

From the Philippines to Iraq

Investigating Counterinsurgency Operations, Atrocity, and Race

Richard Bangs

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ABSTRACT:

This thesis asks two central questions: (1.) Is there a link between atrocities committed during American counterinsurgency campaigns and race? (2.) Is there continuity between the counterinsurgency techniques deployed in the Philippines and in Iraq in this respect? In an effort to answer these questions I propose to briefly outline the chapters which are to follow.

In Chapter 1 I propose to tackle the question of race using the following questions as broad guides to my investigation: what is it? how do we understand it? how will it be operationalized? In other words, this first chapter serves both as a literature review and an outline of the theoretical framework to be adopted in the later sections of this thesis. It outlines the current state of the concept 'race' in the literature of various fields of politics with an eye to finding space for a critical approach. In the end, I settle on the elegant framework set forth by Roxanne Lynn Doty.

In Chapter 2, carrying forward Doty's operationalized concept of race, I undertake an analysis of the discourse and practice surrounding American Counterinsurgency Policy during the invasion of the Philippines from 1899-1903. First; I investigate the role that racialized discourse played in the domestic and international contexts surrounding the invasion of the Philippines. Second; I delve into the empirical historical record to attempt to sketch out how racism was deployed on the ground in the counterinsurgency in the Philippines and what relationship the acts of atrocity committed there had with racial discourse.

Following the findings of Chapter 2 I attempt to investigate the extent to which these mechanisms existed in the counterinsurgency in Iraq in Chapter 3. The investigation of Iraq is structured similarly to that of the Philippines but, due to the absolute abundance of information on Iraq, it is broken into three sections. The first section examines the role of race in the

domestic politics of the United States before, during, and after September 11, 2001. The second section sketches out an emerging international logic concerning military intervention and development. The final section sketches out the empirical reality of how race was used in atrocity in Iraq.

Table of Contents:

Introduction: On Atrocity, Race, and Counterinsurgency2
 The Question of Imperialism.....5
 Why American Imperialism?8
Method and Case Selection: Why These Cases? 11
 Why do the cases of the Philippines and Iraq go to show a continuity of American
 Imperialism? 11
 How do the cases of the Philippines and Iraq go to show a continuity of American
 Imperialism? 13
 Why Counterinsurgency?..... 15
 Why Race and not Gender or a more Intersectional Approach 16
 Research Question 17
Chapter 1: Towards A Critical Visual Discursive Theory of Racism 19
Chapter 2: Racism, Counterinsurgency, and the Philippines: American Counterinsurgency
Policy from 1899-1903..... 36
 The Role of Racialized Discourse in the Invasion of the Philippines 36
 The Historical Record of Racialised Counterinsurgency in the Philippines 46
 Conclusion: 61
Chapter 3: Racism, Counterinsurgency, and Iraq: American Counterinsurgency Policy from
2003-2007 63
 Part 1: US Domestic Racism 64
 Part 2: Counterinsurgency and Global Biopolitics 71
 Part 3: US Racism and Imperialism in Iraq 80
 Conclusion: 94
Conclusion: Comparative Analysis of the Cases of the Philippines and Iraq....and Beyond..... 95
Bibliography 102
Appendix 109

Introduction: On Atrocity, Race, and Counterinsurgency

As with any research project there are general and specific reasons for its pursuit. Though broader motivations drove my investigation, I will, in the interest of space, limit my anecdotal illustration to one key example. The one example that is most illustrative occurred on March 12, 2013. Although this event was one which passed without much mainstream fanfare at the time¹, subsequently, it received much attention. On the day in question the senior United States Senator from Oregon, Ron Wyden, sat amongst his peers at the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. He was interrogating Director for National Intelligence (DNI) James Clapper. Wyden's questions revolved around possible domestic operations of the foreign spy agency the National Security Agency (NSA); revelations of any such operations would be illegal. Senator Wyden, following about 6 minutes of questions directed at DNI Clapper, asked "does the NSA collect any type of data at all on millions or hundreds of millions of Americans?"² Slightly hunched over and holding his hand to his face, as though hiding from the Senator, James Clapper responded "No sir."³ Senator Wyden immediately rebutted "it does not?" to which James Clapper, still visibly anxious, replied "not wittingly. There are cases where they [the NSA] could inadvertently, perhaps, collect, but not wittingly."⁴ Following the Edward Snowden leaks and the revelations about the NSA doing exactly what James Clapper claimed they were not, calls for his resignation ensued.⁵

¹Although to those more attuned to the United States political scene one could not help but make the correlation between Wyden's earlier kind of wink and nudge warning of May 2011 and the March 2013 senate meeting. To give you a taste of what I am referring to see (Wyden, 2011).

² *Ron Wyden's Exchange with Director of National Intelligence James Clapper*, 2013, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsmo0hUWJ08&feature=youtube_gdata_player.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ To date he has not resigned, nor do signs show that he will. Apparently, in Washington, an apology and a twitter account are penance enough for lying to congress. Although *he* will not be prosecuted the Obama administration continues to prosecute the highest number of whistleblowers in a single administration ever.

Although this example has seemingly little to do with racism, or the U.S. military committing atrocities, it has everything to do with why studying these matters is important. Many commentators could perhaps point out that Clapper was telling the most truthful version of the situation authorized by the National Security State's, at times necessary, but otherwise unaccountable, secrecy framework. This explanation and others like it suggest that either human nature, the man, the institution, the policy, or some hybrid combination of these, is responsible for this event. These explanations situate Clappers lie within a *limited* set of problems and challenges. Contra to these *limited* approaches, I wish to set out to critically engage *the system* itself by way of investigating the discourses that authorize the actions of the National Security State. The system which I wish to critique is composed of imperial and oppressive discursive formations which make these limited critiques possible but also colour their possibility. Therefore, the broader objective motivating this research seeks to expose these discursive formations and the harm that they allow.

In a specific sense this research seeks to shed light on the practices of the United States military in situations of counterinsurgency. This project's first specific goal is to demonstrate the mechanisms through which American soldiers commit atrocities during counterinsurgency campaigns and to thereafter link these across 100 years in time. The project's second specific goal is to investigate the mechanisms by which atrocities occur and how these are often expressed using racial discourses. Here I aim to show the broader implications of racist discourse and its implications for not only extreme expressions of political violence but its ability to act as a tool of oppression no matter what the stakes or scope of its exercise. In so doing I aim to demonstrate that the policy of counterinsurgency in each of the cases I have selected has not only failed, but was also counterproductive.

At its most basic level counterinsurgency aims to secure the hearts and minds of the target population against a given insurgency. Yet the discursive and empirical violence attendant to any military operation renders tragedy and atrocity inevitable. And therefore, counterinsurgency seems a counterproductive means of population control. I think that the testimony of Farea Al-Muslimi on April 23, 2013 is illustrative of my point. Mr. Al-Muslimi is a Yemeni activist, granted, but one who I believe is uniquely situated given his experiences. He is an American educated Yemeni who was sponsored by the State Department to come to America and attend an American high school. Thereafter, he attended an American style university; the Lebanese International University, Sana'a Campus. He describes his high-school experience as "one of the best years of my life."⁶ The "most exceptional experience," was:

Coming to know someone who ended up being like a father to me. It [sic.] was a member of the U.S. Air Force... most of my year was spent with him and his family. He came to the Mosque with me and I went to the Church with him and he became my best friend in America. I went to the U.S. as an ambassador for Yemen and I came back to Yemen as an ambassador of the U.S.⁷

Mr. Al-Muslimi, clearly enamored with his positive experience, then describes the drone strike that took place just six days earlier in his village of Wessab. The strike drastically and instantly shifted his perspective of the U.S. He recounts: "I could never have imagined that the same hand that changed my life and took it from miserable to promising one [sic.] would drone my village."⁸ The drone strike targeted an alleged Yemeni terrorist who, according to Mr. Al-Muslimi, "Was well known to government officials and even... [the] local government could have captured him if the U.S. had told them to do so."⁹ Following the drone strike, Mr. Al-

⁶ Farea Al-Muslimi. [testimony]. Delivered at the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights concerning the question of the moral, legal and constitutional issues surrounding targeted killings and the use of drones, April 23, 2013. Accessed at *Dick Durbin, US Senator for Illinois: Assistant Majority Leader*. "Testimony Of Farea Al-Muslimi." Accessed on August 22, 2013.

<<http://www.durbin.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=cffa0fbd-d95e-4853-ad3d-1a92126ff1f1>>

⁷ Farea Al-Muslimi.

⁸ Farea Al-Muslimi.

⁹ Farea Al-Muslimi.

Muslimi describes the drastic change in public sentiment towards the United States compared to the feelings of villagers prior to the drone strike:

In the past what Wessab's villagers knew of the US was based on my stories about my wonderful experiences here. The friendships and values I experienced and described to the villagers helped them understand the America that I know and that I love. Now, however, when they think of America they think of the terror they feel from the drones that hover over their heads ready to fire missiles at any time. What the violent militants have previously failed to achieve, one drone strike accomplished in an instant.¹⁰

The Question of Imperialism

Imperialism is a key concept which guides my research and a concept which I believe is pivotal to understanding American Foreign Policy's commonalities from the Invasion of the Philippines at the turn of the 20th century to the Invasion of Iraq more recently. George Steinmetz provides a fairly straightforward definition of imperialism; he defines empire as "a relationship of political domination over a periphery by a core and therefore encompasses the transfer of various practices from center to margin."¹¹ Steinmetz dissects empires into spatial and temporal components. He characterises imperialism temporally in the modern era and spatially to a non-territorial type of empire.¹² Steinmetz also makes a clear distinction between colonialism and imperialism. Colonialism is characterised by the colonial power's complete sovereign and legal control of the oppressed whereas the imperial power's intent is not to maintain legal or sovereign control but indeed a much more insidious *de facto* control over numerous domains: economic, military, cultural, social, and or a mix of these¹³.

Steinmetz provides us with some good building blocks to then understand the complex and always emergent concept of "Imperial Formations" put forth by Stoler and McGranahan.

¹⁰ Farea Al-Muslimi.

¹¹ George Steinmetz, "Return to Empire: The New U.S. Imperialism in Comparative Historical Perspective*," *Sociological Theory* 23, no. 4 (2005): 356.

¹² *Ibid.*, 349.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 350.

In conceptualizing 'Imperial Formations' Stoler and McGranahan use Balibar and Althusser's notion of a formation - "the 'concrete complex whole comprising economic practice, political practice, and ideological practice at a certain place and stage of development."¹⁴ They also add Raymond Williams' conception of formations to their conceptual framework. Williams defines formations: "as a social form suggesting 'effective movements and tendencies' that have 'variable and often oblique relations to formal institutions."¹⁵ Imperial formations, as Balibar, Althusser, and William's definitions suggest, are characterised by fluidity in imperial practice. This is precisely what Stoler and McGranahan wish to capture with their conceptual framework. Stoler challenges these notions in asking: "What if we begin not with a model of empire based on fixed, imperial cartographies but with one dependent on shifting categories and moving parts whose designated borders at any one time were not necessarily the force fields in which they operated or the limits of them?"¹⁶ She continues further describing the dynamics of imperial formations: "as supremely mobile polities of dislocation, dependent not on stable populations so much as on highly moveable ones, on systemic recruitments and 'transfers' of colonial agents, on native military, on a redistribution of peoples and resources, on relocations and dispersions, on contiguous and overseas territories."¹⁷ In this light, empires (especially imperial ones) are seen as ever shifting living organisms within an ever-changing universe of political, economic, ideological, and institutional emergent practices.

Although Stoler and McGranahan's definition of imperialism is more fluid than Steinmetz's it still contains fundamental unifying principles. Imperial practices are those which revolve around the following characteristics: "inequitable treatment, hierarchical relations, and

¹⁴ Ann Laura Stoler and Carole McGranahan. "Introduction: Refiguring Imperial Terrain," in *Imperial Formations*. (School for Advanced Research Press: 2007): 8

¹⁵ Stoler and McGranahan, 8

¹⁶ Ann Laura Stoler. "On Degrees of Imperial Sovereignty." *Public Culture*. (18:1): 137-138

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 138

unequal rule.¹⁸ And, importantly for this particular analysis, the imperial power is convinced of “the righteousness of their cause [and] the inevitability of their triumph.¹⁹” This conception of imperial practice also puts into question Steinmetz’s macro view concerning the relations of core to periphery. Steinmetz’s imperialism assumes that an empire is primarily exercising power over a territorially non-contiguous entity – the British in India, the French in Algeria, the Americans over the Filipinos, etc. Stoler illustrates the blindnesses which are perpetuated under a strict core-periphery (metropole-colony) definition of empire:

‘Metropole’ and ‘colony’ may ‘work’ to describe the distance and difference separating the American Philippines and the United States in 1898, but the dichotomy seems ‘unsuited’ when applied to the enmity lines that separate Native American residential schools from their surroundings or poor whites, Mexicans, and blacks from white ranchers on the Mexico-Texas border.²⁰

What the Stoler and McGranahan definition of imperial formations accomplishes is to open up the categories of those controlled and dominated under empire. The concept of imperial formations allows the recognition that the United States had a domestic colonial empire over First Nations and African Americans while simultaneously exercising foreign imperial military power over Filipinos. This conceptual framework is essential to the way I will proceed in my work. Stoler and McGranahan’s conception of core and periphery allows for a complex relationship between domestic conceptions of the other and foreign ‘on-the-ground’ conceptions of the other. Most importantly this conceptual framework opens up a window to a more complex discursive reality beyond core and periphery.

¹⁸ Stoler and McGranahan, 11

¹⁹ Stoler and McGranahan, 11

²⁰ Ann Laura Stoler. *Haunted By Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History*. (Durham : Duke University Press, 2006): 8

Why American Imperialism?

Srdjan Vucetic argues that American Imperialism is linked to 4 discrete discourses: “Anglo-Protestantism (religion), Anglo-Saxonism (race/ethnicity), Anglo-Saxon capitalism (institutions) and English (language).²¹” Of particular interest here is the racialized discourse of Anglo-Saxonism – “a discourse that supported one version of social inequality based on both religion and race/ethnicity: the superiority of White, Anglo-Saxon Protestant males over other human beings.²²” Anglo-Saxonism is one of the most powerful motivators for the rise of American Empire overseas and domestically at the turn of the century. Reginald Horsman, one of the leading authorities on the Anglo-Saxon discourse and the Mexican American War, argues that the rise of Anglo-Saxonism saw a related rise in feelings of racial superiority. These feelings were supported by the quasi-sciences of the day and cross pollinated with a rising romantic nationalist movement – a movement fueled above all by a drive for territorial conquest. This conquest was based on the idea that the superior people’s genetic and inherent national capacities were supposed to triumph over the inferior peoples of the earth.²³

These feelings of racial superiority which manifested into racial exterminism were intertwined with a sense that America was an indispensable and exceptional nation – a sense of American Exceptionalism. Three aspects are key to understanding American Exceptionalism:

²¹ Srdjan Vucetic. "What is so American about the American empire?" *International Politics*. (Vol. 48, 2/3, 2011): 252

²² Vucetic, 256

²³ Reginald Horsman. *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*. (Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press: 1981): 167. One particularly extreme variant of the racial exterminist logic came from novelist William Gilmore Smith. It is all the more ironic that he expounded such a view given the sympathy he had for the plight of the ‘Indians’ in his time. Although he maintained, consistently and above all, that the Anglo-Norman race must expand and spread their superior lineage. When speaking of the Mexican American war in 1847 to his friend James Henry Hammond he explained “War is the greatest element of modern civilisation, and our destiny is conquest. Indeed the moment a nation ceases to extend its sway it falls a prey to an inferior but more energetic neighbour.”

“(1.) [the] providential mission, (2.) racial superiority, and conquest encompassed in the doctrine of (3.) Manifest Destiny.²⁴” American Exceptionalism signifies that the United States was something unique and different from the old tyrannical aristocracies of Europe. For our purposes here it is the racially superior aspect of this doctrine along with its mutually reinforcing and circular logical construction which is of most interest. American Exceptionalism marks a continuity within American history which, in fact, does not make the United States look exceptional at all, but rather, illustrates the similarity between themselves and the colonial powers from which they so desperately wished to distance themselves.

The racial aspect of American Exceptionalism is perhaps best analyzed through the lens of one of the more well know pieces of post-colonial writing; Edward Said’s 1979 *Orientalism*. Although Said claims that his book *Orientalism* is not searching for “some nefarious 'Western' imperialist plot to hold down the 'Oriental' world,²⁵” he does elaborate the many moves which the West (self) uses against the Orient (other) in order to create and construct 'the Orient'. Orientalism is shaped by an unequal power exchange where the 'West' has the preponderance of power in four distinct realms: “power political...power intellectual...power cultural...[and] power moral.²⁶” Being as it is that the west has all of these powers, and indeed has the ability to shape the very way in which the orient is perceived, the goal of Said's *Orientalism* is to expose this process. In so doing he attempts to “illustrate the formidable structure of cultural domination and, specifically for formerly colonized peoples, the dangers and temptations of employing this structure upon themselves or upon others.²⁷”

²⁴Meghana V. Nayak and Christopher Malone, “American Orientalism and American Exceptionalism: A Critical Rethinking of US Hegemony,” *International Studies Review* 11, no. 2 (2009): 255.

²⁵ Edward W. Said. *Orientalism*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1979): 12

²⁶ Said, 12

²⁷ Said, 25

Another important contribution to understanding race and racism is Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics. The most extreme forms of biopolitical discourse emerged from the eugenics discourse at the turn of the century.²⁸ Eugenic discourse classified racism into binary relational forms; either hetero-referential or auto-referential. Hetero-referential racist discourses are characterised by a negative portrayal of the 'other,' i.e. racial slurs and epithets. Auto-referential discourses are characterised by a positive portrayal of the self vis-à-vis the 'other,' i.e. ethnocentrism.²⁹ Rasmussen explains: "Hetero-referential racism typically negates the value of the other and follows a logic of domination, whereas auto-referential racism affirms the superior value of the self and follows a logic of exclusion."³⁰ Each discourse reinforced the notion that there was a necessary exclusion in society which discriminated between those less worthy of life and those more worthy. An internal societal war was sparked which started a new kind of discourse; a discourse whereby the notion of a war invaded all aspects of life from the tumultuous to the banal. Biopolitics emerges out of these phenomena – it is a government's decision to "to make live and let die."³¹

As we will see in Chapter 1, it is the coming together of these disparate theories through the lens of Roxanne Lynn Doty's framework which will enable a unique and critical view of racism in American counterinsurgency.

²⁸ Kim Su Rasmussen. "Foucault's Genealogy of Racism" *Theory, Culture & Society*. Vol. 28(5): 38

²⁹ Rasmussen, 38

³⁰ Rasmussen, 38

³¹ Michel Foucault, "*Society Must Be Defended.*" *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, 1st Picador pbk. ed.. (New York: Picador, 2003), 253–254.

Method and Case Selection: Why These Cases?

When addressing why I have chosen these two particular cases (the Philippines [1898-1903] and Iraq [2003-2007]) it is first necessary to explain the discriminations that I have made in regards to case selection. The most obvious of which is Vietnam. Vietnam is certainly a pivotal turning point within the narrative of American imperialism and certainly a turning point for the victory of political dissent and social mobility against imperialism in the United States. However, I did not choose Vietnam for two reasons: Firstly, and less importantly, there is already a brilliant and thorough coverage of the linkages which exist between Vietnam and current US Foreign Policy in Iraq and Afghanistan. Secondly; I wished to trace an imperial history dating back to the key moment of American Imperialism; the moment when their imperial impulses grew so strong that they acquired non-contiguous territory of peoples unlike them and seemingly inassimilable within the American polity. The choice of the invasion of the Philippines, as a point of comparison, also puts an emphasis on American Imperialism as an event of a *Longue Durée* and whose implications are far ranging and deeply structural nature. A few quick words on how and why these cases show continuity within American Foreign Policy...

Why do the cases of the Philippines and Iraq go to show a continuity of American Imperialism?

I think that on the most basic level the cases of the Philippines and Iraq show a continuity in that there is a comparable similarity in the ways in which American Foreign Policy mobilizes the ideas of race and racism in each of these cases. If we narrow our focus to the case of their

counterinsurgency policies I think it is here that we can find some generalizable elements which can be separated out in each case.

There is a great deal of similarity between each case but, beyond the similarity of the elements that I am trying to separate out, I think that each case on its own represents kind of a seminal historical moment in its own right. In the case of the Philippines, especially in American Diplomatic History, this moment in history is subject to (and perhaps at this point was.....) a vigorous debate. The subject of this debate was whether or not the invasion of the Philippines represented the first 'true' moment of American imperialism (and relatedly as to whether the United States had been an imperial state). In some ways this is the case and in some other ways it is not the case, again, this all depends on ones conception of empire. In my opinion it is a mixed case. It is not the original moment of American empire because to call it thus would be to ignore the wars that American governments had waged against Aborigines prior to the invasion of the Philippines. It is a seminal moment in the history of American empire, however, in that it represents a novelty; the American military mobilized its forces and traveled overseas to conquer a foreign people, a people whom they considered as very much 'other' and barbarian. This moment in American Foreign Policy very much resembles that of the European Powers in the same time period.

Iraq, in its own right, represents a moment of some special historical importance. It represents, again, a revival of this debate as to whether or not the United States is an empire or not. Indeed in the case of Iraq, and this is shown very vividly through works such as Derek Gregory's *The Colonial Present*, the Americans set up shop in Iraq in a manner very reminiscent of other imperial powers before them. They obviously were not treating the local people very well, and this is shown through this idea of 'attacking the city' and 'controlling the urban space.' The powering down of the city and the related failures caused failures in waste and

water management which were disastrous. The insurgency started soon thereafter out of a resent of the American governments decision to completely dismantle the existing sunni government. Originally the insurgency was composed of Sunni militants, and soon thereafter al-qaeda and other related jihadi groups joined in. But also, and interestingly, normal Iraqis suffering under the weight of disaffection and tired of the management of their country by the Americans also started to swell the ranks of the insurgents. The invasion represented, in many ways, America's third grand return to empire moment when they went abroad with the express purposes of invading and controlling a country.

How do the cases of the Philippines and Iraq go to show a continuity of American Imperialism?

I think that the cases of the Philippines and Iraq go to show a continuity of American Imperialism in a couple of key ways: (1.) the political domestic context, (2.) foreign policy orientation, and (3.) the practices involved in each case of counterinsurgency. I'll say a few quick words on each point.

