügl and True's criteria for evaluating partnerships with the private sector (inclusiveness, public transparency and accountability, reflexivity, operational effectiveness; 2014, 1143ff.) will be difficult to apply to powerful actors at the security-market interface.

In terms of *inclusiveness*, the examined documents argue for including more women and base these arguments (among other things) on differences between them, but they do not envision any concrete measures for actual inclusion of different women, neither into the industry nor into the discussion on its genderedness or on gender-sensitive security practices. Instead, they largely work with a predefined notion of gender and cultural difference that is already known, understood in stereotypical ways, and demanded to be put to the best corporate use. The strong neoliberal emphasis on self-regulation and the secretive character of security institutions work together to inhibit the formulation of concrete programs in partnerships toward gender equality with other public or private actors as well as any attempts to address the problem of *transparency and accountability*. As a result, there are no concrete goals formulated that could be evaluated for *operational effectiveness* and no reporting or evaluation mechanisms on the progress in this area.

In terms of *reflexivity*, the documents featured no references to how PMSCs' "normal" business practices exercised gendered power or how the representation of problems, underlying assumptions, and silences might lead to "potentially deleterious effects" (Prügl 2016, 36). The

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inapplicability of these criteria largely stems from the specific market-security merger that characterizes private security. PMSCs and NGOs alike do not follow the "gender *equality* is good for business" narrative, which is becoming increasingly common in other corporate contexts (Prügl and True 2014). The political reference point is not equality or inclusion, but security with its own antiemancipatory, gendered, and racialized tendencies.

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