

8 The global arms trade and the diffusion of militarism

David Kinsella

The acquisition and use of military power are perhaps the most studied subjects in the field of international relations, mainly because they have been common occurrences throughout history. It is surprising, then, that the concepts of militarism and militarization are not sufficiently well defined to command a consensus among scholars as to their meaning, let alone their causes and consequences. And as other chapters in this volume clearly document, militarism and militarization are concepts that are relevant to social relations in realms other than formal inter-state relations, which has made conceptual clarity that much more difficult to achieve. But my focus in this chapter is indeed inter-state relations, with special attention to the impact of the global arms trade on the militarization of developing states and on those states' use of military force – behaviour that may, in some cases, derive from state policies fairly described as outgrowths of militarism.

The notion that states acquire military capabilities, which are then employed in hostilities against other states, or against non-state actors who are perceived to threaten governments from within state borders, is a straightforward and relatively uncontroversial rendition of the connection between militarization and militarism. But examining the role of the global arms trade as a contributing factor in both, invites further consideration of relevant social forces operating at the international level. The Cold War, in particular, provided a social context within which major powers formulated their arms supply policies and other states, many of them newly independent, availed themselves of opportunities to build and maintain military capability. Arms-transfer relationships, then, can be viewed as a mechanism by which states acquire, in addition to military capability, prevailing conceptions of statehood and national security.

This chapter has three main parts. In the next section, I differentiate the concepts of militarization and militarism. There is no scholarly consensus on the definitional issues addressed in this section, but it is necessary for my purposes to try and draw a careful distinction before moving on to consider how the concepts ought to be interpreted in relation to the global arms trade. Next is a discussion of the value that developing states attach to capital-intensive military postures and the role of arms-transfer relationships in shaping state preferences in this regard. In the last section, I turn to the arms trade as a factor in the

diffusion of militarism and draw attention to some pertinent findings reported in the empirical literature on effects of arms transfers on military hostility between and within states. I conclude with some speculative comments on the post-Cold War restructuring of the global arms trade and the implications for militarization and militarism in the contemporary era.

Militarization and militarism

As concepts, militarism and militarization are related but distinct. ‘Militarization’ usually refers to a process by which military capabilities are introduced and/or enhanced in some social realm. As a process, militarization consists of the activities or preparations taking place within a society – weapons procurement, conscription, base construction, etc. – whereby the government becomes (presumably) better equipped to undertake military action against foreign or domestic enemies. In this case, militarization is nearly synonymous with military mobilization or build-up (e.g. Ross, 1987). Or it can describe the transformation of an ongoing relationship or interaction, especially between states, such that the threat or use of military force is now a key component. That is, a dispute between two states may be, or may become, ‘militarized’ (Jones *et al.*, 1996). Often the term is used to suggest, explicitly or implicitly, that the distribution of power and influence has shifted decisively to the advantage of the military sector at the expense of non-military sectors within society (Thee, 1977; Smith, 1983; e.g. Giroux, 2008). We might say that society itself has become militarized.

The term ‘militarism’ is commonly used to describe a disposition or proclivity to behave in a particular way, namely, to employ military over non-military means of conflict resolution. Thus, domestic and/or foreign policy orientations and choices are characterized as ‘militaristic’, which usually entails a judgement that policy makers are too quick to turn to military solutions or seek out opportunities to deploy armed force. Sociological treatments frequently connect this policy disposition to the valorization of military virtues in society: bravery, discipline, and loyalty, as well as authoritarianism and other less redeeming manifestations of a ‘militarism of the mind’ (Skjelsbaek, 1979). Almost always the implication is that the praise of military virtues and the reliance on military means is excessive to the point of dysfunction, that militarism drives ineffective (if not unethical) policy choices and suboptimal social arrangements (Mann, 1984; Kwong and Zimmer, 1995). In distinguishing militarism from the ‘military way’ – the efficient deployment of military personnel and weaponry to secure specific objectives – Vagts, in a now classic study, stated that militarism:

presents a vast array of customs, interests, prestige, actions, and thought associated with armies and wars and yet transcending true military purposes. Indeed, militarism is so constituted that it may hamper and defeat the purposes of the military way. Its influence is unlimited in scope. It may

permeate all society and become dominant over all industry and arts. Rejecting the scientific character of the military way, militarism displays the qualities of caste and cult, authority and belief.