(1.) Political Domestic Context: Race and Racism have been enduring factors in the way that politics/policies have been/are conducted in the United States. Now this is not to say that race has been deployed the same way across 100 years in time. During the time contemporaneous to the two cases in question understandings of race and what constitutes racism differed. In the time of the Philippines (1898-1903) race was believed to have a basis in science, amongst other things, and was believed to have some level of acceptance. It was acceptable for one of the leading generals in the American military comment on the Filipino peoples' semi-civilization. In the time of Iraq, these things are less acceptable on the societal level. This is not to say that racism doesn't exist in the time of Iraq, nor is it to say that people

are no longer racist. As I quote Michelle Alexander in my Chapter 3 and in my conclusion, she gets at the heart of the current problem of racism.....this invisible kind of unspoken racism which exists but which has, in some contexts, and especially the case on the war on drugs, not been explicitly designed as a racist and exclusionary policy.

What I attempted to show in the Chapters on Iraq and the Philippines was that there was an enduring racist sentiment in the political domestic scene of the United States. In the time of the Philippines the heads of each major party espoused racist sentiments towards the people of the Philippines. Roosevelt, as I write about in Chapter 3, espouses this kind of ‘destroy the barbarian to remake them’ kind of ideology whereas his chief competitor, William Jennings Bryan, espouses ideas that the Philippines should not be conquered because the integration of Filipinos into the American polity would result in a corruption of its racial pool. In Iraq, these sentiments persist. What I attempt to show in the case of Iraq, in chapter 3, was the race relations between the United States government and various racial others. Particularly ‘muslim looking’ Americans and black Americans. What I attempt to make clear in this chapter is the emergence of a new kind of racism. It emerged causing a mass incarceration of disproportionately black male Americans. ‘Muslim-looking’ Americans received a fairly oppressive treatment as-well. I attempt to show this in the chapter in question.

(2.) Foreign Policy Orientation: The foreign policy orientation of the United States has by-and-large been coloured by racial considerations. In the time of the Philippines the political elite of the country spouted rhetoric rich with references to the superiority of their Anglo-Saxon race. At the time, President Roosevelt espoused a hyper masculine ideology where it was seen as natural for the stronger races of masculine virile men to overspread the earth and to displace those who were deemed less racially fit. In the time of Iraq, although Generals and men of political importance did not spout such rhetoric, their motivations and considerations

were similarly coloured by racial considerations. As one of the opening quotations to chapter 3 demonstrates; racial epithets were used by high ranking officers in the military, and certainly were used amongst military personnel more generally. However, although there are signs of this kind of language appearing it does not appear to have appeared in the same frequency as it did in the Philippines. Furthermore, in Iraq, the idea of helping the less fortunate through the lens of ‘controlling the risky zones of the global south’ appears as a new iteration of the Rooseveltian doctrine of ‘destroying the barbarian to train them to become civilized.’

(3.) Practices of Counterinsurgency: The main focus of my thesis, and where I think there certainly is a continuity of racial practice in United States Politics, is to be found in how they carry out their counterinsurgencies. I think that the three main similarities across these cases are: (1.) That racism was used in the form of epithets and older imperial tropes to dehumanize the ‘other’ via various context specific representational practices. (2.) A sense of jocular and dark humour was associated with acts of torture and atrocity. (3.) Exceptional levels of violence and cruelty were employed discursively and in practice against a racial ‘other’.

Why Counterinsurgency?

A counterinsurgency policy is designed to quell rebellious and violent insurgents under a given power. Given the violent nature of all military operations I believe that the discourses produced in violent confrontation between peoples produce a rich trove of ideas which are indicative of a number of cultural predispositions and idiosyncrasies. In this light, counterinsurgency is important to my research because I want to know what drives military personnel to engage in atrocity, or put otherwise - “the murder of civilians and prisoners, torture of captives,

systematic burning of civilian quarters (destruction of private property), and rape.³² Relatedly, why is it that a perpetrator would revert to a racial language when doing so? These two questions make up the core of my research project here; more specifically attempting to understand the relationship that these actions have with the ideas of race prevalent at the time.

Why Race and not Gender or a more Intersectional Approach

I would like to keep this discussion brief because I think that this is perhaps a choice which is not more complex than a mere personal preference. Before carrying any further, a couple of caveats must be mentioned: 1. I do have a brief discussion of intersectionality in my in first chapter, and I think that intersectionality is key to understanding many social phenomena. 2. I am not 'anti-feminist' or scared of incorporating gender or using feminist authors in my work. On the contrary any cursory survey of my bibliography will prove the opposite. Now, the reasons for my choice to focus on race will be limited to two: one of personal preference and another of personal experience. My own research interests lie in the intersection between American Foreign Policy and Race. The reason for this personal research interest stems from my own personal experience of racism. Perhaps if I were a woman or perhaps if I'd not had the good fortune to grow up in the socio-economic surroundings in which I did, I would write about gender or class with more focus. But my own personal experience of witnessing racism in action spurred my passions to pursue this particular topic. It is no more extraordinary an experience than any other, but perhaps what pushed me to pursue race in specific was the idea that it is fake – fake in the sense that it is a man-made creation – one which can be undone and rectified. But not tomorrow... nor any time soon... and not easily.

³² Richard E. Welch Junior. "American Atrocities in the Philippines: The Indictment and the Response." *Pacific Historical Review*. Vol. 43, No. 2 (May, 1974): 234

Research Question

Having briefly sketched out my broad rationale for pursuing this research two central questions represent the synthesis of the foregoing and, I hope, get to the heart of the concepts and ideas discussed above. These two questions are: (1.) *is there a link between atrocities committed during American counterinsurgency campaigns and race?* and (2.) *Is there continuity between the counterinsurgency techniques deployed in the Philippines and in Iraq in this respect?*

In an effort to answer these questions I propose to briefly outline the chapters which are to follow. In Chapter 1 I propose to tackle the question of race using the following questions as broad guides to my investigation: *what is it? how do we understand it? how will it be operationalized?* In other words, this first chapter serves both as a literature review and an outline of the theoretical framework to be adopted in the later sections of this thesis. It outlines the current state of the concept ‘race’ in the literature of various fields of politics with an eye to finding space for a critical approach. In the end, I settle on the elegant framework set forth by Roxanne Lynn Doty.³³

Carrying forward Doty’s operationalized concept of race I undertake an analysis of the discourse and practice surrounding American Counterinsurgency Policy during the invasion of the Philippines from 1899-1903. Chapter 2 is broken down into 2 parts: first; I investigate the role that racialized discourse played in the invasion of the Philippines and the subsequent counterinsurgency policy, and second; I delve into the empirical historical record to attempt to sketch out how racism was deployed on the ground in the counterinsurgency in the Philippines and what relationship the acts of atrocity committed there had with racial discourse. In a

³³ Roxanne Lynn Doty, “Foreign Policy as Social Construction: A Post-Positivist Analysis of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines,” *International Studies Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (1993).

general way, it appears that the enemy 'other' became racialized as the result of a psychological shift in soldiers' minds to dehumanize the other. A mixture of the psychologically stressful environment in which the soldiers found themselves and a readymade set of domestic and on-the-ground racial tropes animated the soldiers decision to use race to dehumanize the 'other'.

Following these findings I attempt to investigate to what extent these mechanisms existed in the counterinsurgency in Iraq in Chapter 3. The investigation of Iraq is structured similarly to that of the Philippines but, due to the absolute abundance of information on Iraq, it is broken into three sections. The first section examines the role of race in the domestic politics of the United States before, during, and after September 11, 2001. The second section sketches out an emerging international logic concerning military intervention and development – particularly illustrating two logics at play: (1.) an international biopolitics of counterinsurgency and (2.) an orientalist visuality of the 'other.' The final section sketches out the empirical reality of how race was used in atrocity in Iraq. Pulling from countless interviews from soldiers returning from Iraq, and using a deep case study of the Mahmudiyah killings, it appears as though the relationship between atrocity, race, and counterinsurgency proposed in the previous chapter holds – although the clarity of hindsight is not afforded to the war in Iraq.

In the conclusion I will undertake a comparative analysis between the two cases underlining the core linkages and key case specificities. I will then undertake a brief exploration of the Obama policy towards the emergence of drone warfare and the expansion of the use of Special Forces, especially those of the Joint Special Operations Command, and how this helps us understand race and atrocity.

Chapter 1: Towards A Critical Visual Discursive Theory of Racism

Counterinsurgency is defined as “military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency.”³⁴ However, as we will see in Chapter 3, it is more about western techniques of control over the global south than it is ‘defeating insurgency.’ Therefore, Counterinsurgency at its core is composed of two key practices: 1. “a practice wherein and whereby identities are constructed and boundaries are drawn so that threats to the existing order are attributed to the dangerous ‘Other(s),” and 2. “[a] representational [practice] by which the authority and values of the West are reaffirmed.”³⁵ The second point, the *raison d’être* of post-colonial theory, is to unlock the mechanism(s) which naturalize(s) the east vs. west/north vs. south/ developed vs. un(der)developed binary. This binary mode of thinking allows scholars to understand the movement of political power and therefore how privilege flows to the ‘self.’ Underlying this binary assumption is often a key qualifier, a racial qualifier – that of the ‘white’ ‘self.’ Although post-colonial scholars often do not specifically name race and racism as their key locus of analysis it is assumed by the way in which they uncover the oppression faced overwhelmingly by people of colour. First and foremost it should be our task to uncover what the key unspoken concept of post-colonial analysis is – race. From here we will begin to see the commonalities and logic underlying the race-counterinsurgency relationship. This will allow us, further, to engage in a comparative historical case study of these dynamics in action in the foreign policy of the United States in our cases: 1) the Filipino-American war from 1898-1903 and 2) the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

³⁴ Markus Kienscherf, “A Programme of Global Pacification: US Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Biopolitics of Human (in)security,” *Security Dialogue* 42, no. 6 (2011): 520.

³⁵ Roxanne Lynn Doty, *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 76.

Before venturing to define the internal content of our term it is often helpful to describe its external boundaries - what it is not. By starting from a negative orientation we will come to understand the limits of the conceptual power of race. Philosophers of science raise serious doubts as to the material existence of the term. This argument usually starts by listing the various biological proofs which conclude that the term *race* has no validity in reality as there is no scientific proof of *races*. From here, given that race refers primarily to ‘supposedly’ false biological traits, proponents often extrapolate that the term should be replaced by something which doesn’t “encourage false beliefs.”³⁶

Often folk ideas of race, ideas which we deem as supposed ‘common sense,’ dictate that members of a certain race are all heir from a certain genealogy and have certain physical, or what is known in biology as phenotype traits, in common. Indeed, when we think of many of the most harmful stereotypes they are often founded on shared physical appearance. The conclusions which ‘disprove’ the existence of race are twofold. First, the genetic variation amongst members of a race is greater than the genetic variation between races.³⁷ That is to say, if races existed they should share more genetic material than they share with those of other races - this is not the case. Secondly, some early racialists suggested that races were indeed subspecies. According to Cosmides et al that is not the case.³⁸ The variation between chimpanzees is higher than that between humans; even with the number of humans obviously far outpacing that of chimpanzees. Therefore, given the low genetic variability amongst humans, we cannot say that there is sufficient evidence to warrant the creation of a species or even a sub species for that matter.³⁹

³⁶ Joshua Glasgow, *A Theory of Race* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 138.

³⁷ Leda Cosmides, John Tooby, and Robert Kurzban, “Perceptions of Race,” *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 7, no. 4 (April 2003): 173. See appendix for graphic.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Given that there is no scientific basis for race how should one proceed? Philosophers of science believe that various solutions are in order. These philosophers make recommendations based on whether or not they believe race to be a ‘social kind,’ (as opposed to a ‘natural kind’). A kind is defined as “that set of properties without which the object cannot exist and which serves in some important way in explanations of the object’s characteristic behaviour.”⁴⁰ Social, here, roughly refers to that set of characteristics which is studied by the social sciences and natural can be so defined by the natural sciences.⁴¹ Philosophers of science are unanimous in their belief that race does not constitute a ‘natural kind.’ Therefore their belief on its existence as a ‘social kind’ leads them to either continue the use of the term or substitute the term for something else entirely.

An example of the former position is represented by Zack’s conception of race. Her motivation to keep the term stems from the real consequences that this term has. Her concerns are vocalized through the lens of the American Empire’s prison industrial complex. American prisons are disproportionately populated by black males, a very real consequence of racism.⁴² Zack believes that to mask the term is to hurt those labeled by it and rob them of its emancipatory power. An example of the latter position is represented by Glasgow’s solution to the problem of race. He believes that race is not a natural kind and is very narrowly a social kind. This view stems from his contention that the social kind ‘race’ often relies on conceptions of physical racial characteristics which have no basis in science.⁴³ Glasgow’s solution is to construct the term “race*.” The new semantic construction “race*” will signify those discourses

⁴⁰ Sally Haslanger, “Social Constructionist Analysis of Race,” in *Revisiting Race in a Genomic Age*, ed. Barbara A. Koenig, Sandra Soo-Jin Lee, and Sarah S. Richardson (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 59.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴² Naomi Zack, *Philosophy of Science and Race* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 114.

⁴³ Glasgow, *A Theory of Race*, 123.

which referred to the original phenomenon as solely a “social kind”.⁴⁴ Ancestry will replace the notions of common lineage and phenotype which the old word race attempted to capture.

Having had a good grasp of what the concept should not include we should venture to discover its positive contents. Foucault’s account of early racism is instructive to us here. His essential conclusion is as follows:

“The newly emerging Sciences [of the 18th century] understood knowledge primarily as a practice of ordering and classifying on the basis of essential differences (1970, 1994). Classification of human beings by race also had a strong conceptual relationship with mapmaking, in which the expanding geographical areas of the globe ‘discovered’ by Europeans were given order and intelligibility in part through their association with racial types.”⁴⁵

Given the above, it is no surprise that most scientists of the day sought explanations based on the climates of geographic regions to determine difference of a racial kind.⁴⁶ Later in the 18th century, and carrying on until the mid-19th, race was a nationalist tool interwoven with notions of romanticism. At this stage races represent the originating and founding peoples of various nations.⁴⁷ This mid-19th century notion is tied more closely to a conception of ethnicity. The contemporary notion is linked more closely to the mid to late 19th century foucauldian notions of biopower and biopolitics. In a nutshell the rise of biopolitics saw the rise in prominence of the authority of medical science. This rationality privileged the use of various intellectual and statistical tools which aimed at controlling the population as opposed to disciplining individuals. The core principle became “to make live and let die.”⁴⁸ Racism, according to Foucault, is the mechanism through which those undesirables in society are left to die.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Ibid., 154.

⁴⁵ Linda Alcoff, “The Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment,” in *Visible Identities Race, Gender, and the Self* (New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 179.

⁴⁶ Robert Bernasconi, “Who Invented the Concept of Race? Kant’s Role in the Enlightenment Construction of Race,” in *Race*, ed. Robert Bernasconi (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2001), 25.

⁴⁷ Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981).

⁴⁸ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 253–254.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 254.

This medical centric rationality encouraged some to seek fundamental biological motivations for a hierarchy of races dominated by Caucasians or later - whites. For example, the quasi-science of phrenology (the study of human skulls) dictated that the smaller skull size of non-white peoples correlated with their inferior intellectual capacity. Therefore, according to this quasi science, although improvement was possible it was slow and very much limited by the original structure. The implications of this claim lead to the view of the racial other as inherently always inferior: “a small brain could not manifest a powerful mind; the mind could be developed by education, but its effects were limited by the original organisation.”⁵⁰

Given this brief history, a definition reflecting the content of the social kind race is in order. Sally Haslanger, using formal logic, derives the following: “A group is *racialized* if its members are socially positioned as subordinate or privileged along some dimension (economic, political, legal, social, etc.), and the group is ‘marked’ as a target for this treatment by observed or imagined bodily features presumed to be evidence of ancestral links to a certain geographical region”⁵¹ (author’s emphasis). This definition is helpful because it differentiates between the problematic term race and the process through which members of society receive racial characteristics - *racialization*. We can think of the analogous term gender, and its relation to its biologically situated term, sex, as having the same relationship between race/racialization (the social kind) and skin pigment (natural kind).⁵²

The ‘race debate,’ or the debate concerning the appropriate usage, definition, and life of the term, presents two sides: those who wish to use the term race and those who wish to substitute race for another term. For the sake of being succinct we will refer to those who fit in

⁵⁰ Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, 121.

⁵¹ Sally Haslanger, “Gender and Race: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be?,” *NOUS* 34, no. 1 (March 2000): 44.

⁵² Haslanger, “Social Constructionist Analysis of Race,” 65. Haslanger defines colour as: “the (contextually variable) physical markers of race, just as the term ‘sex’ to [sic] refers to the (contextually visible) physical markers of gender.”

the former category as *conservationists* and those who fit in the latter as *revisionists*.⁵³ Those who argue the conservationist position, as the name suggests, want to conserve the term race and believe that it still has analytical validity as a social kind despite its falsity as a natural kind. Those who argue the revisionist position take two broad stances: 1. those who want to replace the term with a 'superior' near term and 2. those convinced that the current term spreads racism and false beliefs.

Proponents of the near term substitution are largely scholars of Marx. They argue that the category race is only a distracting proxy for the true and objective category 'class.' Wallerstein, a key figure, claims that class is an 'objective' category⁵⁴ whereas other identity markers are constructed categories, or what Wallerstein refers to as various expressions of peoplehood.⁵⁵ Although various non-class identities are not wholly distractionary to Wallerstein, the fact remains that they are seen as mere vehicles through which the ultimate solutions to the Marxist dilemma will be solved. Dirlik arrives at a similar end point through a different journey. His problematique stems from an "increased institutional visibility of members of marginalized and excluded groups," with the simultaneous continuation of oppression of these groups.⁵⁶ Dirlik, as Wallerstein, argues that "racial and cultural equality *cannot be achieved outside the class ideology* that guides, shapes, and maintains racial and cultural antagonisms" [my emphasis].⁵⁷ Race therefore is a tool of false consciousness designed to distract the proletariat from their unified consciousness. There is no doubt that in some cases class and race often do correlate heavily. This would be based on the shared oppressions which

⁵³ I have borrowed some form of these terms from Zack, *Philosophy of Science and Race*; Glasgow, *A Theory of Race*; Haslanger, "Social Constructionist Analysis of Race."

⁵⁴ Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, "The Construction of Peoplehood: Racism, Nationalism, Ethnicity,," in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, ed. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein (London ; New York Verso, 1991), 84.

⁵⁵ The sense in which Wallerstein uses 'peoplehood' is perhaps closer to identity markers and linked to ideas of 'pastness' (Ibid., 78.)

⁵⁶ Arif Dirlik, "Race Talk, Race, and Contemporary Racism," *PMLA* 123, no. 5 (October 2008): 1376, doi:10.1632/pmla.2008.123.5.1363.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

proletarianization and racialization present (not to mention patriarchy). Race comes with its own powers of oppression and resistance independent of those inherent in other identity markers. The same way that a Marxist analysis cannot capture all the complex webs of meaning which are tangled in colonialism and imperialism; a scholar of race would be ill served to use the concept of race alone to understand the plight of working class women of colour. Because oppression always happens in an interlocking and simultaneous fashion we could not fully understand the position of a racialized working class women of color if not for the oppressions occurring by virtue of her race, gender, and class.

Race is not only deemed less 'objective' than class but often confused with ethnicity.

According to Haslanger, race contra ethnicity involves a process of hierarchy:

"It might be useful to employ the notion of 'ethnicity' for those groups that are like races as I've defined them except that they do not experience systematic subordination or privilege in the context in question... we can distinguish between grouping individuals on the basis of their (assumed) origins [ethnicity], and grouping them *hierarchically* on the basis of their (assumed) origins [race], [sic.] and the contrast between race and ethnicity might be a useful way to capture this distinction."⁵⁸

There is also a notion of a perceived (although wrongful) permanence and objectivity associated with race that is not present in ethnicity. To put it differently, ethnicity and culture "make reference to the histories, experiences, and productions of a people," whereas the idea of race refers to supposedly "objective and arbitrary bodily features."⁵⁹

Normatively, race is also more desirable than ethnicity. First, ethnicity does not quite do justice to the relations of biopower which race and racism perpetrate(d).⁶⁰ Secondly "the race-to-ethnicity move would in fact go against the semantic teachings on the role of ordinary language and the folk theories of identity."⁶¹ This means that as "race-talk" works on a higher

⁵⁸ Haslanger, "Gender and Race," 45.

⁵⁹ Linda Alcoff, "Racism and Visible Race," in *Visible Identities Race, Gender, and the Self* (New York ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 198.

⁶⁰ Srdjan Vucetic, "Black Banker, White Banker: Philosophies of the Global Colour Line," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 26, no. 1 (2013): 41, doi:10.1080/09557571.2012.734783.

⁶¹ Ibid.

cognitive level of abstraction it is preferable to “ethnicity-talk.”⁶² Thirdly, according to intersectionality theory, we would lose some of the explanatory power which is gained when switching from ethnicity to race.⁶³ Drawing from our previous discussion of intersectionality; although the distinction is often blurred between race and ethnicity much is lost in not talking about race in favor of ethnicity. It is precisely because of the simultaneous oppressions which intersectionality speaks to which would be lost in only using the term ethnicity. And this goes equally for class.

Scholars of the second revisionist position are a much more diverse grouping. Glasgow, for instance, follows an externalist view concerning linguistic philosophy.⁶⁴ He comes to the conclusion that the ‘social kind’ race should be substituted for race* and the ‘natural kind’ should be substituted for ancestry. Blum, also a revisionist, favors the term racialization over the term race. He believes that the term race reifies the oppressive aspects of the natural kind term⁶⁵ whereas racialization does not. Racialization better highlights the biological falsity of race in that it expresses a more ‘social kinds’ emphasis.⁶⁶ However, despite these caveats, Blum’s criticisms fall dangerously close, or indeed fall over the line, of paternalism. In explaining the falsity of the term race and the negative impacts it has on identity construction Blum argues “Why can’t one be healthily, unashamedly, and responsibly ‘black’ while making one’s job, or work on behalf of refugees, or interracial family, for example, the center of meaning in one’s life?”⁶⁷ Leaving aside the obvious fact that people of color do these things already, and although

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., 41–42.

⁶⁴ There is equal consideration to be given to the folk, or common, usage of the term race in everyday discourses but also to those experts in the relevant field (Glasgow, *A Theory of Race*, 127–128.)

⁶⁵ Lawrence A. Blum, *I’m Not a Racist, but--: The Moral Quandary of Race / Lawrence Blum*. (Ithaca,: Cornell University Press, 2002), 160.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 152.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 169.

the core goal of this ideal is laudable - that of a united humanity, this does not speak to the reality which necessitates a shared identity of 'blackness.'

Blum's shortcomings here, a sense of moral righteousness notwithstanding, stem from his eagerness to do away with the social and natural kinds of race simultaneously. Blum does not account for the implications of the biopolitics of the social kind which we cannot forget or make disappear. They make up important elements of what constitutes the concept of race and indeed help us to explain its persistence despite many hard fought battles and victories towards racial equality and justice. Think of the racial aspects of widespread social problems in the United States: mass incarceration, access to education, ghettoization, and other pervasive racial phenomenon. These oppressions, and their resistances, cannot be battled, or understood, merely with the concept of racialization. The false biological attributes imbued in the term race are integral to understanding race and racism. This brings us to an unresolved paradox regarding race; many scholars of race wish to end the oppression associated with it by coming into a colour blind society. And yet, the trappings of the colour blind society serve to worsen racism in society.

Having taken on some of the debate concerning the semantics of race, we must now look into the foremost operationalizations and uses of this concept. The foremost accounts of the development of race within the American polity come from a group of scholars using a historicist, constructivist, and largely structuralist account of racism. Headed by Omi and Winant this group of scholars create nuanced accounts of the formation of race within the U.S. Omi and Winant argue that the concept of race in the United States has evolved through the concept of "racial formations."⁶⁸ A racial formation is "the sociohistorical process by which

⁶⁸ Joe Feagin and Sean Elias, "Rethinking Racial Formation Theory: A Systemic Racism Critique," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36, no. 6 (2013): 931, doi:10.1080/01419870.2012.669839.

racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed' in societies like the USA."⁶⁹ Racial formations are composed of "racial 'projects,'⁷⁰ that combine representational/discursive elements with structural/instrumental ones'; and... 'iterative sequences of interpretations 'articulations' of the meaning of race that are open to many types of agency, from the individual to the organizational, from the local to the global."⁷¹ This assemblage describes both the discursive and the instrumental aspects of power while still leaving agency open for various actors.

Contrast with this a number of other complex mainstream structural theories of race. Bonilla-Silva critiques this theories' over-determination of the role of the "ideological and juridico-political,"⁷² aspects of racism over the more societally situated ones. King and Smith argue that it is not only institutions *or* ideology which bring forth new 'racial formations' but institutions *and* ideologies.⁷³ They also wish to portray 'racial formations' in the United States as a binary contest (as a contest between the "white supremacist" order and the "racial egalitarian" one) rather than a contest of three or more projects.⁷⁴ They wish to demonstrate the fluidity of alliances; that members of either order at any time could defect to either side. Feagin and Elias, present a 'systemic racism' theory geared towards uncovering the pervasive domination of white supremacy in the political and social structure of the United States. Their theory shines a light on: "[the] discriminatory practices perpetrated by whites...the unjustly gained resources and power for whites...the maintenance of major material and other resource

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 933. Defined as: "sociopolitical contestations occurring among different racial-ethnic groups."

⁷¹ Ibid. Overview of racial formation: "."

⁷² Eduardo Bonilla-silva, "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation," *American Sociological Review* 62, no. 3 (1997): 466.

⁷³ Desmond S. King and Rogers M. Smith, "Racial Orders in American Political Development," *American Political Science Review* 99, no. 1 (2005): 76, doi:10.1017/S0003055405051506.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 77.

inequalities... [and] the dominant 'white racial frame' designed to rationalize and implement persisting racial oppression.”⁷⁵

Omi and Winant raise 3 important counter-critiques. The first centres on the inadequacy of the binary approaches of their critics. Omi and Winant disagree that Whites engaged in the antiracist fight are mere tokens of a black vs white binary. They argue that “the fact that millions of Whites (and not only Whites) identify with this idea [of anti-racism], and the fact that many Whites have adopted a more serious antiracism ([i.e.] cultural workers, ‘movement people,’ etc., who cannot be dismissed as mere tokens or exceptions) calls into question the rigidities [of this approach].”⁷⁶ Furthermore, the binary view of racism as a struggle of black vs white does little to reveal the power and agency of oppressed groups.⁷⁷ Omi and Winant also point to the need for a historical complexity lacking in the conceptions of others; complexity they believe which was captured in their ‘racial formation’ framework.⁷⁸ The takeaways here should be: 1. That Omi and Winant’s approach lacks an analysis of white supremacy and 2. That alternative approaches lack the openness and complexity built into Omi and Winant’s approach. The theory proposed below is mindful of these things and uses them to enrich its analysis.

Before moving on to how these concerns become operationalized we need to deal with one last fundamental issue – visuality. The concept of race is intimately tied with the visual. Physicality displaced climactic determinism from the 19th century onwards as quasi-sciences of race classified humans according to physical traits. My point here is that the visual inference

⁷⁵ Feagin and Elias, “Rethinking Racial Formation Theory,” 937.

⁷⁶ Michael Omi and Howard Winant, “Thinking Through Race and Racism.,” *Contemporary Sociology* 38, no. 2 (2009): 123.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

mechanism through which we understand the world is almost never discussed in relation to race, and yet there most certainly is a very real and consequential bias to be discussed here. This seemingly hidden aspect of race is dangerous for this very reason: “The perceptual practices involved in racializations are then tacit, almost hidden from view, and thus almost immune from critical reflection... Perception is, not presumed true, but defined as access to truth’.”⁷⁹

Why is this important to our understanding of race? First and foremost, the existence of racialized groups and persons is due in large part to the creation of a system which classified people as such. These classifications created differences between various groups which rendered them as knowable objects.⁸⁰ Chief amongst these differences was the visual phenotypical difference; physical features which constructed a difference from a self to a racialized other. These characteristics are primarily visually known and therefore, although biologically false in their ‘real’ existence, are very real in a social sense.⁸¹ Alcoff’s discussion of the material consequences of visual inference is instructive here: “Visible difference naturalizes racial meanings... We may need to be trained to pick out some features over others as the most salient to identity, but those features nonetheless have a material reality... Locating race in the visible thus produces the experience that racial identity is immutable. This is why race must work through the visible markers on the body, even if those markers are made more visible through learned processes.”⁸² Although there is certainly an element of physicality in the actualization of race this actualization is only possible through the construction of reality. This reality is one where the positive identification of certain features creates a concept called race. Although differences in skin pigmentation and minor shapes of facial features exist, race itself

⁷⁹ Alcoff, “The Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment,” 188.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 179.

⁸¹ See note 1 in Michael Omi and Howard Winant, “Resistance Is Futile?: A Response to Feagin and Elias,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36, no. 6 (June 1, 2013): 971.

⁸² Alcoff, “The Phenomenology of Racial Embodiment,” 192.

does not exist unless we give the combination of these features an importance and a meaning. This is why visibility is so important to race because of the attribution of a system of knowledge to specific phenotypical objects without which race is unknowable.

Important work done in the psy sciences compliments the findings of the philosophy of visibility discussed here. It details how race forms in our cognition. The answer is partly through learned visual cues, and partly through cognitive functions.⁸³ The two cognitive functions thought to be responsible for seeing race are: 1. a function for determining coalitions and alliances and 2. a domain specific function. Lawrence Hirschfield conducts empirical work which centers on children and their cognition of race. Hirschfield's experiments deals with domain specific cognition.⁸⁴ Hirschfield explains domain specific cognition as: "the results of perception [which] represent sedimented contextual knowledges, that 'our individual sensibilities and perceptions are never purely individual, but are the result of our upbringing, heritage and identity.'"⁸⁵ Hirschfield's empirical work centres on the ability of young children (3 and 4 year olds) to recall identity markers in stories which are presented to them either orally or visually. One of Hirschfield's key conclusions in the auditory recall experiment was that "four-year-olds showed a marked improvement over three-year-olds in their ability to remember race."⁸⁶ It is reasonable to conclude that this "strongly suggests that the visual cues of race become operable only after a child has developed a cognitive competence specific to the domain of race in his or her cultural context."⁸⁷ Therefore, as Hirschfield's research demonstrates – the inferential mechanism is a necessary intermediary in order to learn racial

⁸³ Vucetic, "Black Banker, White Banker," 38..

⁸⁴ To see the work refuting the alternative hypothesis of coalitional alliance cognition see: Robert Kurzban, John Tooby, and Leda Cosmides, "Can Race Be Erased? Coalitional Computation and Social Categorization," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 98, no. 26 (December 18, 2001): 15387–92, doi:10.1073/pnas.251541498.

⁸⁵ Alcoff, "Racism and Visible Race," 203.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 204.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

physical cues as it is not a natural or inherent phenomenon. It is culturally constructed concept which artificially imbues physical traits with meaning.

Although the concept of 'race' is constructed it is certainly not inconsequential in its materiality. Cathy Hannabach traces the ways in which Haitian refugees' blood was racialized and imbued with a specific narrative related to AIDS. This narrative rendered their bodies suspicious, policeable, surveilleable, and legitimate targets of the biopolitics of the U.S. state. Hannabach explains: "the regulation of blood marks the convergence of US nation building, economic markets, military interventions, and biopolitical control over the course of the twentieth century, a process that has only increased in the twenty-first century."⁸⁸ Following the coup in Haiti in 1991 Haitians fled their country looking for a better life. Yet when they fled to the U.S. they were filed into the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base. Once there the refugees were sorted following a mandatory blood test. Those who were found to be HIV positive were corralled into a fenced in area surrounded by barbed wire. It is important to note 2 things: 1. It is not clear that blood test were administered with regularity to those entering the US. Permanent visa applicants were administered blood tests but asylum seekers were not.⁸⁹ The Haitians were applying for asylum not permanent residence. 2. The choice to hold Haitian refugees at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base is historically consistent with the immigration policy of the U.S. Their policy was to send 'the other' to zones of exceptional sovereignty – zones which are controlled by the U.S. but not subject to its laws or its constitution.⁹⁰ Add to this the narrative propagated by the U.S. media about Haitian refugees as homosexual HIV carrying refugees, and this phenomena paints a picture of a racialized group, whose blood was deemed dangerous.

⁸⁸ Cathy Hannabach, "Technologies of Blood: Asylum, Medicine, and Biopolitics," *Cultural Politics* 9, no. 1 (2013): 36.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

In light of the lack of a critical perspective which questions the role of the inferential mechanism in the creation of racialized groups and collectivities I believe the construction of such a methodology is in order. Keeping in mind the takeaways from earlier discussions of race I follow the path set out by Doty in order to create a critical methodology which takes these things into account. Firstly, a switch from the question of *why* to *how possible* will be in order. This switch will change the object of analysis from one of purely causal inference, to one investigating the underlying processes and social structures which make events possible.⁹¹ Instead of viewing power as objective (as an object which can be wielded) a more Foucauldian conception is in order; one which posits the productivity and circularity of power and which allows power to create the world within which it circulates.⁹² This perspective does not assume the ‘already constructed nature’ of subjects. It assumes that subjects inhabit a world where meaning is constructed and where these meanings have material effects on reality. Therefore, the subjectivity of individuals is constructed and evolving in a world of changing meanings.⁹³ It takes into account and allows for the agency of colonized and colonizer. It follows that those making foreign policy, and therefore those deciding on the counterinsurgency policy, are equally constructing meanings and are constrained by the range of available meanings constructed before them.⁹⁴

Given the constructedness of our world, the way in which we make our world through language will be analyzed through the tool of ‘discourse.’ Language should be understood as existing and referring to signs. These signs refer to a myriad other signs in an endless web of meanings which is termed intertextuality.⁹⁵ The way in which the construction of foreign policy discourses will be approached is following the fundamental agreement in the field of scholars

⁹¹ Doty, “Foreign Policy as Social Construction,” 298.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 299.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 300.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 301.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 302.

studying race. All scholars, whether they believe the term exists or not, believe that persons are given racial traits according to a hierarchical understanding of identity markers (gender, class, race, ethnicity, etc...). It is important, then, to understand the functioning of this hierarchy through language. A discourse should be understood in the Foucauldian sense as: “a structured relational totality.”⁹⁶ A discourse according to Doty: “delineates the terms of intelligibility whereby a particular ‘reality’ can be known and acted upon.”⁹⁷ Discourses are not closed systems and they indeed exist in relation with other discursive fields which are fuzzily delineated. The demarcations of one discourse from the next does not depend on “reference to the same object...a style of statement...the concepts involved...or themes,” but rather to the “regularity in the logic of the representational practices.”⁹⁸ Therefore a search for the ‘regularity in the logic of representational practices’ with regards to the racial implications of counterinsurgency is what is aimed at here. The practical application of which will be demonstrated in the next chapter.

At this juncture it would be helpful for us to heed the call beckoned to us by Haslanger’s piece “Gender and Race (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them To Be?” Essentially what she intends on bringing up here is that terms exceed our understanding of them in that we have the power to shape what we want them to be. Haslanger explains: “How we classify bodies can and does matter politically, for our laws, social institutions, and personal identities [which] are profoundly linked to understandings of the body and its possibilities. This is compatible with the idea that what possibilities a human body has is not wholly a function of our understandings of it. Our bodies often outdo us, and undo us, in spite of the meanings we give them.”⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Doty, *Imperial Encounters*, 6.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 9–10.

⁹⁹ Haslanger, “Gender and Race,” 52.

Haslanger, here, illuminates the precise point with which I wish to end my thoughts here. The fact that whatever 'we' call the phenomenon whereby those who have a different look than us are oppressed - race, racism, racialization, etc. - the important thing is what we do with these understandings. As Haslanger points out, human action often outpaces the elements contained within concept definitions. It is my purpose here to write and research about race, but for race to reshape itself, to become what scholars want it to be - a tool used to understand a certain phenomenon, and through this understanding learn how to undo the structures of power which enable oppression.

Chapter 2: Racism, Counterinsurgency, and the Philippines: American Counterinsurgency Policy from 1899-1903

You have no idea the way these people are treated by the Americans here... The first thing in the morning is the 'Nigger' and the last thing at night is the 'Nigger.'
-Sergeant Patrick Mason, U.S Army¹⁰⁰

The counterinsurgency operation in the Philippines is interesting in that it acts as a microcosm. Counterinsurgency policy, contemporaneous imperial endeavours, and exported racism all played central roles in the American military operation. Let me be clear, I am not advocating that the United States' invasion of the Philippines was entirely the product of racial export - that is not the case. It is something much more complex - an act of empire steeped in unique racial constructions from the Philippines, playing off of existing imperial tropes and attitudes, but also very much responding to popular racist sentiments of the day. Discourses are real just as ideas and thoughts are real - their 'realness' stems from their ability to lead to action. The racism of the day, combined with the catastrophic reality of war, led to horrible acts of atrocity and death. The key question here is, then, what role did race play in the counterinsurgency and atrocities in the Filipino-American war?

The Role of Racialized Discourse in the Invasion of the Philippines

Before moving on to discuss the empirics and the practices surrounding the American counterinsurgency operation; the discourse must first be analyzed. First, it will be important to understand the lenses through which actors at the time came to represent Filipinos. In a broad sense there are two elements which are important to understand American counterinsurgency of the time: the broader macro discourse of civilization/savagery and the micro domestic

¹⁰⁰ Paul A. (Paul Alexander) Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, & the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 129.

political situation in the United States. The macro discourse of civilization/savagery dominated the thinking on how to deal with Filipinos and fundamentally how to come to know them. Our starting point into this discourse will be the ‘standard of civilization.’ The criterion for admission into this civilized standard depended largely on one’s civilizational criteria – criteria which stood for race.

Gong defines the “Standard of Civilization” as “an expression of the assumptions, tacit and explicit, used to distinguish those that belong to a particular society from those that do not.”¹⁰¹ Five general standards were created, which if fulfilled, granted a country membership to the civilized club of nations. The most important tenet applicable to this case is the third which speaks to civilized warfare: “a ‘civilised’ state adheres to generally accepted international law, including the laws of war”¹⁰² This standard had substantial consequences for the way civilized countries would fight ‘uncivilized’ (or more often referred to as ‘barbaric’ and ‘savage’) countries. This was especially true when ‘uncivilized’ countries shifted military tactics from conventional to guerilla warfare. Civilized countries saw this deviation from the civilizational norm as a *carte blanche* to respond in kind with acts of barbarism against those who had done so to them. Therefore, what it meant to be civilized was more than just abstract notions of international law but could very well mean life and death.

The reasons for this exceptional use of force are various and complex. First, the position of the ‘other’ is important to our understanding of the creation of this exceptional space. The term civilization itself, working as a binary opposite to both barbarian and savage, serves 2 purposes: first, to create a *dichotomized* binary, and secondly to (attempt to) mask imperialism.¹⁰³ The term civilization, as mentioned above, naturally implies its opposite term – ‘savage’ or

¹⁰¹ Gerrit W. Gong, *The Standard of “Civilization” in International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 3.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 14; my emphasis.

¹⁰³ Brett Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization the Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 43

'barbarian.' These terms are not only set in binary opposition to each other but they are often used by 'civilized' imperial users as dichotomous and mutually exclusive. Each term (either civilization or its opposite) has no necessary positive content in and of itself. The term civilization is reinforced through a negative generation of internal content juxtaposed to what it meant not to be civilized. These oppositions, in turn, form a chain of signifiers which all refer to each other in a circular logic. The signifiers, then, work as the internal content of each term. Therefore, as Doty remarks "to be civilized was to be superior, which was to be rational, which was to be civilized."¹⁰⁴ Once the creation of these closed and opposed semantic systems is complete, the civilized system creates a hierarchy. The term civilized assumes its place in a superordinate place in this hierarchy whereas the 'savage' 'barbarian' 'other' assumes a subordinate place.

Secondly, the hierarchical relationship between semantic systems is created based on the civilized 'self's' self-appropriation of epistemic authority through the imposition of uniformity on the 'other'. Authority is self-appointed through the Kantian ideal of a liberal universal cosmopolitanism. Despite its seeming benevolence, Kantian cosmopolitanism carries with it an inherent imperialism. Bowden explains:

'Claims of universal values are accompanied by a temptation to impose values on the recalcitrant, resulting in violence and domination.' Thus, 'given the tragic consequences of a society of particularistic states,' should we really be 'surprised at the strength of the cosmopolitan impulse to erase or transcend that particularism.'¹⁰⁵

Therefore, it is apt to note here that a more fitting label to give Kant's liberal universalism would be to be labelled liberal uniformism.¹⁰⁶ This cosmopolitanism affirms sameness and not particularity.

¹⁰⁴ Doty, *Imperial Encounters*, 46.

¹⁰⁵ Bowden, *The Empire of Civilization the Evolution of an Imperial Idea*, 95.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 98.

One of the key tools of affirming this uniformity was through the increasingly important field of international law. With the advent of positivism in Europe the ‘Standard of Civilization’ shifted towards an International Law that rested purportedly on the principles of scientific empiricism and fact.¹⁰⁷ The rise of positivism brought a rise in the application of the scientific method to areas beyond the natural sciences. Phrenology, the quasi-science of measuring the human head to determine its intellectual capacity, was one of these new areas of inquiry. Discussed briefly in the previous chapter, phrenology is important because it purported to be the *most* scientific - “it was neither circumstances nor environment but specific, inherent physical differences that accounted for the failure of the non-Caucasian races to achieve Christianity and civilisation.”¹⁰⁸ Therefore it posited the greatest knowability of the racial ‘other’ because it could directly compare and measure it against the Caucasian self in a supposed inter-subjective and mutually agreed upon scientific manner.

Phrenology not only posited to ‘know’ the measure of intellectual capacity, but then passed judgement on a race’s moral character based on its proofs. For example, one of the leading phrenologists of his day, George Coombe, ‘found’ that: “the existing races of native American Indians show skulls inferior in their moral and intellectual development to those of the Anglo-Saxon race, and that, morally and intellectually, these Indians are inferior to their Anglo-Saxon invaders, and have receded before them.”¹⁰⁹ Caucasians, on the other hand, were not so ‘afflicted’. Indeed they were endowed with superior “frontal, coronal parts of the head” which established them as more intelligent than other races, and therefore as more moral.¹¹⁰ Given Caucasian superior head size, according to phrenologists, it was also reasonable to

¹⁰⁷ Gong, *The Standard of “Civilization” in International Society*, 43.

¹⁰⁸ Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, 121.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 143.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

conclude “their intellectual and moral superiority over all other races of men.”¹¹¹ Non-Caucasians, according to this view, despite their ‘inherent predisposition’ towards moral degeneracy could be taught how to better themselves. Indeed, some thought it was their duty to uplift the ‘savage’ or the ‘barbarian’. The duty for uplift, originally occupied by Christian missionaries, was thought now to belong to the uniquely masculine and virile Anglo-Saxon – the premier race of imperialists. A race whose unique destiny it was not only to overspread the world but to uplift those beneath their station – or, as the Rudyard Kipling poem infamously put it, “take up the White Man’s Burden.”¹¹²

Third, reinforcing the idea of the epistemic authority and forced uniformity was the notion of the Anglo-Saxon as uniquely equipped to civilize lesser races. This authority was self-appropriated by virtue of a unique destiny. But why did this idea of Anglo-Saxonism take hold over other ideals? What was it specifically about Anglo-Saxonism which translated into the ideals of conquest and empire which motivated American imperialist? As Reginald Horsman explains – the idea of Anglo-Saxonism was very much tied to the idea that Saxons, and specifically English Saxons, were uniquely free. Horsman teases out some of the main reasons and mechanism which explain why it was that ‘anglo’ and ‘saxons’ were uniquely equipped to spread civilization and to create their own empire. The popularization of this idea that Anglo-Saxons were uniquely equipped to overspread the world with their brand of a uniquely free empire originates in the idea of races which Foucault discusses in his discussion of race. Here races were those groups of people which populated various nations.¹¹³ The idea of the Anglo-Saxon which most applies here dates back to the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Historians and other intellectuals developed a growing interest in the origins of the Caucasian people.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Rudyard Kipling, “The White Man’s Burden,” *McClure’s Magazine* (1893-1926), February 1899.

¹¹³ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 60.