(Vagts, 1967: 13)

There is obviously a close relationship between militarization and militarism, not only as concepts but also in the ways they are manifest in domestic and international society. Indeed, the probable causal connection between militarization and militarism is widely, and not unreasonably, assumed by most academics, activists, and policymakers who promote the cause of arms control and disarmament. While many regard military build-up as wasteful and a misdirection of scarce resources, the alleged behavioural consequences have been the greater concern. Thus, early in the twentieth century, as the US was moving toward a more assertive role in world affairs, critics cautioned that the maintenance of a strong standing army was at odds with the nation's republican origins and would invariably lead to warlike policies. 'If we continue that policy,' lamented the Honorable Carl Schurz (1899: 102), 'militarism with its characteristic evils will be inevitable.' Unlike European states, which for geopolitical reasons were compelled to attend to the balance of power, the United States was secure and military preparedness could only lead to military adventurism (see also Villard, 1916).

There is almost always an explicit or implied normative statement accompanying discussions of these concepts in the scholarly literature. Both terms suggest *excess*. That is, there is an optimal or normal level of military capability and presence, whether for society as a whole or some particular social realm or relationship, which in the process of militarization has been surpassed. Likewise, relative to some optimal mix of military and non-military approaches to problem solving, militarism manifests as behaviour or policies biased in favour of the former. Of course, what counts as normal or optimal is almost never established, and probably cannot be. This does not mean that such scholarly analyses are incorrect in their conclusions; it just means that they are usually subjective.

At the conceptual level and when it comes to empirical investigation, it can be difficult to maintain a clear distinction between militarization and militarism, precisely because they appear together and are universally viewed as social ills. This is as much a reflection of a complex reality as it is analytical shortcoming. As Ross (1987) points out in a review of the literature appearing in the 1970s and 1980s, the term militarization was used to encompass two phenomena: (1) the excess growth of military capability, which Ross calls 'military build-up', and (2) a process of increasing military influence in government and society, which he calls 'process militarization'. Both can lead to militarism, but the connection between the latter and a policy orientation characterized as militarism would seem to be more direct. Says Ross (1987: 564): 'there is likely to be a mutually reinforcing, reciprocal relationship between military build-up and militarism, not simply the unilinear, causal relationship [...] in which process militarization results in militarism.'

No particular differentiation between militarization and militarism is uniformly observed in academic writing; indeed, the frequency with which the two are melded in both theory and research can frustrate a search for conceptual clarity. For the remainder of this chapter, as I discuss the implications of the global arms trade for both militarization and militarism, I will follow the distinction sketched above. And I will differentiate further by focusing on a limited range of behavioural manifestations: militarization in the form of weapons build-up and proliferation, and militarism in the form of armed conflict. I do this because I do not believe that we know enough about the global arms trade, the driving forces behind it, or its international and societal consequences to sustain an analysis employing more expansive conceptualizations of militarization and militarism, which tend to run the two phenomena together, or more inclusive operational measures, which tend to require more data (quantitative or qualitative) than has been collected and examined by scholars in the field.

Thus, some important dimensions of the subject are set aside in the discussion that follows, and two are worth mentioning up-front in light of the definitional matters addressed above. First, when focusing on these particular behavioural manifestations of militarization and militarism, and indeed most others, it is extraordinarily difficult to establish with any degree of certainty that the condition of excess has been met. As already mentioned, unless one takes the position that any and all forms of weapons acquisition counts as militarization, and any and all forms of armed conflict amount to militarism, this is a big omission. Second, my discussion will largely leave to the side questions concerning the military's stature in government and society. The military, as an institution, is implicated in both militarization (as an acquirer of societal resources and influence) and militarism (as an influencer or maker of policy). Given the wide variety of roles that militaries play in different societies, and have played over time in single societies, my exploration, which draws far more on international relations research than comparative politics research, cannot begin to do justice to this dimension of the issue.

Militarization and global military order

Militarization can be viewed as an instrumentally rational response to insecurity in an anarchic setting. But we are also interested in the forms that militarization takes, and the forces emanating from international society that shape those forms. Early efforts to theorize about the role of the arms trade on patterns of militarization took as a point of departure the notion of a global or world military order. The existence of a global military order can be linked to one or both of two structural features of international society. One is an emergent isomorphism in military force structures, military doctrines, and/or military-industrial capacities among states – if not globally, then within tiers of comparably situated states. The other is the dependency that marks military relations between states occupying different positions in the global hierarchy. The arms trade has served as a mechanism for development and maintenance of both these structural

elements of the global military order (Albrecht *et al.*, 1975; Øberg, 1977; Eide, 1980; Secăres, 1981).