This interest stemmed from a growing fascination in racial superiority.¹¹⁴ Research began in this area in an attempt to uncover the roots and lineages associated to various national progenitor races. English historians of this orientation traced the roots of the Englishman from Western Asia, through the forests of Germany, and then on to the isle of Britain where the Saxon tribe settled to populate the British Isles.¹¹⁵ The Saxons were mythologized in various works of literature in the day to aggrandize the uniquely free and liberal tradition of the British. In the popular mid-19th century work *Ivanhoe*, the titular character conducts a struggle against the Norman invaders who had forcibly settled the Saxons of Britain. This work shows the uniquely free values of *Ivanhoe* against the Norman invaders and is supposed to mark a tradition of liberty and a struggle for freedom.¹¹⁶

But why the Germans? Why does this matter that Saxons came from the forests of Germany? The emphasis on Saxons, and particularly English speaking descendants of the free german tribes of Saxons, had to do with the idea of Manifest Destiny. The idea that a strong people (read here nation) were predestined, often by god, to gain more territorial possession lay at the heart of this idea. The idea of Manifest Destiny, particularly at this time, was very much all about being the most masculine virile and therefore, best, people. These characteristics were sought after and it followed naturally that those who had conquered the most territory were the most racially fit, and therefore were more inherently worthy and powerful. Therefore, the further east a given nations progenitor people had spread, the farther west they must have trekked, and therefore the farther they would have had to battle. It was thought that “the further a race had penetrated [west], the earlier it must have started on its course the greater its imprint on world history.”¹¹⁷ There was therefore a sense of superiority based on the spatial

¹¹⁴ Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, 34.

¹¹⁵ Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, 37.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 40–41.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

conquest a people's race had undertaken. The relation between the distance a people had travelled west and the racial superiority of a people was tied to a notion of masculine power and racial fitness. It was thought that those people more virile and possessing martial prowess would overtake those more feminine and who took poorly to combat. Westward conquest was, therefore, intimately tied in this conception with racial superiority: "[The Anglo-Saxon's] rise in England was identified as only one stage in a relentless Western movement that had begun in India, had stretched into the German forests, and was playing itself out in the United States and in the British Empire's settlement colonies."¹¹⁸ This signified that by the time Anglo-Saxons had arrived in the United States destiny had bestowed upon them a duty to finish this "raging outward movement," of a uniquely "heroic racial diaspora that snaked through the borders of states and broke fearlessly through frontier."¹¹⁹ Amongst the British, and Americans as the natural ancestors of British lineage, Anglo-Saxons were mythologized as uniquely free, but also free and virile people. After all it was the Germanic tribes, in this conception, which overthrew the tyranny of roman empires and remained free and unconquerable. And therefore it is this conception of the Anglo-Saxon as uniquely virile, free, and invested with liberty which drives this conception of Manifest Destiny.

Although proponents of this conception were often met with opposition from insular southern racial exceptionalists and Anglophobic north-easterners¹²⁰, its purchase upon prominent Americans is undeniable. Thomas Jefferson believed that

it is impossible not to look forward to distant times, when our rapid multiplication will expand itself beyond those limits and cover the whole northern, if not the southern, continent, with a people speaking the same language, governed in similar forms and by similar laws; nor can we contemplate with satisfaction either blot or mixture on that surface.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Paul A. Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910.," *Journal of American History* 88, no. 4 (2002): 1324.

¹²⁰ Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons," 1339.

¹²¹ Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, 92.

The idea that it was the Anglo-Saxons' duty to expand and colonize the West was known as Manifest Destiny.¹²² The idea of a manifest destiny, one where American Anglo-Saxon people would overspread the continent, fit well into the overarching discourse of Western civilizations westward expansion but added to it a certain racial exterminism. It was precisely this idea of American expansion which Theodore Roosevelt gives voice to in his 1889 book *The Winning of the West*. The central point of discussion in this work is "the spread of the 'English-speaking race' across 'the world's waste spaces' over the previous three centuries."¹²³ Roosevelt would go on to invoke this 'waste spaces' trope against first nations in an 1893 report concerning First Nations reserve administration. He purported that it was "nonsense" to claim that First Nations had title to their lands for the reason that "Agriculture, he felt, was the only thing that entitled people to own land (this argument ignored the many Indian groups that were agricultural)."¹²⁴ This trope relied on Lockean land tenure principle – the idea that "every individual has a property in his own person and his own labour, and so could rightfully appropriate to himself from the common whatever he mixed his labour with."¹²⁵ It is clear, given the fact that some aboriginal groups did practice agriculture, that this was more of an expansionist move, one which truly did not consider the aboriginal way as legitimate. One which was in line with filling the 'waste spaces' of the American continent with Caucasian Anglo-Saxons without a 'blot or mixture on that surface.'

Manifest Destiny's racial exterminist component originated from: (1.) characteristics unique to Anglo-Saxon's and (2.) the Anglo-Saxon's claim to epistemic authority. Ideal typical Anglo-Saxons were said to embody a number of strong virile masculine characteristics unique

¹²² Although the Anglo-Saxon was not the only figure to be called to expand into the 'waste spaces,' he was one amongst many

¹²³ Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons," 1325.

¹²⁴ Walter L. Williams, "United States Indian Policy and the Debate over Philippine Annexation: Implications for the Origins of American Imperialism," *The Journal of American History* 66, no. 4 (March 1, 1980): 816

¹²⁵ John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, ed. C.B. Macpherson (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, inc., 1980), xvi.

to their race.¹²⁶ The Anglo-Saxon was, “distinctly masculine,” “youthful and vigorous,” and wasn’t afraid to apply force when necessary – he was “tied to tasks of struggle and conquest.”¹²⁷ He also “inevitably extirpated the weaker races with whom they came into contact, or administered over them with stern but even handed law.”¹²⁸ One such expression of this ideal said that the Caucasian race was ingrained with an aggressive racial antagonism to inferior races. This antagonism originated from a sense of superiority, a superiority born of a sense of epistemological authority. The Anglo-Saxon sense of authority was based on the notion that they themselves had achieved the pinnacle of civilization. This act of forced uniformity based on a sense of temporal and racial superiority is known as imperial historicism. Imperial historicism is the practice of applying “a supposed universal ontology of temporal contextualization for every aspect of human culture ...an epistemological tool of imperialism meant to provide order and logic to a perceived universal chronology of evolutionary progress culminating in modernity.”¹²⁹ Therefore, Anglo-Saxon notions of Manifest Destiny were fed by an epistemological authority gained from a sense of temporal and racial superiority.

Roosevelt’s imperialist ideology was not unopposed. The politics of the annexation of the Philippines and the subsequent opposition to the war coalesced around two fluid camps: the imperialists and the anti-imperialists. Each had their own understanding of race and the place which it should occupy within this debate. The anti-imperialists were made up of two important factions: the insular anti-imperialists and the anti-war anti-imperialists. The insular anti-imperialists were composed of men such as Carl Schurz. These anti-imperialists were alarmed by the prospect that Filipinos would form part of the Union once annexed by the United States. They could not fathom Filipinos being entitled to all the rights and freedoms afforded to White

¹²⁶ See Hoganson and Bederman

¹²⁷ Kramer, “Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons,” 1322.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Michael (Michael C.) Hawkins, *Making Moros: Imperial Historicism and American Military Rule in the Philippines Muslim South* (DeKalb, Ill: NIU Press, 2013), 4.

Americans.¹³⁰ Schurz argued that the Philippine islands were made up of “A large mass of ...barbarous Asiatics, descendants of Spaniards, [sic] mixtures of Asiatics and Spanish blood,” which were “greatly outnumbering the ‘very few persons of northern races.’”¹³¹ These anti-imperialists deeply indulged a kind of white supremacism which followed a eugenic conception of the state and race. Furthermore they supported the racial exterminist logic and the idea of the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon based on his inherently superior racially characteristics.

The anti-war anti-imperialists, for either reasons of progressive ideology or pragmatic political opposition to the war, formed the anti-imperialist league and set out to wage a PR war against the invasion of the Philippines. Chief amongst them was renowned writer Mark Twain. In a seminal satirical protest letter addressed indirectly to the imperialists, entitled ‘To the Man Sitting in the Darkness’ (which we are lead to assume is addressed to President McKinley), Twain denounces the war for reasons of its racism, proselytry, financial greed, and other imperialist motives. Twain’s critiques continue to animate much of the public debate today - a man truly ahead of his time.

The imperialists, for their part, partook of racism. It was not expressed in the same manner as some of the anti-imperialists but along the lines that have been previously discussed. Gail Bederman summarizes the core of the racism engaged in by the imperialists in her review of some of President Roosevelt’s hyper-masculine speeches. In one such speech he proclaims:

It is our duty toward the people living in barbarism to see that they are freed from their chains, and we can free them only by destroying barbarism itself. The missionary, the merchant, and the soldier may each have to play a part in this destruction and in the consequent uplifting of the people.¹³²

¹³⁰ I specify White here because First Nations, Black, Asian, and Hispanic Americans either did not have the same rights as White Americans or were treated much differently than White Americans.

¹³¹ Eric Tyrone Lowery Love, *Race over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 182.

¹³² Gail Bederman, in *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 189.

Bederman gets at a crucial element of this ‘white man’s burden’ - its racially exterminist underbelly. She continues to outline this element with a kind of sarcasm “this unselfish racial uplift would be worth the bloodshed, even for the destroyed barbarians themselves. Both Indians on the Great plains and the Tagalogs in the Philippines – at least, those who still survived – would be far happier after the white man had conquered them.”¹³³ It is precisely this element of the ‘white man’s burden’ which is so pernicious – a racial exterminism cloaked in the veil of a supposed benign humanitarian impulse. The appropriation of epistemic authority would perhaps be benign were it not for the forcing of uniformity by a violent any-means-necessary mentality.

The Historical Record of Racialised Counterinsurgency in the Philippines

The idea of a racially exterminist imperialism suggested in Roosevelt’s speech was more than mere rhetoric. The hierarchical organization of peoples by an Anglo-Saxon race uniquely blessed with the destiny to uplift the ‘barbarian’ and ‘savage’ certainly had its ‘real’ consequences. The civilized/savage binary was a recurring trope within the so-called ‘civilized’ laws of war. One of the earliest European examples of the use of a civilized/barbarian discourse appears with the Spanish jurist Vitoria. Although normally he did not want harm to come to the natives of the new world, if they infringed on Spanish Christian and European rights, they were to be dealt with harshly. Vitoria explains, “since it is now lawful for the Spaniards as has been said, to wage defensive war or even if necessary offensive war, therefore *everything necessary to secure the end and aim of war*, namely, the obtaining of safety and peace, *is lawful*.”¹³⁴ [my emphasis] Non-European uncivilized people were subject to the whims of Imperial military

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Gong, *The Standard of “Civilization” in International Society*, 37.

commanders, those with epistemic and racial authority, as the uncivilized were deemed to be outside the law.

‘Savages’ and ‘barbarians’, by definition are those outside the zone of the norm of civilization. They are in a zone of exception. In zones of exception anarchy rules – which is to say there is no overarching law that governs the exceptional space. In an exceptional space all tactics are permitted to subdue the exceptional threat posed. The danger in this case is the racial other. International rules of civilized combat do not apply in the exceptional space to the racial ‘other.’ The unspoken mantra of the imperial military commander became “when is one allowed to wage war against savages and barbarians? Answer: always. What is permissible in wars against savages and barbarians? Answer: anything.”¹³⁵ The civilized/savage discourse often enabled various colonial powers to commit asymmetrical acts of violence against colonial peoples. One of the logics underlying this argument explained that savages merited additional force applied against them because of the manner in which they conducted warfare. Sir John Charles Ardagh, British Lawyer and proponent of the use of dum dum bullet¹³⁶ against colonial peoples, argued that these projectiles were needed given the ‘savagery’ of the non-European foe:

Even though pierced two or three times, he does not cease to march forward, does not call upon the hospital attendants, but continues on, and before anyone has time to explain to him that he is flagrantly violating the decision of the Hague Conference, he cuts off your head.¹³⁷

This passage is important because it shows the logic which underpins this imperial and racist mindset. In this case the use of civilized methods of warfare puts imperial armies at a distinct disadvantage because they have to show civility and restraint on the battlefield. The ‘barbarian’ as a kind of unconquerable human not felled by three to four shots merits exceptional

¹³⁵ Frederic Megret, “From ‘savages’ to ‘unlawful Combatants’: A Postcolonial Look at International Law’s ‘other,’” in *International Law and Its Others*, ed. Anne Orford (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 3.

¹³⁶ A dum dum bullet is bullet which would shatters on impact making the wound inflicted much more fatal and more difficult to treat.

¹³⁷ Megret, “From ‘savages’ to ‘unlawful Combatants’: A Postcolonial Look at International Law’s ‘other,’” 20.

treatment. Given this exceptional case the use of a weapon which is banned for use against civilized countries but perfectly legal against colonials is therefore merited (according to this logic). When the European burned, tortured, and killed he was a hero for his martial prowess, inside the civilizational norm, yet when the Filipino or Boer responded in kind they were 'savage', 'barbarians', and beyond the pale of the law, a racial and civilizational exception.¹³⁸

The conscious switch from conventional to guerilla warfare is an important one because in the minds of the imperial power it signals the break from the normal rules of war to a kind of exceptional racial rules of war. In November 1899, Emilio Aguinaldo, leader of the Filipino resistance, shifted strategies to guerilla warfare as a tactical decision. It was, to him, a rational decision for an army fighting for their freedom against a foe who was clearly more capable in the conventional field of battle. Apolinario Mabini, foreign minister and then prime minister of the Philippines, noted that "in this 'extreme case,' the laws of war 'implacably order the weak people to defend their threatened honor and natural rights under pain of being called uncivilized and incapable of understanding the responsibilities of a proper government.'"¹³⁹ It was a rational calculation, not without its drawbacks. Mabini knew that there were consequences for switching military tactics, but it is doubtful he knew the pain to which his people would be put for 'being called uncivilized.'

American military commanders and political elite ushered the war into a new exceptional space of violence based on their conception of this switch in military tactics. To them it was a natural move towards a more savage war from an inferior race. Secretary of the War Department Elihu Root noted that "the war on the part of the Filipinos...has been conducted with the barbarous cruelty common among uncivilized races."¹⁴⁰ The legal

¹³⁸ Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 1998), 134.

¹³⁹ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 135.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 138.

justification for this brutal counterinsurgency came from General Orders 100. The orders, a set of regulations for the civilized conduct of warfare drawn up during the American Civil War, were embedded with a sense of racial hierarchy. The document repeatedly distinguishes between civilized and uncivilized warfare constantly referring to barbarism or some etymological derivative thereof. The orders allow a more free and brutal use of force against enemies designated as either barbarous or savage. For example:

27. The law of war can no more wholly dispense with retaliation than can the law of nations, of which it is a branch. Yet civilized nations acknowledge retaliation as the sternest feature of war. A reckless enemy often leaves to his opponent no other means of securing himself against the repetition of *barbarous outrage*. [my emphasis]¹⁴¹

What is interesting here is that barbarous outrage is to be answered to with a retaliation which is predicated upon the meaning of what exactly a barbarous outrage is. Therefore, depending on the definition of what one means by this, then, General Orders 100 enabled the offended party a *carte blanche* as to the retaliatory measures to be administered. According to American military and civil officials guerilla warfare constituted a ‘savage’ and ‘cowardly’ form of war - meriting any retaliatory measure to deter future acts of ‘barbarism.’

A further clause which authorized a more free and brutal violence was article 85, or the ‘war-rebel’ clause. In November of 1899, General MacArthur declared the war over given that there was “no organized insurgent force left to strike at,” thus designating all remaining resistors as ‘war-rebels.’¹⁴² ‘War-rebels’ are “persons within an occupied territory who is [sic.] in arms against the occupying or conquering army, or against that authorities established by the same.”¹⁴³ The penalty, if captured, could be “death” and could be served to war-rebels even

¹⁴¹ Iii Ramsey, “A Masterpiece of Counterguerrilla Warfare: BG J. Franklin Bell in the Philippines, 1901-1902,” 2007, 123.

¹⁴² Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 130.

¹⁴³ Robert C. Doyle, *The Enemy in Our Hands: America’s Treatment of Enemy Prisoners of War, from the Revolution to the War on Terror* (Lexington, Ky: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 148.

in the case that they had not yet enacted their violence.¹⁴⁴ War-rebels can be killed without having even committed an act of defiance - it only required the imminent threat of violence: “they are not prisoners of war; nor are they if discovered and secured *before their conspiracy has matured to an actual rising or armed violence.*”¹⁴⁵ [my emphasis] The war-rebel clause simultaneously negated the Filipino struggle as a legitimate one and reduced the legal obligations toward the Filipinos.

Although no specific analysis has been conducted dissecting when each atrocity occurred; the consensus seems to be that atrocities occurred more frequently following the transition from conventional to guerilla warfare in November 1899.¹⁴⁶ Guerilla tactics, according to the American military and political elite, allowed a kind of justified barbaric response through their understandings of race and civilization. These were bolstered and covered by legal justifications which reflected their racism and their view of civilization. Although they purported to obey civilized rules of war there was a total of “fifty-seven verifiable instances when American soldiers committed atrocities.¹⁴⁷” Atrocity, here, will be defined as “the murder of civilians and prisoners, torture of captives, systematic burning of civilian quarters, and rape.”¹⁴⁸ Broken down into its parts that’s: “murder of prisoners, 6; murder of civilians, 18; rape, 15; administration of the "water cure," 14; other forms of torture of prisoners and civilians, 4.”¹⁴⁹ On top of all these atrocities there are also 60 cases of

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Brian McAllister Linn, *U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 145; Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 143; Richard E. Welch Jr., “American Atrocities in the Philippines: The Indictment and the Response,” *Pacific Historical Review* 43, no. 2 (May 1, 1974): 236, doi:10.2307/3637551; Frank Schumacher, “‘Marked Severities’: The Debate over Torture during America’s Conquest of the Philippines, 1899-1902,” *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 51, no. 4 (2006): 478; H. W. Brands, *Bound to Empire: The United States and the Philippines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 49.

¹⁴⁷ Welch, “American Atrocities in the Philippines,” 234.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

aggravated assault.¹⁵⁰ But if indeed it is true that more atrocities occurred following the launching of the guerilla campaign we must also ask why?

To answer this question preliminarily - the commission of atrocities at an accelerated rate could be due to an increased dehumanization of the 'other' via the tactic of racialization. In extreme cases this racialization gave way to bestialization – the practice of portraying the 'other' as an animal. This process took hold following an increase in the intensity of fighting between Filipinos and American soldiers. The possibility of these acts is predicated on pre-existing cultural notions of race and racism, as discussed above.

The American counterinsurgency was conceived in a period where many generals, officers, and enlisted men arrived to the field of battle with significant cultural baggage. A set of ideas that informed some men's way of seeing the world; of seeing the racial other as always already a 'savage.' This is made clear by the shared experience of American political and military leadership in conflicts against American First Nations. An interconnected ideological group of Pro-expansionist imperialists believed that their formative political and military experiences (“[Of] the thirty generals in service in the Philippines between 1898 and 1902, it was found that twenty-six (87 percent) had experience with Indians in the West.”¹⁵¹) against aboriginals directly applied to their new imperial project – the people of the Philippines. This group was composed of congressmen,¹⁵² bureaucrats, members of the military, and academics involved in facets of the imperial endeavour.

This institutional affinity of American political and military leaders had pernicious ideological consequences. Imperialists frequently used language comparing Filipinos to First Nations. Discursively, it set Filipinos up as something savage, untamed, wild, and therefore,

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Williams, “United States Indian Policy and the Debate over Philippine Annexation,” 828.

¹⁵² Ibid., 824.

beyond the pale of the regular rules of war.¹⁵³ The most explicit example of this comparison occurs within a debate over what the concept ‘tribe’ signified between ethnologists.

Ethnologists were key players in the imperial game of defining and therefore knowing the ‘other.’ The originator of the debate David P. Barrows, commissioned as the head of the Ethnological Survey of the Philippines¹⁵⁴, originally defined tribes using an oppositional strategy making the Filipino inferior in comparison to First Nations: “Such great and effective confederacies, as we find among the North American Indians are far beyond the capacity of the Filipino of any grade.”¹⁵⁵ A definition from *The Century Dictionary* describes tribes as follows: “a division of a barbarous race of people...In general, the tribe, as it still exists among the American Indians and many African and Asiatic races, is the earliest form of political organization, nations being ultimately constituted by their gradual amalgamation and loss of identity in the progress of civilization.”¹⁵⁶ This definition is to be contrasted with Dean C. Worcester’s definition. Worcester, zoologist and distinguished ethnologist in his own right, defined tribe as follows:

A division of a race composed of an aggregate of individuals of a kind and of a common origin, agreeing among themselves in, and distinguished from their congeners in physical characteristics, dress, and ornaments; the nature of the communities which they form; peculiarities of house architecture; methods of hunting, fishing and carrying on agriculture; character and importance of manufactures; practices relative to war and *the taking of heads of enemies*; arms used in warfare; music and dancing, and marriage and burial customs; *but not constituting a political unit subject to the control of any single individual nor necessarily speaking the same dialect.*¹⁵⁷ [my emphasis]

Although the seemingly least racist of the definitions; there are three interesting representational moves at play here. First, the initial setting out of Filipino tribes as ‘divisions of race’ signalled that there is a difference between them (these tribes) and us (the American or

¹⁵³ Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 134.

¹⁵⁴ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 212.

¹⁵⁵ Dean Conant Worcester, “The Non-Christian Tribes of Northern Luzon,” *The Philippine Journal of Science* 1, no. 8 (October 1906): 796, <http://archive.org/details/cu31924023497344>.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 802.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 803.

European audience to which this is being put). Furthermore, we are given to believe that these ‘divisions of race’ signal tribes as hierarchically inferior to the ‘self’. Were it to signal hierarchical equivalence or superiority Worcester would have utilized a much less charged vocabulary, such as the vocabulary used to describe the Athenian tribes in *The Century Dictionary*: “A division, class, or distinct portion of a people from whatever cause that distinction may have originated; as, the city of Athens was divided into ten tribes.”¹⁵⁸ The second move at play here, as Doty would say, is one of Presupposition/naturalization.¹⁵⁹ We are to presuppose that Filipino tribes take the heads of their enemies. Now whether or not this is the case is irrelevant because the purpose of this definition is to highlight those elements which are important for a comparative analysis – concepts which are widespread across cases and which act as comparative waypoints to speak to all cases with some significance. Worcester could have substituted this clause for something else (mode of dance, diplomacy, etc.) or subsumed it under the ‘practices relative to war.’ But its main stage appearance presupposes and naturalizes the idea that Filipinos undertake decapitation on a wide scale and that therefore, by implication, a great number are ‘barbarous’. Thus only further acknowledging the switch to guerilla warfare as something racial and not tactical. The final representational move at play here is one of the delegitimization of Filipino fitness for self-government. Indeed, Worcester prefaces this definition with the following:

Were we to adopt any definition which includes as an essential feature the existence of a head or chief warrior of the tribe as a whole, we should be forced to the conclusion *that there is no such thing as a tribe* in the Philippines outside the territory occupied by the Moros.¹⁶⁰ [my emphasis]

Therefore, taken together, not only are Filipinos racially inferior and militarily ‘savage,’ but they also lack a proper political organization. Although seemingly innocuous, the foregoing sets up the Filipino as in need of governance from another outside entity willing to uplift them

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Doty, *Imperial Encounters*, 10.

¹⁶⁰ Worcester, “The Non-Christian Tribes of Northern Luzon,” 803.

and provide them with a proper central government. This is, in other words, a justification of imperialism based on the inherent characteristics of the Filipino.

Although the racism against Filipinos became increasingly apparent as the war progressed; initially, when the Filipinos and Americans fought side by side against the Spanish, their relationship was one of cordiality and apprehension. Before the signing of the treaty of Paris two naval officers, Wilcox and Sargent, were tasked with undertaking an expedition on the island of Luzon to discern the Filipinos fitness for self-government. Wilcox noted the Filipino people's hospitality and warmth. Sargent noted their extreme of responses that is "between the coldest suspicion and the most demonstrative hospitality."¹⁶¹ The local officials, for their part, lost no opportunity to display Filipino governmental and military prowess, offering displays of "elaborate Filipino patriotic celebrations stirring dedications of independence, and impressive military drill."¹⁶² Once the treaty of Paris was signed the relationship between the two peoples soured. The signing represented a severe dampening of the spirits for independence minded Filipinos. Sargent and Wilcox felt a general cooling of temperament towards them following the signing of the treaty, "the party came under greater scrutiny and was detained or forced back, subject to a new regulation that travellers not 'carry arms, not approach within 100 metres of fortification, not make any plans, or take photographs of them.'"¹⁶³ It was the first of many measures demonstrating the new cooling of American-Filipino relations.

Tensions between the Americans and the Filipinos built up following the signing of the treaty of Paris. The Spanish propaganda that Filipinos had heard highlighted Americas racist past and present. Filipinos became increasingly suspicious of American intentions in the Philippines as a result of the Spanish negative portrayal of their treatment of subject peoples.

¹⁶¹ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 106.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 108.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

General McReeve recounted the impressions he had gathered from Filipinos, supposed lies told to them by the Spanish: “ ‘that we have mercilessly slain and finally exterminated the race of Indians that were native to our soil and that we went to war in 1861 to suppress an insurrection of negro slaves whom we have also ended by exterminating.’”¹⁶⁴ McReeve later comments on the former ‘fabrication’ saying “‘The Spanish versions of our Indian problem is particularly well known.’”¹⁶⁵ It is clear that First Nations represented a ‘problem’ to American sovereignty. As a ‘problem’ First Nations represented something to be solved, and once solved forgotten about or done away with, not a human to be negotiated with and lived next to. Any soon-to-be-subject person would certainly have cause to worry. Filipino anxiety is further confirmed by the stories of black American soldiers in the Philippines: “one black veteran reported...that when Filipinos were ‘told of America’s treatment of the black population,’ they were ‘made to feel that it is better to die fighting than to become subject to a nation where, as they are made to believe, the colored man is lynched and burned alive indiscriminately.’”¹⁶⁶ Filipinos sentiments towards the Americans were those of mistrust and of apprehension – they were told they would receive independence but received none and they were told that their new masters were racist killers; sentiments which surely created tension between themselves and the American military presence.

As the Filipino was labeled ‘savage,’ and therefore beyond the pale of civilized laws of war, in practice it gave the military carte blanche to conduct atrocities against them. Although this process did not happen overnight, it was a gradual escalation towards an exterminist view. Kramer systematizes this continuum in which the American soldier comes to dehumanize the Filipino. At first, the Filipino is dehumanized and racialized via the use of two different racial

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 104.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

epithets. First, the Filipino is dehumanized via the usage of the term “gugu.”¹⁶⁷ Kramer traces this term as the originator of the popular epithet ‘gook.’¹⁶⁸ The case of the American Soldier Louis Hubbard is instructive here. His initial view of the Filipino other was a positive one. In December of 1898, he observed that they were fine people and even remarked that one in particular was the finest clarinettist that he had “ever heard in his life.”¹⁶⁹ However, two weeks into the war against the Filipinos, following intense fighting, he noted that “they are just like any savage,” and in mid-march he grimly noted, the quicker we “get these ‘gugos’ of [f] the face of the earth the quicker we will be ready to start for home.”¹⁷⁰ The other epithet which was used was the term ‘nigger’, although its use is unique in this case because most uses are found within quotation marks. The quotation marks are there as if to say that there was a difference between those in the United States and the Philippines, a kind of unique racial innovation to the Philippines. The quotation marks signalled to those at home that they were racially inferior, as the original word implies, but that they were not black of skin colour but ‘brown.’ The new usage both subordinates the ‘other’ within the racial hierarchy and widens its use to signify subordination of not solely ‘blacks’ but all those racially inferior to the American. One soldier characterised fighting in the Philippines as a game, calling the Filipino a “nigger” (in quotation marks), and characterising the experience of battle as a hunt.

Soon, we had orders to advance, and we [. . .] started across the creek in mud and water up to our waists. However, we did not mind it a bit, our fighting blood was up and we wanted to kill "niggers." This shooting human beings is a "hot game" and beats rabbit hunting all to pieces. We charged them, and such a slaughter you never saw. We killed them like rabbits, hundreds, yes thousands of them. Every one [sic.] was crazy [. . .] No more prisoners.¹⁷¹

This quotation finalizes the dehumanization of the other via the process of racialization to bestialization of the ‘other.’ According to the quotation here, although he wanted to kill

¹⁶⁷Ibid., 125.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 127.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 125.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Schumacher, “Marked Severities,” 481.

specifically ‘niggers,’ the ‘nigger’-as-rabbit fulfills a more pleasurable and ‘game like’ experience for this soldier. It renders the act of violence easier to accomplish, and more pleasurable.

The jocularity and nonchalance surrounding the application of the torture technique euphemistically referred to as ‘the water cure’¹⁷² demonstrates this kind of escalation in dehumanization of the Filipino ‘other.’ In one particularly egregious case one soldier wrote down a “mock-testimonial patent-medicine advertisement.”¹⁷³ This ‘humorous’ formulation adds ‘fun’ and pleasure to the application of the torture technique. The letter’s author addresses his advertisement to:

‘My Dear Doctor Uncle Sam,’ by a certain ‘Mariano Gugu.’ The author complained of a recent bout of ‘loss of memory, loss of speech [sic] and other symptoms’ of a disease called ‘insurrectos’; among other things, he ‘had forgotten where I placed my Bolo’¹⁷⁴ and my rifle.’ He had been miraculously cured with ‘only one treatment of your wonderful water cure.’ No Hombre’s shack is complete without a barrel of it.’¹⁷⁵

This advertisement accomplishes two goals: first, as previously discussed, it establishes a kind of dark humour concerning the application of the ‘water cure,’ by couching it in this mock-advertisement format. The second representational move at play here is the attempt to show the Filipino resistance as an illegitimate endeavour. A common metaphor applied to insurgents is a disease metaphor, a metaphor where insurgents are represented as a disease and the counterinsurgent as the cure.¹⁷⁶ This mock advertisement makes explicit reference to this fact when it calls the torture technique a ‘treatment,’ the end to which is the ‘water cure,’ and by labelling the ‘insurrectos,’¹⁷⁷ ‘a disease.’ Worse still is the picture which exists of this torture

¹⁷² See Welch, “American Atrocities in the Philippines,” 235.

¹⁷³ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 140.

¹⁷⁴ Term used for a machete like knife in common usage on the island.

¹⁷⁵ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 140.

¹⁷⁶ See Colleen Bell, “Hybrid Warfare and Its Metaphors,” *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 3, no. 2 (2012): 225–247.

¹⁷⁷ the name which the Americans gave to Filipino resistors

technique being carried out.¹⁷⁸ This picture is a testament to the carelessness and quotidian nature with which this technique of torture was deployed.¹⁷⁹

These acts of torture are often blamed on enlisted men. Some historians blamed this racist attitude on the provinciality and racial habits acquired by simple country boys who carried their racial prejudice with them.¹⁸⁰ And yet this seems too narrow a cross section of people for such widespread acts of atrocity. Indeed I would contend that the racism which enabled the dehumanization of the Filipino other, and therefore the more widespread use of torture and other war crimes, was a more widespread and widely accepted conception of race and racism. A kind of racism that was present not only amongst the young uneducated man enrolled in the army to ‘shoot niggers’ but also just as readily available in the upper echelons. Linn contends that

An army investigation in 1902 concluded that some soldiers had given Filipinos the water cure, but smugly concluded that in ‘comparatively few instances is there evidence that a commissioned officer was present.’ ...It is impossible to concur with this judgement. An Army board called to investigate Gardener’s allegations that torture was widespread heard testimony from both Americans and Filipinos which suggested that in Tayabas alone. Between October and December 1901, there were seventeen cases of physical abuse involving eight U.S. officers.¹⁸¹

And therefore it is reasonable to conclude that there was a measure of officer acceptance to the usage of these techniques. Furthermore, the racism which was deployed against the Filipinos was not of a purely military violent kind. Even the most progressive of officers had racially prejudicial attitudes. Colonel Allen, listing the “‘the requisites of a good officer of native troops,’ explained that ‘Above all he should not be...a *nigger hater* or one who considers the Filipino question as a second *Indian proposition*.’”¹⁸² [Author’s emphasis] And despite these progressive leanings he equally partook of the ‘yellow fever’ of the time characterising the Russo-Japanese

¹⁷⁸ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 142.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 141–142.

¹⁸⁰ Welch, “American Atrocities in the Philippines,” 241.

¹⁸¹ Linn, *U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899–1902*, 145.

¹⁸² Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America’s Empire the United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 88.

war as “a racial struggle against a ‘gigantic oriental human wave’ that could also become a ‘menace to Aryan civilization.”¹⁸³ Finally, Colonel Allen discouraged bringing his men to justice for committing atrocities, because “While conceding the truth of the charges, Allen lobbied hard to have the matter swept aside in the interests of the larger imperial enterprise.”

Even Generals were very much a part of the racism occurring within the counterinsurgency campaign. General Franklin Bell was the man in charge of the concentration camp policy in Batangas. In all, it is estimated that 11,085 Filipinos lost their lives because of these camps.¹⁸⁴ In demographic terms, these deaths represent a rate “more than twice as high as might have been expected in normal times.”¹⁸⁵ General Bell was known as a man who had “a reputation for relentlessness.”¹⁸⁶ Bell, as all military men, was very much immersed in the cultural and hegemonic racial ideals of the time. Bell was very suspicious of the Filipino people. He characterised them as ‘the most skilled dissimulators one earth:’

They are the most skillful dissimulators on earth, and many of our officers, fresh from the States, had the wool so completely pulled over their eyes as to be incompetent to cope with the able deceivers. They have a great many good qualities but a wonderful lot of customs and habits which must be trained out of them before we should ever be able to make a creditable people of them.¹⁸⁷

It is clear that Bell thought the Filipino people were deceitful and that they had ‘a great many habits that had to be trained out of them.’ Bell shows us here that his sentiments were very much in line with the view of the ‘self’ as possessor of epistemic authority. Bell implicitly speaks to his duty to both classify the other as inferior (‘habits which had to be trained out of them’) but also to fulfill his Anglo-Saxon duty to uplift (‘we should ever be able to make a creditable people of them.’)

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Glenn Anthony May, *Battle for Batangas: A Philippine Province at War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 264.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 247.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

Although Bell would not issue his circulars outlining the implementation of his concentration policy until December 6th of 1901¹⁸⁸, in August of 1900, we get a further sense of the extent to which Bell is embedded within the discourse of racial superiority vis-à-vis the Filipino other. In a letter to Apolinario Mabini, ex-Foreign Minister and current Prime Minister of the Philippines, Bell writes

‘Civilization demands that the defeated side, in the name of humanity, should surrender and accept the result, although it may be painful to his feelings.’ Combatants to strayed from the principle ‘place themselves in a separate classification’ as ‘incompetent in the management of civil affairs to the extent of their ignorance of the demands of humanity.’ In this specific case, the end of conventional war and the dispersal of the Philippine Army meant that continued Filipino resistance was no only ‘criminal’ but was ‘also daily shoving the natives of the Archipelago headlong towards a deeper attitude of semicivilization in which they will become completely incapable of appreciating and understanding the responsibilities of civil government.’¹⁸⁹

Bell was very much party to the cultural assumptions of the Filipinos as a ‘semicivilized’ people which showed itself wanton and incapable of delivering the kind of civilian government which the United States could. Setting up Filipinos as ‘semicivilized’ situated them outside the regular rules of warfare and justified the American imperial enterprise and the Filipinos need to be controlled.

On December 8, 1901 Bell issued his order outlining how the concentration camps would be set up. Some small-scale agriculture continued inside the camps but this could by no means make up for the wide scale destruction wrought on the agriculture and property of Filipinos. The first American expedition of 1902 destroyed “500 tons of rice and palay, hundreds of bushels of corn, hundreds of hogs and chickens, and more than 6,000 houses, 200 carabaos, 800 head cattle, and 680 horses.”¹⁹⁰ A subsequent expedition launched on the 12th of January 1902 and concluded 19 days later, destroyed “308 head of cattle, 57 carabaos¹⁹¹,

¹⁸⁸ Ramsey, “A Masterpiece of Counterguerrilla Warfare,” 7.

¹⁸⁹ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 135.

¹⁹⁰ May, *Battle for Batangas*, 255.

¹⁹¹ Water buffalo indigenous to the Philippines

numerous other animals, and about 250 tons of palay.”¹⁹² Indeed, the destructiveness of the concentration policy indirectly led to the over ten thousand deaths experienced in the province. The majority of the excess deaths in this province are attributed to death by disease. Given the close quarters, overcrowding, calorie deficiency, and increase in human subjects for mosquitoes, concentration camps set up by Bell created a rather perfect storm for the spread of malaria and other diseases. Due to the rinderpest epidemic cows were no longer available for malaria ridden mosquitoes to bite. Given that 75-95% of the cow population had been killed either by rinderpest or by the war; mosquitoes looked to humans on which to feed, humans who had not been the target of choice for these mosquitoes and thus were not sufficiently immunized against this onslaught.¹⁹³ Although Bell did not directly murder eleven thousand people he played an indirect and facilitatory role. A role that was shaped, no doubt, about the need for a quick and painful war, a war, that had to be fought to raise up a ‘semicivilized’ people to become more ‘creditable.’

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the relationship between racism and counterinsurgency is complex and multifaceted. What seems to be the clearest is that following the 1899 transition to guerilla warfare, there was increased instance of atrocity. An increased instance of atrocity that coincided with an intensification of hatred and intensity of warfare, clearly expressed through racial terms. This racism justified extra-legal means of violence to a barbarous enemy, and cognitively eased the means through which to inflict this violence on others through the portrayal of the ‘other’ as an animal. Fast-forwarding from 1903 to 2003, the United States’ invasion of Iraq contains eerie similarity with that of the Philippines. Atrocities have been

¹⁹² May, *Battle for Batangas*, 256.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 265.

committed, presidencies ruined, and a war justified by what we know now were complete fabrications. What is unclear though, and what animates this inquiry, is the following essential question – *In what ways is the invasion of Iraq similar to the invasion of the Philippines and in what ways is it different?* But before tackling this more complicated synthesis the same question which supposes itself here supposes itself in Iraq – “To what extent can we say that atrocity and counterinsurgency in Iraq were driven by race and racism?” It is the concern of the next chapter where I will investigate these questions.

**Chapter 3: Racism, Counterinsurgency, and Iraq: American Counterinsurgency Policy
from 2003-2007**

*The enemy we're fighting is different from the one we'd war-gamed against¹⁹⁴
- Lt. Gen. Wallace, ex- commander of the US army's V Corps*

*The only thing these sand niggers understand is force and I'm about to introduce them to it¹⁹⁵
-Anonymous Senior Officer in Iraq*

In this final substantive chapter what I aim to achieve is to answer the question posed at the end of the last chapter - *To what extent can we say that the counterinsurgency in Iraq was driven by race and racism? And did this result in atrocity?* The relationship which I propose is in part illustrated by the two quotations prefacing this introduction. Lt. General Wallace's comment shows a lack of cultural awareness of the 'other' – an ignorance that is indicative of larger overarching ideas about counterinsurgency and the place of the Iraqi 'other' within it. The anonymous officer's comments show a disregard and frank hatred of the 'other'. Again, these comments fall into a discourse that was present within the US military during the invasion and occupation of Iraq; one which enabled certain kinds of violence against the 'other' via a widespread systematic process of dehumanization. It is these attitudes and ideas about the 'other' which I will investigate in greater depth in this chapter. By the end, I hope I will have clarified the linkages between these seemingly different attitudes – and offer answers, if not imperfect and partial ones to this chapter's key question.

To make my point, I will attempt to roughly sketch out the (1.) racist domestic and (2.) overarching 'Western' or 'imperial' discourse concerning racism and counterinsurgency. I will

¹⁹⁴Qtd in Nicholas Mirzoeff, "War Is Culture: Global Counterinsurgency, Visuality, and the Petraeus Doctrine.(Special Topic: War)(Critical Essay)," *PMLA* 124, no. 5 (2009): 1740.

¹⁹⁵ Daniel Egan, "Frantz Fanon and the Construction of the Colonial Subject: Defining 'The Enemy' in the Iraq War" 21, no. 3 (November 1, 2007): 145.

also link this discourse to the way that soldiers in Iraq chose to think about and act towards Iraqi civilians. Therefore, contra the previous chapter, we will precede from the small to the large, looking first at the contours of the racialized discourse emanating from the United States.

Part 1: US Domestic Racism

Let us begin five days after September 11th, 2001. On the 16th of September, 2001 Balibir Singh Sodhi was killed. His crime? Nothing according to US law. Although Sodhi himself was a Sikh, his assailant killed him because he thought he was killing a Muslim. Sodhi was killed for being ‘Muslim-looking.’¹⁹⁶ Beyond the tragedy that this represents, which should not be understated or forgotten, this event represents both a continuity and a discontinuity within United States racism. It represents a continuity in that the phenomenon of racialization¹⁹⁷, scapegoating¹⁹⁸ and inflammatory racism¹⁹⁹ are all at work; elements which have a long history in United States domestic and foreign discourses on race.²⁰⁰ The discontinuity here is a new intensity of this racism – a more intense application of racist discourse and actions surrounding a socially constructed group of individuals known through various identity markers – Middle Easterners, Muslims, Arabs, etc.²⁰¹ The racialization I wish to focus on is that of islamophobia or the racial hatred ascribed to ‘Muslim-looking’ individuals.²⁰² This islamophobia manifested itself in various discourses throughout the years of the Iraq war. Its unity of field (its ‘regularity in the

¹⁹⁶ Erik Love, “Confronting Islamophobia in the United States: Framing Civil Rights Activism among Middle Eastern Americans,” *Patterns of Prejudice* 43, no. 3 (2009): 402.

¹⁹⁷ See chapter one for definition

¹⁹⁸ Love, “Confronting Islamophobia in the United States,” 403.

¹⁹⁹ Tariq Amin-khan, “New Orientalism, Securitisation and the Western Media’s Incendiary Racism,” *Third World Quarterly* 33, no. 9 (2012): 1600.

²⁰⁰ See Salah D. Hassan, “Arabs, Race and the Post-September 11 National Security State,” *Middle East Report* no. 224 (October 1, 2002): 19–21.

²⁰¹ It should be noted that the names we use to describe this group of individuals runs the risk of grossly oversimplifying the reality of each individual’s identity and which in itself helps construct hurtful stereotypes. Indeed it reifies the orientalist tropes which are attendant in “imaginative geographies.” (Gregory, *Colonial Present*, 17)

²⁰² Quotation marks are used here for the reasons set forth in the above footnote

logic of representational practices’) is made cohesive by a sense of national anxiety in the presence of the ‘new’ enemy ‘other’ in ‘our’ midst. According to this conception this enemy was/is, above all, racially inferior to ‘us’ hierarchically. It should be noted that this sense of ‘newness’ is not to say, however, that racism towards ‘Muslim-looking’ individuals did not exist in the past. What is meant by ‘new’ here is a particularly intense reincarnation of islamophobia. It is my contention that the period surrounding (leading up to, during, and after) the invasion of Iraq saw a resurgence of the islamophobic discourse. A discourse which was expressed through highly orientalist, oversimplificatory, and dehumanizing representations.

Before attempting to sketch out this islamophobic discourse, we should not forget the highly problematic nature of race relations in the United States. No account of racism and racial discourse would be whole without understanding the context in which racial ‘others’ are constructed in the US’ domestic racial discourse. One group of racialized ‘others’ who have received a particularly oppressive treatment by the US government has been young black men. This is particularly true of those targeted by a war on drugs which unfairly imposed upon them a *New Jim Crow*. The central processes of this structural racism whose main product is mass incarceration occurs in three stages: “(1.) The war on drugs, (2.) The period of formal control, and (3.) The period of invisible punishment.²⁰³” The war on drugs, through its overly harsh drug laws, contributes “vast numbers of people...into the criminal justice system by the police, who conduct drug operations primarily in poor communities of color.²⁰⁴” From 2005–2008 the Stop and Frisk program in New York City stopped Black and Latino men 80% of the time. However, arrest rates and summons rates of these same demographics for the same time period

²⁰³ Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: New Press ; Jackson, Tenn, 2010): 180.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

fell between 4-6% for the former and 5-7% for the latter.²⁰⁵ Secondly, once charged with an offence “defendants are denied meaningful legal representation and pressured to plead guilty whether they are or not.²⁰⁶” Once found guilty prisoners will find themselves in a system favoring mass incarceration. In fact, America currently has the highest amount of people (*in the world!*) in prison as an absolute measure of prisoners and is second only to Seychelles in prison population rate.²⁰⁷ In the final stage, prisoners, which are disproportionately black men, “will be discriminated against, legally, for the rest of their lives – denied employment, housing, education, and public benefits. Unable to surmount these obstacles, most will eventually return to prison and then be released again, caught in a closed circuit of perpetual marginality.²⁰⁸”

Nowhere are the effects of this racial system more acute than in the city of Chicago. At first glance it would seem counter-intuitive given that “it has boasted black mayors, black police chiefs, black legislators, and is home to the nation’s first black president. It has a thriving economy, a growing Latino community, and a substantial black middle class.²⁰⁹” And yet “90% of those sentenced to a drug offense in Illinois are African American.²¹⁰ Speaking in more general terms “55% of the adult black male population in Chicago have a felony record,” and “80 percent of the adult black male workforce,” have a felony record.²¹¹ Not only do black people make up a disproportionate number of prisoners but white people are “consistently more likely to avoid prison and felony charges, even when they are repeat offenders.²¹²” The hardest hit demographic amongst black men are young black men – in 2001 “there were more black men in the state’s correctional facilities... than the total number of black men enrolled in

²⁰⁵ “Report: Racial Disparity in NYPD Stop and Frisks,” *Center for Constitutional Rights*, 4–5, accessed March 7, 2014, <http://ccrjustice.org/learn-more/reports/report%3A-racial-disparity-nypd-stop-and-frisks>.

²⁰⁶ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 181.

²⁰⁷ “Highest to Lowest,” *ICPS (International Centre for Prison Studies)*, accessed February 18, 2014, <http://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest>.

²⁰⁸ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 181.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 183.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 184.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² *Ibid.*

undergraduate degree programs in state universities.²¹³ In addition to this consider that “just 992 black men received a bachelor’s degree from Illinois state universities in 1999, while roughly 7,000 black men were released from the state prison system the following year just from drug offenses.²¹⁴” Because of the pervasive extent to which young black men are imprisoned “today mass incarceration defines the meaning of blackness in America: black people, especially black men, are criminals. That is what it means to be black.²¹⁵” Black criminals are constructed in contrast to white criminals. While black criminals are stigmatized for being black white criminals are stigmatized for being criminals.²¹⁶ Therefore, there are discursive consequences to empirical realities, ones which persist despite their falsity – such as the black man as criminal.

Therefore, as the empirical reality of mass incarceration negatively shapes the discursive construction of blackness, so too will the events of 9/11 shape the discourse surrounding ‘Muslim-looking’ people. Our focus here will be on the ways in which ‘Muslim-looking’ people were persecuted by the government and negatively portrayed in the US media in the direct aftermath of 9/11. These constructions would be the result of national anxiety which would spur to life a very ugly racialized logic. Although only 19 ‘Muslim-looking’ people were responsible for the attack on the twin towers, racial profiling by the government delivered official sanction to islamophobia. Starting just after the attacks on the twin towers the United States national security state set out to racially profile and target ‘Muslim-looking’ people. On Nov 9, John Ashcroft, the Attorney General, tasked the FBI with ‘interviewing,²¹⁷’ “5,000 men

²¹³ Ibid., 185.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 192.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ *Sanctioned Bias: Racial Profiling Since 9/11* (ACLU, February 2004), 5, <https://www.aclu.org/national-security/racial-profiling-911-report>. The reason I say ‘interviewed’ is it seems, from many eye witness accounts, that these ‘interviews’ were more coerced interrogations; there was no shortage of threats or intimidation tactics by the FBI pressuring individuals to comply. (Ibid., 11–16.)

between the ages of 18 and 33 who had legally entered the U.S. on non-immigrant visas in the past two years, and who came from specific countries linked by the government to terrorism.²¹⁸ In March of the following year a further 3,000 were ‘interviewed.’ The specific kinds of tactics which were used were threats of deportation based on minor immigration issues in exchange for potentially valuable information on Muslim terrorist groups.²¹⁹ In June of 2002 Attorney General Ashcroft instituted the NSEERS (National Security Entry Exit Registration System). The purpose of this program was to register “all male nationals over the age of 15 from 25 countries²²⁰,” who were “ordered to report to the government to register and be fingerprinted, photographed and questioned.²²¹” In one year the NSEERS program had managed to register “83,310 foreign nationals, placing 13,740 into deportation proceedings. Not a single one of these individuals was ever publicly charged with terrorism.²²²”

Unsurprisingly, Muslim advocacy groups counted a threefold increase in islamophobia and discrimination complaints amongst their members from 2001-2002.²²³ The list of NSEERS targeted countries is all the more revelatory of Bush administration racial profiling given the nationalities of the 9/11 hijackers themselves. Of the 19 hijackers “fifteen...were from Saudi Arabia. Two were from the United Arab Emirates, one was from Lebanon, and one was from Egypt.²²⁴” And yet curiously this translated into the racial profiling of Muslims in general.

Racial profiling is not only bad policy, it is racial discrimination. Beyond its absurd ineffectiveness and probable polarizing effect against the Bush administration, more

²¹⁸ *Sanctioned Bias: Racial Profiling Since 9/11*, 5.

²¹⁹ Hilal Elver, “Racializing Islam before and after 9/11: From Melting Pot to Islamophobia. (I. Point of Departure into IV. 10 Years After 9/11: Islamophobia and Racializing Islam, with Footnotes, P. 119-155) (Ten Years After 9/11: Rethinking Counterterrorism),” *Transnational Law & Contemporary Problems* 21, no. 1 (2012): 140.

²²⁰ List is as follows: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan and Syria...Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Eritrea, Lebanon, Morocco, North Korea, Oman, Qatar, Somalia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan and Kuwait (*Sanctioned Bias*, 7)

²²¹ *Sanctioned Bias: Racial Profiling Since 9/11*, 6.

²²² *Ibid.*, 7.

²²³ Elver, “Racializing Islam before and after 9/11,” n. 132.

²²⁴ “FAQ about 9/11,” *National September 11 Memorial & Museum*, accessed March 7, 2014, <http://www.911memorial.org/faq-about-911>.

importantly, this tactic has negative discursive and representational effects. It represents the 'other' as undifferentiated mass. It reifies the idea that all who are 'other' are 'the same.' Beyond a 'shared look,' this representational practice assumes there are also 'shared' behavioral patterns and ways of thinking. As we shall see later the commonality of the Muslim faith in Arab countries quickly slips to the illogical and ignorant fear of all Arabs and Muslims as the terrorist 'other.' This construction is something which racial profiling plays a key role in creating.

Although the state was deeply involved in targeting 'Muslim-looking' men in their national security and surveillance programs, the media was also equally involved in racializing 'Muslim-looking' individuals. Reaching back to the recent resurgence of Western interest in the Middle East²²⁵, we can see an evolution of discursive tropes surrounding countries and persons from the Middle East. Although starting with a more exotic-centric discourse pre-1967 we see a transformation towards a discourse centred on threat and danger surrounding 9/11. This transition towards the Middle East as dangerous started with the defeat of the combined Arab armies in the 1967 war. The trope of a more dangerous, fanatical, and irrational 'Arab' came about as the result of a narrative of the 'Arab' as antagonist.²²⁶ This trope then made way for the 'Arab' as "villainous ... 'oil sheik,'"²²⁷ following the oil crises of the 1970s. Following the 1979 Iranian Revolution, this trope transformed into the Arab/Muslim as terrorist. This trope gained traction through the depictions of Muslims as the primary antagonists in many Hollywood movies throughout the 80s and 90s.²²⁸

Fast forwarding to the period 2001-09, a number of key discursive trends and tropes emerged establishing connections between terrorism and the 'Muslim-looking' person. Powell's

²²⁵ I only use this term for purposes of symmetry with the authors writing.

²²⁶ Love, "Confronting Islamophobia in the United States," 410.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Ibid., 411.

media study uncovered a number of insightful connections being made in Media reporting during this period. Suspects of terror attacks were quickly labeled Muslim, whether or not they were.²²⁹ Despite no proof being uncovered directly linking a terrorism suspect to Al-Qaeda, news networks established this link before such proof was absolute.²³⁰ This association with Al-Qaeda works as a solidifying narrative to the U.S. 'self' vs the 'Muslim-looking'/foreign 'other'.²³¹ Furthering this discourse, foreign terrorism is simply labeled terrorism, especially when the suspect is labeled Muslim. The label 'domestic terrorism' is reserved for those terrorists who are thought not adhere to Islam and who have no international terror network connections.²³² This foreign/domestic distinction, acting as a proxy for 'self' and 'other', further humanizes the 'self' and dehumanizes the 'other.' Domestic terror is portrayed as less threatening than international terror. They are also more human than international terrorists - domestic terrorists personalized and humanized.²³³ International terrorism is more threatening and a greater security risk compared to domestic terror. In this way international terrorism is portrayed as an always lurking threat.²³⁴ Finally, the portrayal of victims of terrorism is indicative of an underlying islamophobia. Victims of international terror are linked to "Christianity and terrorists with Islam."²³⁵ The media reifies the 'self vs. 'other' distinction in portraying "Muslims as a threat to Christians in America. Once again the dichotomy of good versus evil arises as Christianity represents 'good' and Islam represents 'evil.'²³⁶

In the period surrounding 9/11 the US government and media portrayed Muslims in such a way as to fuse two identities into one - the terrorist identity with the Muslim identity.

²²⁹ Kimberly A. Powell, "Framing Islam: An Analysis of U.S. Media Coverage of Terrorism Since 9/11," *Communication Studies* 62, no. 1 (2011): 96, doi:10.1080/10510974.2011.533599.

²³⁰ Ibid., 97.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Ibid., 98.

²³³ Ibid., 99.

²³⁴ Ibid., 103.

²³⁵ Ibid., 105.

²³⁶ Ibid.

The consequences for this racialized discursive portrayal of Muslims are negative – ‘Muslim-looking’ people are labeled terrorists, their identities slip into a hyphenate taken as an equivalency (Terrorist = Muslim and vice versa). In this discourse Muslims are dehumanized, and labeled as the more serious and constant threat to American security. Their fundamental identity characteristics are labeled evil versus the goodness of the Christian victim. Indeed these tropes and representational practices are not confined to the U.S. domestic racial discourse. This discourse and the representational practices it deploys are reproduced on a wider ‘Western’ level. Indeed, the tropes present in the U.S. domestic context are traceable to decision making at the strategic/command level.

Part 2: Counterinsurgency and Global Biopolitics

Counterinsurgency is as much a product of the domestic discourses which inform race as it is responding to perceived challenges internationally. Specifically it relates to the project of Development and of new ways of waging war. COIN sets itself apart from ‘traditional’ warfare in that “security, development and good governance to the local population,” are hoisted up as the foremost objectives “rather than merely killing insurgents.”²³⁷ It is touted as a form of warfare which attempts to win hearts and minds - to be fought amongst the population as opposed to against it. However, despite its magnanimous rhetoric it is still a military operation – it is not so benevolent an undertaking. It is first and foremost an enterprise geared towards establishing governments which will secure themselves against threat and also secure the US against future terrorist activities. It is a technology of population control which is tied up with previous notions of liberal rule, war, and development. The liberal way of rule²³⁸ - a liberal

²³⁷ Kienscherf, “A Programme of Global Pacification,” 518..

²³⁸ Ibid.

government's aim to make life live and let others die – is tied to the liberal way of war²³⁹ - a liberal government's attempts to control risky forms of life. In the American case risky forms of life are those forms of terrorist life on the imperial periphery which threaten to bring its violence to the imperial core. These notions of making life live and preventing risky life are tied up with notions of the liberal way of development; a liberal government's aim to create self-sufficiency at the household and communal levels amongst the people of the global south.²⁴⁰ The combination of these forms of liberal rule creates the possibility of the strategy of containment. Duffield explains containment as “those various interventions and technologies that seek to restrict or manage the circulation of incomplete and hence potentially threatening life, or return it from whence it came.²⁴¹” Northern powers use COIN as an answer to the problem of the risky populations of the global south. The Pentagon's 2010 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report (QDRR)* sets this out fairly clearly. The *QDRR* establishes strategies which it anticipates using; “counterinsurgency (COIN), stability, and counterterrorism (CT) operations,” and where they envision them taking place; “in environments ranging from densely populated urban areas and mega-cities, to remote mountains, deserts, jungles, and littoral regions.²⁴² The 2010 *QDRR* continues further saying “accordingly, the U.S. Armed Forces will continue to require capabilities to create a secure environment in fragile states.²⁴³”

It is not a stretch to say that this ideal of containment is racially coded. The division evident in securing the lives of the global North against those of the global South falls closely into Foucault's notion of racism – the idea that the state no longer directly kills those perceived

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 523.

²⁴¹ Mark Duffield, “Global Civil War: The Non-Insured, International Containment and Post-Interventionary Society 1,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 21, no. 2 (2008): 146.

²⁴² Kienscherf, “A Programme of Global Pacification,” 523.

²⁴³ Ibid.

to be racially unfit but, rather, lets them die.²⁴⁴ The increasing blurring and interplay between development and security deeply informs the context of interventions and Western military forays into the global South, of which counterinsurgency forms the tip of the lance. Zones largely populated by the undesirable and risky foreign ‘other.’ A rather novel and ‘new’ feature of this particular kind of population regulation lies also in its scope. In the American case not only is there vehement opposition against immigrants (underdeveloped life) but also ramping up of rhetoric against failed states and zones of global underdeveloped life, zones where the United States is free to regulate those populations thanks to its self-authorization for the use of military force.²⁴⁵ Legally speaking the world as we know it is now the battlefield of the United States military – free to regulate risky life of the undesirable and underdeveloped ‘others’ as they please.

Beyond the biopolitical configuration of American global military governance, counterinsurgency is also entwined with orientalist visibility – a form of seeing the world where the ‘other,’ particularly the ‘oriental’ other, is discursively and empirically subordinated to the ‘self’ in a racial hierarchy. Military strategy experienced a cultural turn before the invasion of Iraq. It was justified in part through the notion that the enemy’s culture could be turned against it in order to defeat it, a notion extracted from Sun Tzu’s *Art of War* - ‘If you know your enemies and know yourself, you will not be imperiled in a hundred battles.’²⁴⁶ Gregory contends that cultural knowledge was integrated into the US military’s strategy because “a key objective was to generate actionable intelligence about the insurgency that could inform lethal targeting, so that cultural knowledge was not a substitute for killing but rather,

²⁴⁴ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 253–254.

²⁴⁵ *Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002*, 116, 2002.

²⁴⁶ Sunzi (6th cent BC), “The Art of War,” <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/132/132.txt>, pt. III s 18, accessed March 11, 2014, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/132/pg132.html>.

in certain circumstances, a prerequisite for its refinement.²⁴⁷ Cultural knowledge was a key ingredient for the success of counterinsurgency because it allowed a more effective and surgical targeting of potential ‘insurgents’. The need for a culturally savvy guide of who to shoot was essential in the context of the total immersion of the enemy amongst the civilian populace. To this end the Human Terrain System (HTS) was initiated, its purpose was to embed scholars from the social sciences and humanities into military situations on the ground to further the military’s cultural knowledge. This approach garnered vocal objections from academic and professional organizations protesting the weaponization of their disciplines.²⁴⁸

The attitudes of one of the foremost counterinsurgency experts, David Kilcullen – counterinsurgency advisor to General Petraeus - concerning what he calls the *Accidental Guerilla Syndrome*²⁴⁹ are instructive of the military’s wider view of culture. What *The Accidental Guerilla* obfuscates is a robust discussion of the *why* of the involvement of this Guerilla (why is this guerilla fighting in the insurgency?) and therefore their agency. Kilcullen rushes to discuss the *how*, - or rather ‘*how* to stop the creation of more guerillas.’ Given this, the first important blindness from which a culturally centred counterinsurgency suffers is its preoccupation with the *how* (how to win the war) and not the *why* (why should this war be fought). Taking it one step further, it delegitimizes the questioning of the invasion of Iraq by the military’s *de facto* control of Iraq and takes this as the logical equivalent of the legitimacy of their mission.

The second important blindness is the use of medical metaphors to explain the *Accidental Guerilla Syndrome*. The three steps through which a given society goes through in its ‘viral contamination’ of the *syndrome* are threefold: (1.) “the infection itself,” followed by (2.)

²⁴⁷ Derek Gregory, “The Rush to the Intimate: Counterinsurgency and the Cultural Turn in Late Modern War,” *Radical Philosophy* 150, no. 2008 (n.d.): 10.

²⁴⁸ Bell, “Hybrid Warfare and Its Metaphors,” 228; Kienscherf, “A Programme of Global Pacification,” 526.

²⁴⁹ Kienscherf, “A Programme of Global Pacification,” 524.

“contagion sets in,” and finally (3.) “rejection.²⁵⁰” Insurgency in this conception is the mechanism by which antibodies are countered – it represents the improper functioning of a body’s immune system. Counterinsurgency in this conception is the victory of the antibodies over the contagion – the proper functioning of the body’s immune system. This binary representation of counterinsurgency obfuscates the immunization process which it calls upon to represent itself. By definition immunization is “the introduction of an artificial, intrinsically destructive agent, so as to produce a life-generating effect.²⁵¹” Put another way, immunization is “exposure to the very substance that one must defend against.²⁵²” It is the violence which attends any military operation which medical and immunitary euphemisms tends to hide behind its technocratic veneer of ‘triage’ and ‘ameliorative’ treatments. Ultimately this metaphor refers back to its colonial predecessors in that it attempts to strip the agency from those it fights. In creating the concept of an *Accidental Guerilla* and it simultaneously labels opposition to imperial control both illegitimate and barbarous. But in this particular instance there is something more at play here. Bell insightfully illustrates that “any support for the insurgency is a symptom, an uncontrollable effect, of the chaos of war. The population, thus, has no volition of its own. It is misled, threatened with or already ‘infected’ by the insurgency.²⁵³” Therefore, as in Vietnam and the Philippines before it, the US military and the Bush administration cannot foresee legitimate descent to their policies. They cannot imagine a world where different was not worse, where dissent could be politically motivated, or the product of their nations policies; a world in which they cannot fathom the response to ‘why do they (the ‘other’) hate us?’

The logic of the removal of Iraqi agency translated into American military planners conceptions of the population as a whole. Although it was an enemy vastly more complex than

²⁵⁰ Bell, “Hybrid Warfare and Its Metaphors,” 234.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 240.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid.

they had anticipated (“the enemy we’re fighting is different from the one we’d war-gamed against.”²⁵⁴) it was an enemy over whom they felt they could achieve “‘identity dominance.’”²⁵⁵ Through border assemblages²⁵⁶ set up in the city of Fallujah the deployment of biometric technology was designed to aid the US military to sort the population. The population was sorted into who is and is not an insurgent and who is and is not a dangerous form of life. The grid of intelligibility through which these forms of life were sorted was a green, grey, red coding system: individuals coded green were friendly, reds were ‘likely insurgents’, and greys were neither friendly nor insurgent. However, greys morphed into reds in the context of an increasingly violent insurgency. They were treated as always almost insurgents. There are several reasons for the bleeding of non-allies into enemies in the context of counterinsurgency. The most relevant for the case of biometric data collection, and indeed its *raison d’être*, is the amorphousness of fighting an enemy which is not clearly distinguishable from the civilian population. Biometrics by design is supposed to identify ‘objective’ and therefore timelessly ‘true’ constitutive elements of a given individual. This technology supposedly enabled a better sorting of life into its less risky and more risky forms. In a kind of unfortunate irony, however, the attempt to sort the population in the context of a counterinsurgency simultaneously recreates the amorphousness which they sought to separate out – the bleeding of the non-ally into the enemy. The amorphousness which biometric technology authorizes, in the end, sorts Iraqis not into colour codes but into a more simple binary; if one is not a ‘good Iraqi’ one is a ‘bad Iraqi.’

In Baghdad, the designation of red and green city districts was determined by the use of significant activity reports (SIGACTS). A SIGACT is a report created by a soldier on-the-

²⁵⁴ Qtd in Nicholas Mirzoeff, “War Is Culture: Global Counterinsurgency, Visuality, and the Petraeus Doctrine.” *PMLA* 124, no. 5 (2009): 1740.

²⁵⁵ Colleen D. Bell, “Grey’s Anatomy Goes South: Global Racism and Suspect Identities in the Colonial Present,” *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 38, no. 4 (December 31, 2013): 475.

²⁵⁶ Kienscherf, “A Programme of Global Pacification,” 528.

ground transmitting information following what they perceive to be a 'significant activity.' The information obtained from these SIGACTS was then graphically represented in presentations to the public concerning the outcome of the war and how it was progressing. SIGACTS also acted as indicators for the designation of city neighbourhoods as red or green on the Army's Command Post of the Future (CPOF).²⁵⁷ The CPOF acted as a real time map of Baghdad indicating, in part, the riskiness of certain neighbours according to these SIGACTS. The problem with relying on SIGACTS was that it relied on human soldiers, soldiers with families and emotions, ones who were often tired of their mission in Iraq. In some cases soldiers conducted "'search and avoid' missions," instead of conducting 'seek and destroy' missions.²⁵⁸ Indeed, soldiers understandably preferred this to 'just riding around to get blown up'.²⁵⁹ Flaws and all, these SIGACTS were aggregated together, operationalized, and used en masse to create graphical representations of what Iraq was 'truly like.' Indeed, these graphs projected a misleading objectivity and authority to their viewing audience; they performed a clever sort of 'God-trick'. According to Gregory, a 'God Trick' is "the claim to see everything from nowhere in particular."²⁶⁰ The problem with such representations was that: "the battle space could never be fully transparent. All representations were, of necessity, mediated by cultural, conceptual and technical modalities and, crucially, all claims to 'know' the event-ful city were inescapably partial and situated."²⁶¹ One example of this kind of 'God-Trick' in action was the use of the quadratic kernel density estimation (KDE).²⁶² This type of graphical representation is often chosen for its eye catching and dramatic style. It is no coincidence, either, that the comparisons

²⁵⁷ Derek Gregory, "Seeing Red: Baghdad and the Event-Ful City," *Political Geography* 29, no. 5 (2010): 269, doi:10.1016/j.polgeo.2010.04.003.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 270.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 271.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² To see a good example of KDE see Ibid., 277.

between month to month in the KDE²⁶³ look suspiciously like malignant tumours. It appears at first as if they are invading the neighbourhoods of Baghdad. They then recede slowly in the face of the American military efforts. Given the propensity of senior military advisors to speak of counterinsurgency in medical metaphors it is by no means an accident that their self-representations project an image of oncologists attempting to remove tumours. This metaphor is not without real consequences on the ground:

As the oncological metaphor depoliticizes and pathologizes insurgency so it turns counterinsurgency's offensive operations into a form of chemotherapy killing insurgent cells to save the body politic. This becomes even more powerful as these tropes circulate through the public sphere; whatever the effects of the successive Baghdad Security Plans on the people that lived (and died) in that city, these medicalized images helped to make the cultural turn and the operations carried out under its sign therapeutic for the American military and the American public.²⁶⁴

It is the suppression and surgical removal of the cancerous tumours from the body-politic of Baghdad, and throughout Iraq, which enable the collateral damage of Iraqi civilians to be legitimized and silenced. It is therapeutic from the stand point of American military and public opinion to 'see' the progress being made in the colonial laboratory. But it is no peace of mind for the countless Iraqis who died as collateral damage to this 'counterinsurgency.' Gregory carries on elsewhere insightfully noting: "In this looking-glass world bodies are counted but they do not count; they become the signs of a pathological condition and the vector of recovery... This is not algorithmic war, and behind every mark on the map/city is a constellation of fear and terror, pain and grief."²⁶⁵

It is for this reason that biopolitical methods of population control fail to accomplish the very goal which they set out to achieve. Because the very hearts and minds which they attempt to win are always already a threat to be managed and not a person to be entreated with.

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 278.

Because, in the final accounting; the fear, grief, and death experienced by everyday Iraqis, although perhaps counted, is not genuinely taken into account.

Part 3: US Racism and Imperialism in Iraq

From the command level to the on the ground level – the failure to account for the Iraqi ‘other’ has real and negative consequences. No longer at the safe distance of the green zone soldiers experience firsthand, what Gregory terms, the “constellation of fear and terror, pain and grief.”²⁶⁶ As I theorized in the previous chapter racism in counterinsurgency plays a key role in the dehumanization of the ‘other’ along a specific pathway from racialization to bestialization. Now let me be clear in saying that this relationship is not causal (that dehumanization takes place along this path at all times in all places), nor to pretend to have enough data to suggest a systematic²⁶⁷ relationship in this regard. What is unclear is indeed substantial: Amongst whom was racism most prevalent? Where in Iraq did it play the largest role? And when was it most prevalent? However, I think that the relationship I am postulating is highly suggestive and could certainly be the object of further research. What is clear, insofar as can be understood and known, is that racism played an integral part in the conduct of the counterinsurgency in Iraq. Many interviewees speak clearly to this fact.

There are three broad relationships which I wish to suggest in the following pages: (1.) that racism was used in the form of epithets and older colonial/imperial tropes to revive the colonial past and bring it into the colonial present²⁶⁸. (2.) A sense of jocular and dark humour was associated with acts of torture and atrocity. (3.) Exceptional levels of violence and cruelty were employed discursively and in practice against a racial ‘haji’ ‘other’.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Let me be clear of my meaning of systematicity here. What I mean is the testing of my question against sufficient enough data to confirm in a conclusive way the existence, or not, of the specific phenomenon. Which, by the way, as a critical scholar I do not believe possible in the social sciences the ability to explain anything definitively or predict anything with certainty. What I do not mean is that my particular qualitative research methodology is illegitimate or carries less explanatory weight because I did not conduct certain ‘legitimate’ methodologies according to readings such as Gary King, Robert O Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994). For an elegant and well articulated version of critical methodology, and critical systematicity, see Mark B Salter and Can E Mutlu, *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

²⁶⁸ Derek Gregory, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2004).

First, it will be a matter of briefly sketch out the epithets and colonial tropes being used in Iraq. Understanding what representational practices are deployed will enable us to better understand the effect of their usage on the ground in Iraq. To understand, in short, how they bring into being the colonial present. The colonial present at its core is the creation of a link between the colonial past and the present via various continuations or revivals of forms of colonial oppression.²⁶⁹ The most common epithet used against the Iraqi people to bring forth this colonial present was the term ‘Haji.’²⁷⁰ Like the terms used in the Philippines this term attempts to dehumanize the racial ‘other’ by attempting to undermine an ‘inherent’ characteristic of the racialized subject. In this case the origin of the word comes from the Arabic word meaning a person who has made the religious pilgrimage to Mecca. In the discourse of the American soldier it was a term used to deride and to place the ‘other’ in a subordinate position to the ‘self’ in a racial hierarchy. The ‘inherent’ characteristics at which this epithet aims are two-fold: (1.) it presupposes a kind of barbarity and pre-modernity to the ‘Arab/Muslim’ – here forth known as barbarization. As Egan puts it soldiers “make assumptions that all Iraqis are Muslims.²⁷¹” This first representational move reduces the identity of all Iraqis to a single ethno-religious hyphenate (Iraqi-Muslim). The second move removes the individuality and agency of the ‘other’ by essentializing them and representing them as uniform and monolithic – here forth known as deindividuation. This move reifies “orientalist notions of Arab peoples as an undifferentiated mass reducible to the irrational forces of religion...in contrast to assumptions of a rational, modernized West.”²⁷² Indeed these representational moves, especially those essentializing identity, serve to ‘demonstrate’ that “all

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 7–9.

²⁷⁰ Although this was not the only epithet or colonial trope to be used it was the most widespread. Other words such as ‘sand nigger’ have appeared in usage in Iraq (Egan, 144). A less common although still employed trope was designating dangerous areas or uncontrolled areas as “Indian country (Egan, 146; Wall 2012, 495).”

²⁷¹ Egan, “Frantz Fanon and the Construction of the Colonial Subject,” 149.

²⁷² Ibid., 146.

colonized peoples are presumed to share an essential nature, one that demonstrates the correctness of their subordination.²⁷³”

This barbarization and deindividuation of the ‘other’ are closely tied to the idea of the insurgent as a constant threat; an idea which extends beyond combatants and soon thereafter blankets the entire enemy population. This idea, in short, serves to recall the colonial past into the present and justify violence against colonial subjects. The term ‘haji,’ as a mechanism which performs this dual movement, became so commonplace that one soldier recounted “that he was invited to give a talk to a local high school geography class on what he called ‘Hadji culture’ and ‘Hadji geography’—without him ever seeming to recognize the political and controversial nature of the term.²⁷⁴” Indeed, for this soldier the dehumanization of the ‘other’ became so commonplace and every day that he didn’t realize what he did was doing was the equivalent of returning from Vietnam and giving a talk on ‘gook’ culture and ‘gook’ geography.

This representational move is both an effect of counterinsurgency and the racism and dehumanization inherent within the term ‘Haji’. The usage of this term to dehumanize the ‘other’ is also the result of psychological ‘coldness’ or unfeelingness which washes over soldiers in counterinsurgency. Indeed, many soldiers report remembering dehumanizing Iraqis to deal with the difficult realities of the war that they were thrust into. One soldier reports his feeling of desensitization: “‘We wanted to help at first. When people just start dying left and right, you become cold. And it stops being about helping people. You start, you just form this deep, deep hatred for the people you’re fighting against. You become capable of doing things you would never have thought done.’²⁷⁵”

²⁷³ Ibid., 150.

²⁷⁴ Tyler Wall, “Philanthropic Soldiers, Practical Orientalism, and the Occupation of Iraq,” *Identities* 18, no. 5 (2011): 496.

²⁷⁵ Chris Hedges and Laila Al-Arian, *Collateral Damage America’s War against Iraqi Civilians* (New York: Nation Books, 2008), 103.

This is not to say that once a soldier had become desensitized that they felt no remorse or pain for the ‘other’. Spc. Steve Mortillo couches his language in a quotidian struggle to maintain ones humanity by maintaining that of the ‘other’; the daily decision-making process was always a “constant psychological battle,” one where the end goal was always to “stay humane and treat the Iraqi in a justifiable way.”²⁷⁶ The expression of desensitization of the counterinsurgent is often accompanied with a feeling of the enemy as spectral or amorphous – as always present and threatening. Lieutenant Van Engelen expresses a kind of spectral, or constantly threatening presence of the insurgent, “The guy that’s shaking my hand at a council meeting could pretty easily be the guy that ended up shooting at me that night,’ he said. ‘And that is the scariest thing about the whole guerilla warfare. You don’t know who or what is attacking you.’²⁷⁷”

The most extreme edge of this continuum of dehumanization of the ‘other’ is the ‘other’ as animal. This construction usually appears in the context of a more exterminist racism – a racism where the ‘other’ race is unfit to live and therefore must be hunted and killed till extinction. In one interview with an Iraq war veteran he expresses the encounters he had with the enemy ‘other’ as analogous to hunting deer:

When you’re hunting deer, you brag about your skills. That’s how it was over there. It was like we were hunting, or we were shooting targets, you never thought of them as being, I guess we all thought of them as being less than human because they’re Iraqis, they’re different, they’re the enemy. And that’s the way you’re trained. That’s the way you’re taught. And if I went over there I’d do the same thing, that’s exactly how I would feel. I would feel no remorse if I shot one of them. In fact, that’s what you want, you want to be able to tell the story.²⁷⁸

This racial exterminism is also present on a peculiar sign hanging at the National Guard Armory in Southern Indiana - it reads “some hunt deer. We hunt terrorists.”²⁷⁹ It is these

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 102.

²⁷⁸ Wall, “Philanthropic Soldiers, Practical Orientalism, and the Occupation of Iraq,” 494.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 495.

foregoing elements which make a recipe for disaster: the dehumanization (towards bestialization) of the ‘other,’ a kind of desensitization of the American soldier, and an always there spectral insurgency. Therefore, if all Iraqi civilians, or the figure of the ‘haji,’ is an always threatening spectre, then, it is not far-fetched to also claim that violence against all Iraqis, following this logic, is authorized. Wall formulates this well when he illustrates “if all Iraqis are perceived as ultimately a threat in *potentia* due to the inability to distinguish differences [between combatants and non-combatants], all violent military actions by United States foot soldiers are, so the story goes, justifiable and understandable, although perhaps regrettable.”²⁸⁰

Beyond the effects of counterinsurgency in general there is something *more* brutal and intense about the counterinsurgency in Iraq. Indeed there is some research that points to the fact that “white-on-white battlefield violence has historically been reported to be *less* brutal and intense than white combatants versus non-white combatants.”²⁸¹

The Taguba report starts to get at exactly this specific and racialized violence particular to Iraq. The report documents the various cases of abuse which occurred at Abu Ghraib prison. The most frequent recurring forms of abuse were those using sexuality and nudity against Iraqi detainees.²⁸² Torture, here, can be seen as inherent to the idea of the accomplishment of imperial conquest: “As the terrorist resorts to extremes of violence that cause grievous individual pain, so the state replies with extremes of violence that, in turn, cause grievous individual pain.’ Any civilizing mission is marked precisely by this paradox: the civilizing apparatus of liberation is exactly that which delimits the conditions of its possibility.”²⁸³

Although torture frequently accompanies operations of imperial conquest, the role of the ‘other’ as Arab/Muslim/Terrorist played a key role in the type of torture carried out in Iraq. In

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 497.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 496.

²⁸² Taguba, *The Taguba Report on Treatment of Abu Ghraib Prisoners in Iraq* (Cosimo, Inc., 2004), 16–17.

²⁸³ Jasbir K. Puar, “On Torture: Abu Ghraib,” *Radical History Review*, no. 93 (2005): 15.

March of 2003, prominent Neo-Conservatives, Bush administration officials, and high ranking military officers came to idolize *The Arab Mind* by Raphael Patai. Those who read it deemed it the seminal work on 'Arab' psychology and sociology²⁸⁴. The essential thesis of this book, particularly in view of sexuality in the 'Arab' world, was "The segregation of the sexes, the veiling of the women . . . and all the 'other' minute rules that govern and restrict contact between men and women, have the effect of making sex a prime mental preoccupation in the Arab world,' Patai wrote. 'Homosexual activity, or any indication of homosexual leanings, as with all 'other' expressions of sexuality, is never given any publicity. These are private affairs and remain in private.'"²⁸⁵ These political elites deduced that because the 'insurgents' were 'Arab' the use of sexually humiliating torture would force them to divulge even the most closely guarded of secrets. Because sexuality as a public expression, especially homosexuality, was extremely private and taboo detainees would do whatever it took in order to avoid the publication of the photos depicting their sexual humiliation. Ironically it appears that it did not work as planned as the insurgency continued to grow well into 2007 – perhaps even contributed to its growth.

Commenting on the treatment of detainees at Abu Ghraib President Bush said "their treatment does not reflect the *nature* of the American people.'²⁸⁶" Ironically this is the very thing that it represents. One of the key insights of Said's *Orientalism* is that "Orientalism is – and does not simply represent – a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual

²⁸⁴ As an ironic and almost laughable (were it not for the seriousness of the consequences of this thought) aside - this particular book is cited specifically in *Orientalism* as a perfect example of western orientalist thought. Perhaps even more absurd is the mere project that this text seeks to undertake. The idea that all 'Arabs' share the same inherent psychological makeup is incredibly racist. It is akin to studying 'the Black mind,' 'the American mind,' or 'the Aboriginal mind.' To even attempt such projects the researcher must assume that their subjects are static beings; it is to essentialize them, to return to the quasi sciences of phrenology and to remove all the social interaction inherent within identity.

²⁸⁵ Puar, "On Torture," 16.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with ‘our’ world.²⁸⁷ The key point here is Orientalism is not so much about the creation of ‘the orient’ so much as it is about the construction of the West in relation to it. Therefore, it was not so much that *The Arab Mind* depicted ‘Arabs’ as sexually private and repressed so much as it was that certain Americans embraced this view and saw the infliction of this particular brand of torture on these individuals as particularly heinous and deviant. Empirically, given the state of LGBTQ rights in the United States during this period (for example the Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy), the idea of homosexuality as deviant was just as embedded within Western discourse as it was in the ideas of Westerners about the Orient. This ‘self’ construction combined with a sense of military masculinity likewise understood homosexual acts as somehow deviant. This is illustrated fairly clearly in eyewitness testimony of torture taking place at Camp Mercury in Iraq in the fall of 2003. Following his account of highly violent and extreme torture techniques the eyewitness indicates “we never stripped [the detainees] down because this is an all-guy base and that is fucked up shit.”²⁸⁸ Therefore, this eyewitness’ discursive practices represent exactly this combination of military masculinity and notion of socially deviant behaviour, that to strip down a detainee would be ‘fucked up,’ whereas the beatings and stress positions to which detainees were subjected, although reprehensible, fell into a discourse of acceptable violent behaviour. Sexual-centric torture was beyond the pale of accepted violence – it was a particularly heinous violence to be committed against a dehumanized ‘other’.

Coming to our second point; a sense of jocular and dark humour was associated with acts of torture and atrocity amongst the desensitized soldiery. Perhaps the most explicit case of the use of the term ‘haji’ to dehumanize the ‘other’ is the song *Haji Girl* by Marine Corporal

²⁸⁷ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, 1st Vintage Books ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1979): 12.

²⁸⁸ *Leadership Failure: Firsthand Accounts of Torture of Iraqi Detainees by the U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne Division* (Human Rights Watch, September 2005), 11.

Joshua Belile.²⁸⁹ This song, beyond its clear self-affirmed racial superiority, is also an affirmation of Western necropolitics - “the power and capacity to dictate who may live and who must die.”²⁹⁰ The cultural deliberation as to who is fit to live and who must die is done in tandem with considerations of who is important along a hierarchy of human lives. This hierarchical valuation follows what Judith Butler theorizes as the distinction between “grievable,” and “ungrievable,” lives.²⁹¹ Both Western necropolitics and the grievable/ungrievable life distinction evoke within the Western narrator, Belile, “not regret or grief in the sovereign, but rather laughter and self-affirmation.”²⁹² The song makes it clear that Belile sees the subjects of his story as less than human. For starters he devalues their language to a kind of babble by repeating the refrain derived from the movie *Team American: World Police*.²⁹³ He reifies the idea of an essential “Hadji Culture,” reducing all Muslims/Arabs to a simplistic and singular form.²⁹⁴ Most importantly, he designates the lives of those he kills in his song as decidedly ‘ungrievable.’ The first death in the song is that of the sister of the titular character. Following the ‘Haji girls’ decision to take Belile home to her parents, the girls brother and father open fire on Belile. Belile uses the girl’s sister as a human shield and then proceeds to kill the brother and the father. While shots are exchanged the titular character sustains a shot to the head from the crossfire. At this moment of the song Belile sings

*The Blood sprayed from between her eyes
And then I laughed maniacally.*²⁹⁵

Therefore, not only are the lives of the titular character and her family members decidedly ‘ungrievable’ but the violence that Belile inflicts on these characters is justified. It is justified in

²⁸⁹ See full text of song in Appendix A.

²⁹⁰ Tyler Wall, “Imperial Laughs: A Soldier’s Song and the Colonial Present,” *Social Justice* 37, no. 2-3 (2010): 75.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 77.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 76.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 75.

that he is being fired upon and therefore, according to the rules of engagement, has the right to protect his life and act in self-defence. The trope that Belile plays on here goes back to older colonial tropes which enact the idea that colonial subject violence was so savage and extraordinary that the response which was called for was likewise savage and extraordinary. However, unlike the colonial subject, the savagery of the imperial power was justified 'in self-defence' making the colonial powers violence justified. Furthermore, Belile's song, as Kilcullen's *Accidental Guerilla*, is insidious in that it shuts down the questioning of *why* a given violent situation came to be (or perhaps *why* the Marines were there in the first place...) and rushes to judge *how* to fix it. In the end, the jocular and 'dark humour' associated with this song serves to mask imperial slaughter and produce the 'other' as legitimate target for imperial violence.

Although Belile's song is fictitious it speaks to an unfortunate reality lived by many Iraqis – of violence on a mass scale attendant to all military occupations. At the extreme end of the spectrum of colonial violence are moments of calculated discriminant violence - acts of atrocity. Atrocity for our purposes shall mean “the murder of civilians and prisoners, torture of captives, systematic burning of civilian quarters, and rape.”²⁹⁶ Although it is clear that there is much to add to this definition to keep it up to date, given that many of these elements still occur with regularity today, it is equally saddeningly accurate. It is clear that Iraq is no exception to this regularity. The Mahmudiyah murders, in particular, gained media attention for the cold calculated nature in which soldiers premeditated and perpetrated the rape and murder of Abeer Qassim Hamza al-Janabi, just fourteen at the time of her death, and her family. The man who planned and participated in these acts, Private Steven Green, was sentenced to life in prison in May of 2009.²⁹⁷ It appears, according to initial reports, as though he took his

²⁹⁶ Welch, “American Atrocities in the Philippines,” 234.

²⁹⁷ James Dao, “Ex-Soldier Gets Life Sentence for Iraq Murders,” *The New York Times*, May 22, 2009, sec. US, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/22/us/22soldier.html>.

own life in February 2014.²⁹⁸ What is clear is that Green became numb to death; he was engaged in the dehumanization of the ‘other’. What must not be forgotten is how Green came to a psychological place in time where this was ‘okay’ to do – where he could plan the murder and rape of a 14 year old girl. What is often thrown by the wayside in media and pundit analysis is the perpetrators humanity, the story of who Green was before these acts and how he got to such a psychological point. The temptation is often to demonize perpetrators as monsters and as less than human given the heinous nature of their acts. A quick note on this – for those familiar with the voluminous literature concerning pogroms and the Holocaust, specifically Arendt’s *Eichmann in Jerusalem*²⁹⁹ and Browning’s *Ordinary Men*,³⁰⁰ the central arguments of these books is that ordinary people can commit unspeakable acts of violence and cruelty. Indeed the full title of Arendt’s work cited above reads *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. Derek Gregory also speaks to this, taking it one step further in fact, when he notes “It is important not to allow the spectacular violence of September 11, or the wars in Afghanistan, Palestine, and Iraq, to blind us to the *banality* of the colonial present and to our complicity in its horrors.³⁰¹” Therefore, in order to understand racism in counterinsurgency and the banality of evil in this case, we must understand the humanity of Steven Green.

In addition to a history of substance problems and a criminal record Green was born into a tough living situation in his early years.³⁰² Green’s tour in Iraq found him in the

²⁹⁸ “US Iraq War Criminal ‘Killed Self,’” *BBC News*, accessed March 12, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-26265798>.

²⁹⁹ Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (London, England: Penguin Books, 2006).

³⁰⁰ Christopher R. Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*, 1st HarperPerennial ed.. (New York: HarperPerennial, 9319).

³⁰¹ Gregory, *The Colonial Present*, 16.

³⁰² Dao, “Ex-Soldier Gets Life Sentence for Iraq Murders.”; Andrew Tilghman, “I Came over Here Because I Wanted to Kill People.,” *The Washington Post*, July 30, 2006, sec. Opinions, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/28/AR2006072801492.html>.

deadliest region of Iraq, in the so called Sunni Triangle, in the heart of the Sunni resistance.³⁰³ In this posting Green was under daily threat of attack - mortar and rocket attacks on his base were a frequent occurrence.³⁰⁴ The regiment of which Green was a part was particularly hard hit - “[the] 101st Airborne Division's 502nd Infantry Regiment - was losing an average of about one soldier per week.³⁰⁵” His living quarters, and those of all the other soldiers stationed there, caught fire destroying their personal effects and their connections to home. The company commander of Green’s unit was given “three days of ‘freedom rest,’” following the fire in the living quarters. He said that he almost had “‘a nervous breakdown.’³⁰⁶” Green also suffered the traumatic death of his friend Sgt. Casica. Casica died while Green was attempting to save his life. These were just some amongst many incidents which the unit had to endure.³⁰⁷

Tilghman reports some humanity in Green despite the context in which Green was embedded. In one passage he reports that “despite the horrific conditions in which they were daily being tested, I found extraordinary camaraderie among the soldiers in Mahmudiyah. They were among the friendliest troops I met in Iraq,³⁰⁸” later on, commenting on Green specifically, he observes Green “joked around with the Iraqis as he sipped their tea. Most U.S. soldiers didn't hang out on this side of the base with the Iraqis.³⁰⁹”

Despite Green’s kindness and comfort hanging out amongst the local populace, he remained profoundly desensitized to their humanity. While hanging out with members of the local town Green commented to Tilghman “‘these guys are cool...But,’ he added with a shrug,

³⁰³ Tilghman, “I Came over Here Because I Wanted to Kill People.”

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ For discussion of 2 further incidents see: Paul Von Zielbauer, “Investigator Recommends Courts-Martial for 4 Soldiers,” *The New York Times*, September 4, 2006, sec. International / Middle East, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/04/world/middleeast/04abuse.html>.

³⁰⁸ Tilghman, “I Came over Here Because I Wanted to Kill People.”

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

'I wouldn't really care if all these guys got waxed.'³¹⁰ During a meeting with a psychological councillor following the death of Green's close friend Casica, Green and other men from his unit "Told an Army stress counselor that he wanted to take revenge on Iraqis, including civilians. The counselor labeled the unit 'mission incapable' because of poor morale, high combat stress and anger over the deaths, and said it needed both stronger supervision and rest. It got neither.³¹¹" Indeed the authorization to let Green fight came in part because "such sentiments had been expressed by 'other' members of the unit and were not uncommon among troops in combat.³¹²" It is unclear at what point Green expressed these profoundly dehumanizing representational practices, but it is clear that he expressed them freely and frequently. The opening sentence from Green in his interview with Tilghman was "I came over here because I wanted to kill people.'³¹³" Green expresses his desensitization to the 'other' by explaining the ease with which he deals with their death. He brags "over here, killing people is like squashing an ant. I mean, you kill somebody and it's like 'All right, let's go get some pizza.'³¹⁴" Indeed, the most explicit formulation of his dehumanization of the 'other' comes in an interview from prison. In it Green says "there's not a word that would describe how much I hated these people...I wasn't thinking these people were humans.'³¹⁵" Despite Green's non-chalance about the dehumanization of the 'other', Tilghman notes the banality and quotidian nature of his sentiments in the context of his fellow soldiers: "I was on a nine-month assignment as an embedded reporter in Iraq, spending much of my time with grunts like [Green] -- mostly young (and immature) small-town kids who sign up for a job as killers, lured

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ Dao, "Ex-Soldier Gets Life Sentence for Iraq Murders."

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Tilghman, "I Came over Here Because I Wanted to Kill People."

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ "I Didn't Think of Iraqis as Humans,' Says U.S. Soldier Who Raped 14-Year-Old Girl before Killing Her and Her Family," *Mail Online*, accessed February 28, 2014, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1340207/I-didnt-think-Iraqis-humans-says-U-S-soldier-raped-14-year-old-girl-killing-her-family.html>.

by some gut-level desire for excitement and adventure. This was not the first group I had run into that was full of young men who shared a dark sense of humor and were clearly desensitized to death.³¹⁶

Despite his clear desensitization and dehumanization of the ‘other’ Green was unexceptional. There were many young men like him, those with a ‘gut-level desire’ to ‘sign up for a job as killers,’ and who ‘shared a dark sense of humour and were clearly desensitized to death.’ His fellow soldiers’ committed similar violence and were justified given their military context, or were simply never caught. Others still committed no unjustified murders at all. What was unique in the case of Green and what lead him to commit these atrocities at this time? In this way? It is impossible to tell and possibly will remain that way forever. However, this does not mean that there are suggestive postulations for his behaviour. I put forward that within the context of the discourse of Western imperialism there are some important linkages which need to be understood. The possibilities of his actions - what he thought was possible and who he was waging war against - are certainly not trivial considerations. Green had clearly dehumanized the ‘other’, he was desensitized himself, and even suffering from a personality disorder perhaps even PTSD.³¹⁷ The violence which he inflicted on Abeer Qassim Hamza al-Janabi and her family was not without precedent and was eerily similar to the violence inflicted on the prisoners at Abu Ghraib. Just as the torture conducted in Abu Ghraib was indicative of Western conceptions of the Orient so too is Green’s sexual violence. As a desensitized and dehumanized soldier it is likely that Green sought to inflict on his new enemies an exceptional and particularly deviant form of dishonour and pain – rape.³¹⁸ It was a violence inflicted upon

³¹⁶ Tilghman, “I Came over Here Because I Wanted to Kill People.”

³¹⁷ “US Iraq War Criminal ‘Killed Self.’”

³¹⁸ For an interesting discussion of motivations for sexual violence in war see: Elisabeth Jean Wood, “Variation in Sexual Violence during War,” *Politics & Society* 34, no. 3 (2006).

an oriental 'other' firmly within grasp and against whom the potential for any and all violence was possible.

Beyond his orientalist orientation it is clear that Green was part of a particular context and ideology. Amongst the soldiers whom he fought his sentiments of wanton violence against the 'other' were commonplace, most likely encouraged and part of the norms of the social setting in which he was embedded. According to Tilghman he was one of many young men who had come over to kill professionally; one of many who had expressed sentiments of wanting to slaughter Iraqis, and one of many who did. In a broader context, Green was embedded amongst a soldiery where the death of the 'haji' was particularly 'non-grievable,' part of a necropolitics where imperial laughter masked its victim's agency and delegitimized their claims to recourse via the use of violence. Indeed it was widely reported that initial investigations of the Mahmudiyah murders suspected insurgents as the culprits.³¹⁹ It speaks to the discourse of justified imperial violence that US military personnel could not have committed such violence given their self-appropriation of the legitimate monopoly on the use of force.

Green's violence was certainly also inscribed in an American domestic racism. A racism where the government was detaining 'Muslim-looking' people through racial profiling and in a context where islamophobia was on the rise. Above all he was inscribed in a cultural visuality which depicted the Iraqi as "just more *homines sacri*. They simply didn't matter. These victims were people who had been excluded from politically qualified life by Saddam...they were excluded from politically qualified life by America and Britain too: ultimately, excluded from life altogether.³²⁰"

³¹⁹ Dao, "Ex-Soldier Gets Life Sentence for Iraq Murders."

³²⁰ Gregory, *The Colonial Present*, 212.

Conclusion:

If the distance of history has given us clarity in the practices of racism in the Philippines it has not granted us as much clarity in regards to the counterinsurgency in Iraq. What can be discerned, I believe, are three broad relationships between counterinsurgency and racism: (1.) that racism was used in the form of epithets and older colonial/imperial tropes to revive the colonial past and bring it into the colonial present³²¹. This was particularly true of the use of the epithet 'haji' to dehumanize the 'other' via the representational practices of barbarization and deindividuation. (2.) A sense of jocular and dark humour was associated with acts of torture and atrocity. In particular the particular use of sexual violence against prisoners in Abu Ghraib prison and the violence against the oriental 'non-grievable' 'other' in Joshua Belile's racist song *Haji Girl*. In *Haji Girl* in particular: violence acts to silence the voices for justice of those killed and paints the imperial soldier as justified in his actions. (3.) Exceptional levels of violence and cruelty were employed discursively and in practice against a racial 'haji' 'other'. The most extreme examples of which, such as the Mahmudiyah murders, are intertwined in a complex relationship with the phenomena of dehumanization, desensitization, and of the deployment of discriminant targeted acts of violence.

³²¹ Gregory, *The Colonial Present*.

Conclusion: Comparative Analysis of the Cases of the Philippines and Iraq.....and Beyond

The overarching goal of this conclusion is to get a sense of how far we can stretch this comparison; to what extent are these cases similar and to what extent are these cases different? What I will endeavour to do here is to provide a synthesis through the comparisons that have been made with a view to gaining some larger theoretical understandings.

I will start by drawing out some of the key differences between the cases of the Philippines and Iraq. I believe exploring the boundaries of a concept are useful to understand how far we can go with it. Using race as the key element of comparison, perhaps the most obvious difference between cases was the extent to which racism was socially accepted circa 1898-1903. Now this is not to say that men like Mark Twain were anomalous, and indeed anti-racist sentiments did exist and did know some degree of popularity, but above all those who would call upon racial epithets and other racial language could do so in a way which was much more public and acceptable than is the case from 2003-2007. One of the reasons for this was the widespread adoption of the idea that race had a biological component. Indeed the quasi-science of phrenology was often used in this regard to scientifically justify the 'supposed' inherent inferiority of certain races vis-à-vis others. This technique claimed to reach scientific conclusions but in reality affirmed the superiority of Whites over all 'others'.

Indeed, there is no more telling an example in this case than the outright racism of President Roosevelt. As discussed in Chapter 1, Gail Bederman traces the ways that Roosevelt's racism was linked to imperial conquest. In one particularly telling passage Roosevelt invokes the idea that the civilizing mission (of the white Anglo Saxon male) involved

destroying the barbarian to remake him.³²² A sentiment which he drew from his experiences with First Nations in the United States and which, in turn, represented each group as equally colonizable. The counterinsurgency in the Philippines was not won and lost by politicians alone. It was, obviously, very much under the purview of the military. Military men from the rank of General to Private were embedded within a widespread cultural acceptance of race and racism. General Franklin Bell was not immune from his socialization to the racial views of the day. In an exchange with Apolinario Mabini, the Prime Minister of the Philippines, Bell makes explicit reference to the Filipino civilization's "semicivilization."³²³ One cannot help but link his ideas of race to the brutal scorched earth and concentration camp policy which he executed. Indeed, many colonial military men deemed it necessary to inflict harsher punishments on the colonial 'other'. The concentration camp policy alone was responsible for the deaths of close to 11,085 Filipinos.³²⁴

By contrast racism was frowned upon as a public display in the time of Iraq. Indeed, it is unimaginable today for any top general to use racial language or express a desire to crush a lesser race in a press conference. This is even more unlikely given the importance that the United States military places on control of the media landscape. This is not to say, however, that racism is dead. Although present in American society, racism has taken on a different tenor: language has become coded, society sees themselves as 'colour-blind,' and race and racism are supposedly non-issues. Proponents of this 'post-racial' thesis argue that race in America is no longer a central issue. They continue further in arguing that all issues in regards to race in the United States have been 'solved.' Their ultimate trump card, according to them, is the fact that a black president has been elected to office. They see this as the ultimate sign of

³²² Bederman, 189.

³²³ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 135.

³²⁴ May, *Battle for Batangas*, 264.

equality and post-racism. And although the election of Barack Hussein Obama certainly marks a significant and historic milestone for race relations in the United States; it is progress not the end of racism itself.

Despite the supposed 'post-racial' character of the United States what I have endeavoured to demonstrate here is that racism has been, and continues to be, an enduring element of American Foreign Policy. It is precisely the enduring character of racism, and the related effects that can be seen on the colonial 'other' which have, likewise, endured over one hundred years. I believe Michelle Alexander encapsulates best the kind of similarity which I wish to draw between these cases when she describes her conception of systemic racism. It is worth quoting her at length here:

Because this new system is not explicitly based on race, it is easier to defend on seemingly neutral grounds. And while all previous methods of control have blamed the victim in one way or another, the current system invites observers to imagine that those who are trapped in the system were free to avoid second-class status or permanent banishment from society simply by choosing not to commit crime. It is far more convenient to imagine that a majority of young African America men in urban areas freely choose a life of crime than to accept the real possibility that their lives were structured in a way that virtually guaranteed their early admission into a system from which they can never escape.³²⁵

What this quotation explains very well is the multifaceted nature of racism, that is to say that it is composed of individual racist attitudes which feed into a structure which perpetuates racism. Starting with the individual racist attitude component; what is so pernicious about the new aspect of Jim Crow policies is that the war on drugs allows racists to find what they are looking for. It provides them with a kind of phenomenon which affects black persons in America in a widespread fashion and which can be linked back to individual persons behavioural choices. Racists can make of this new system what they want. Furthermore, such constructions of black men feed into their social construction as criminals. Indeed, as Alexander points out, this discursive fixing of criminality to 'blackness' is very much part and parcel of the systemic and

³²⁵ Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 179.

pernicious nature of the racism inherent in the war on drugs.³²⁶ The structural element here is the kind of unacknowledged aspect of racism, its seeming retreat to the private sphere and its unspoken nature. Alexander explains this well when she says “our understating of racism is therefore shaped by the most extreme expressions of individual bigotry, not by the way in which it functions naturally, almost invisibly (and sometimes with genuine benign intent), when it is embedded in the structure of a social system.”³²⁷ Therefore, it is not simply a *limited* critique of certain individuals, processes, institutions, human nature, or a given policy that I wish to pinpoint as the continuity between these cases, but the root of this problem – a kind of deep systemic conception of what race is. But not only of what it is but also how it affects those who mobilize its words and those who are affected by the delineation of the concept of race. And therefore, although *The New Jim Crow* marks a departure in some ways from the racism evident in the Philippines it also marks a continuation of the US discourse of racism in that it is endemic in the structure of politics and the discourse of politics itself. It is not simply racially bigoted language but attitudes which racially subordinate the ‘other’ to the US ‘self.’

What is perhaps most apparent and striking here is the persistence of the structural aspect of racism; which is to attempt to understand the persistent and widespread buying into of the idea that certain persons are lesser and positioned subordinate to the self in a hierarchy. This is evident in the mechanism by which US soldiers dehumanized the colonial ‘other’ and, relatedly, the atrocities committed against civilians by soldiers. As I suggested in my analysis of Iraq, there are some key similarities which appear across both cases: (1.) that racism was used in the form of epithets and colonial/imperial tropes to dehumanize the ‘other’. (2.) This dehumanization discourse was deployed along a particular continuum of friend to enemy. (3.) A sense of jocularity and dark humour was associated with acts of torture and atrocity.

³²⁶ Ibid., 192.

³²⁷ Ibid., 178.

By way of synthesis I will now distill the core elements of each of these three key findings here. First, in each case epithets were used as a mechanism to dehumanize the ‘other.’ In the case of the Philippines the term *gugu*, the ancestor of the term ‘gook,’ was used to dehumanize the ‘other.’ The terms ‘nigger’ was also used. The term ‘nigger’ was even used in an innovative sense in the Philippines whereby the traditional invocation against black persons was expanded to apply to a wider spectrum of ‘brown’ persons.³²⁸ In Iraq the term ‘Haji’ was the most frequently used. Although its origins descended from an honorific in its original Arabic, soldiers used it to signify a kind of dehumanization of the Iraqi ‘other.’ This term was taken to its extreme in the song “Haji Girl.”³²⁹ The song acts as a tool affirming and justifying imperial violence while dehumanizing the imperial ‘other.’

Secondly, epithets were used to dehumanize the ‘other’ and thereby psychologically make easier the work of the counterinsurgent. The use of epithets is usually used along a certain continuum according to the sentiments of soldiers and how they view the other. As the engagements between the colonial armies and those of colonial peoples intensified the enmity towards the colonial ‘other’ intensified – this is played out in the language of the colonial soldier. On the extreme ‘enmity’ end of the spectrum soldiers expressed desires to exterminate the other in their entirety, these sentiments were often accompanied by a sense that the other is an animal to be hunted.

Thirdly, a sense of jocularly and dark humour was associated with the commission of acts of atrocity. In the Philippines, evidence suggests that soldiers carried out acts of torture frequently and on a wide scale.³³⁰ One torture technique in particular, the predecessor to the

³²⁸ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 128–129.

³²⁹ Wall, “Imperial Laughs.”

³³⁰ Linn, *U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902*, 145; Welch, “American Atrocities in the Philippines,” 234.

infamous water boarding technique, named the ‘water cure’, was surrounded by a sense of jocularly and nonchalance. One soldier in particular wrote a mock medical testimonial, a kind of commercial for the water cure making a joke out of the act of torture meant to instill in its victim a sense of drowning.³³¹ A further recurring trope in both cases was the idea of the enemy as animal. In the case of the Philippines, Filipinos were often compared to rabbits and hunting them was expressed as a ‘hot game.’³³² Representing the enemy as an animal made the killing of the ‘other’ an easier task to accomplish and added a sense of ‘gamelikeness’ to the job that was to be done. In Iraq, many of these same phenomena recur. In Iraq, one of the particularities of the violence committed against Iraqis was the sexualized nature of the violence. In the pictures depicting torture at the Abu Ghraib prison, prison guards can be found posing next to prisoners and they are often seen laughing or smiling.³³³ The sexualized nature of the torture is seen to be particularly deviant, and yet the jocularly and nonchalance of these acts remains. These sentiments are also echoed when delving into the atrocities committed by Steven Green. He expresses a disregard for the life of Iraqis and expresses the ease with which he could kill and then afterwards go eat some pizza.³³⁴ American soldiers, as their predecessors in the Philippines, also expressed the act of hunting insurgents as an animal hunt.³³⁵ Again, the soldier expresses these sentiments in a way that profoundly dehumanizes those whose hearts and minds they were sent to win.

Therefore, beyond the tragic loss of life that this event and events like it represent, it is clear that in Iraq and Afghanistan the United States recalled the colonial past into the present.

³³¹ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 140.

³³² Schumacher, “Marked Severities,” 481.

³³³ “May 2004: The Images That Shamed America,” *The Guardian*, accessed April 9, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/gall/0,8542,1211872,00.html>.

³³⁴ Tilghman, “I Came over Here Because I Wanted to Kill People.”

³³⁵ Wall, “Philanthropic Soldiers, Practical Orientalism, and the Occupation of Iraq,” 494.

The Neo-Conservatives, above all others, called into existence this aggressive intervention. These calls mobilized older colonial tropes and ideas about race which had long since retreated from the public discourse as legitimate. They also called to the fore practices and racial profiling which were always present but not as visible as it was directly post 9/11. One of the great tragedies of American Imperialism, borrowing once again the words of Derek Gregory, is that subject peoples become non-people. When they die there is “No regret, no remorse, just more *homines sacri*.”³³⁶ To the American counterinsurgent Iraqi bodies “simply didn’t matter. These victims were people who had been excluded from politically qualified life by Saddam...they were excluded from politically qualified life by America and Britain too: ultimately, excluded from life altogether.”³³⁷ In the final accounting, the imperial powers mindset thinks not of their families but to compensate them, thinks not of their country but as an area on a map to be controlled, and thinks not of them but of an always already insurgent. In the end their death represents only an unfeeling calculation in the calculus of population control. “They’re just dead.”³³⁸

³³⁶ Gregory, *The Colonial Present*, 212.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 207.

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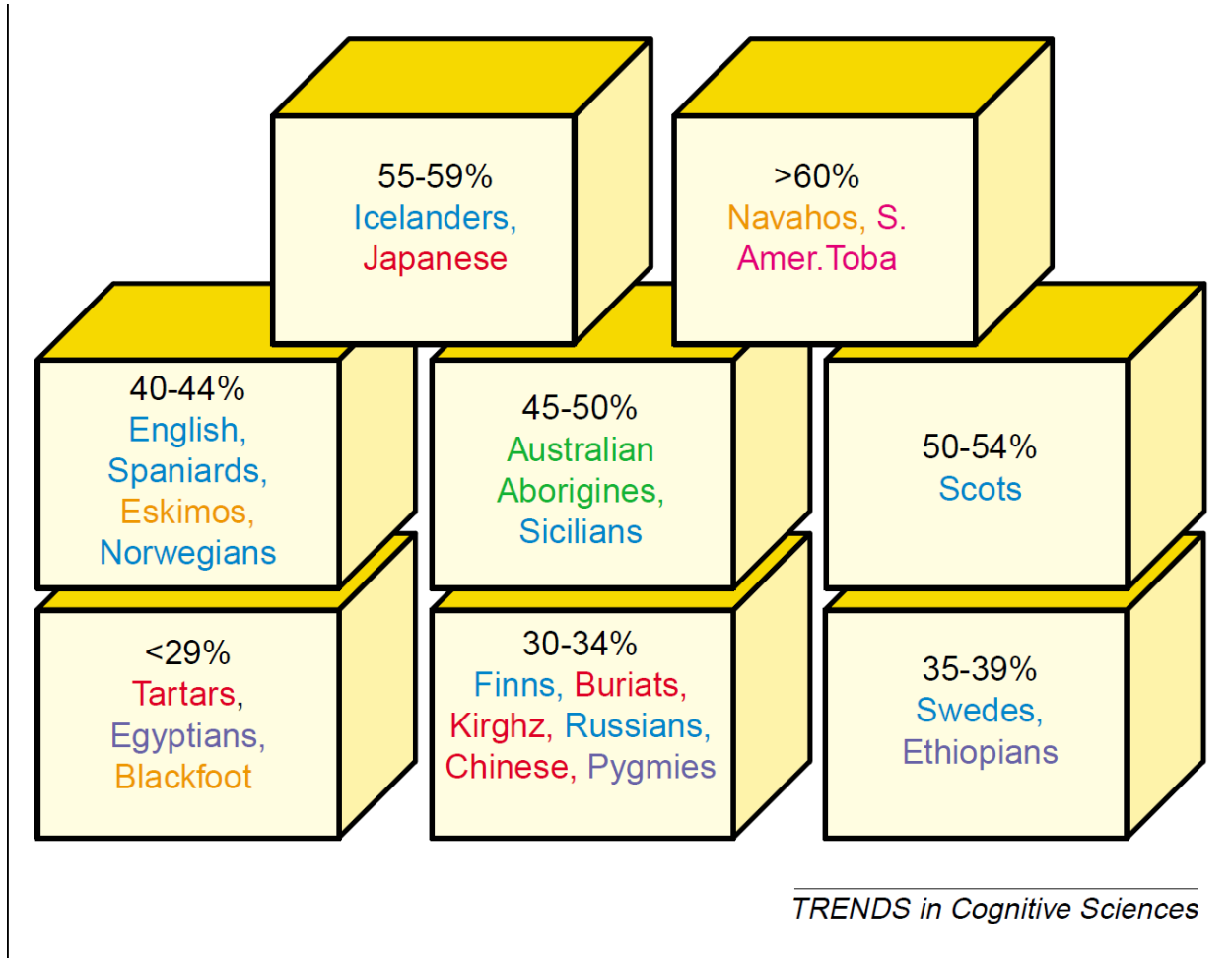
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Appendix



This graphic shows various ethnicities which are most like each other in terms of the fundamental building block which controls for phenotypic features. According to traditional conceptions of race people of the same race should look the same within the same race and therefore these building blocks should cluster tightly within geographic areas. However, as this graph shows, that is not the case.³³⁹

³³⁹ Cosmides, Tooby, and Kurzban, "Perceptions of Race," 173.

Underlined sections represent parts where his audience applauded uproariously
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C_qzEY8R3rU)

Hadji Girl

I was out in the sands of Iraq
And we were under attack
And I, well, I didn't know where to go.

And the first thing that I could see was
Everybody's favorite Burger King
So I threw open the door and I hit the floor.

Then suddenly to my surprise
I looked up and I saw her eyes
And I knew it was love at first sight.

And she said...

Durka Durka Mohammed Jihad

Sherpa Sherpa Bak Allah

Hadji girl, I can't understand what you're saying.

And she said...

Durka Durka Mohammed Jihad

Sherpa Sherpa Bak Allah

Hadji girl, I love you anyway.

Then she said that she wanted me to see.
She wanted me to go meet her family
But I, well, I couldn't figure out how to say no.

Cause I don't speak Arabic.

So, she took me down an old dirt trail.
And she pulled up to a side shanty
And she threw open the door and I hit the floor.

Cause her br'other' and her father shouted...

Durka Durka Mohammed Jihad

Sherpa Sherpa Bak Allah

They pulled out their AKs so I could see

And they said...

Durka Durka Mohammed Jihad

Sherpa Sherpa Bak Allah

(with humorous emphasis:)

So I grabbed her little sister, and pulled her in front of me.

As the bullets began to fly

The blood sprayed from between her eyes

And then I laughed maniacally

Then I hid behind the TV

And I locked and loaded my M-16

And I blew those little f*ckers to eternity.

And I said...

Durka Durka Mohammed Jihad

Sherpa Sherpa Bak Allah

They should have known they were f*ckin' with a Marine.