States procure weapons for some fairly obvious reasons. It is reasonable to hypothesize that the nature of the threats and opportunities states perceive will determine the volume and type of weaponry they acquire, either from foreign or domestic producers. Fighter aircraft, main battle tanks, air defence systems, reconnaissance ships, nuclear missiles, etc., all have their functions in force postures built around states' threat assessments and national objectives requiring the deployment of military power. A 'strategic-functional' account, as Suchman and Eyre (1992) call it, does not tell the whole story, though. Procurement decisions are also partly the outcome of domestic competition among those with political and economic stakes in weapons production and its support infrastructure. These 'factional' explanations infuse the literature on military-industrial complexes, whether from a radical or more mainstream interest-group politics perspective, and essentially disaggregate the unitary rational state into a collection of substate actors each pursuing their factional interests (e.g. Allison and Morris, 1975; Melman, 1985; Buzan and Herring, 1998).

Against these rationalist accounts of military procurement are constructivist explanations, which focus on social structures as conditioning state preferences and shaping identities. The maintenance of modern, well equipped militaries derives in part from a ritualistic belief that they are emblematic of statehood in the contemporary era. According to Sagan (1996/97: 74), 'military organizations and their weapons can therefore be envisioned as serving functions similar to those of flags, airlines, and Olympic teams: they are part of what modern states believe they have to possess to be legitimate, modern states.' This is especially true of emerging regional powers pursuing indigenous arms production capacities. In India, for example, major advances in both nuclear and non-nuclear weapons development have been accompanied by allusions in the public discourse to India's coming of age as a modern state and a player on the world stage (Kinsella and Chima, 2001). Such explanations emphasize:

not the autonomous decision-making activity of independent nation-states, but rather the metonymical iconography of the global cultural order. In this light, the symbolic qualities of advanced weapons overshadow their functional capabilities [...]. From an institutionalist perspective, the proliferation of high-technology weaponry is not a unique and especially problematic occurrence (aside from its possible consequences), but is merely one additional facet of the larger, worldwide trend toward isomorphism among nation-states.

(Suchman and Eyre, 1992: 149–150)

For developing countries, the particular forms that militarization takes by virtue of their embeddedness in the global military order may well be suboptimal. Wendt and Barnett (1993), for example, pose two interrelated questions about the procurement choices that these governments and their militaries so often

make (see also Barnett and Wendt, 1992). First, why is the development of an effective military force equated with capital-intensive militarization? Second, given that advanced weapons procurement is almost always a dependent form of militarization, can this dependency be understood in terms other than the simple lack of military–industrial capacity in developing states? There is little disputing the fact that the preference for armed forces well equipped with the most advanced military technology available pervades defence acquisition policies in less developed states, as it does in more developed ones. The main impediments preventing the former from fully realizing their aspirations is their own limited military production capacities, financial constraints on the purchase of weaponry from foreign producers, and the restrictive arms-supply policies of foreign governments concerned about proliferation.

The international political economy of militarization in the developing world can be understood, in part, as an outgrowth of the history of colonialism and post-colonial strategies of economic modernization (Øberg, 1975; Senghaas, 1977; Luckham, 1978). The colonial experience typically empowered a relatively small local elite, which served the political and economic interests of foreign rulers and fostered a pattern of dependent economic development after national independence. New governments that, along with foreign benefactors, promoted industrialization by directing resources toward export-oriented manufacturing continued to rely on elites in a small number of modernized sectors of the national economy at the expense of larger, more traditional sectors. Such economic development strategies, where a minority of the population constitute the main stakeholders, leave much larger numbers as potential threats to the security of the state and economic order to the extent that they become dissatisfied with political-economic status quo. Given this definition of threat, building the state's military capabilities upon a mass-mobilized army carries substantial risks. Capital-intensive militarization invests coercive power in a smaller, more controllable portion of the population whose allegiance is easier to secure with strategically chosen weapons procurement and other policies (Wendt and Barnett, 1993).

A preference for a capital-intensive military posture is nearly impossible to realize unless the government of a developing state can turn to foreign suppliers of advanced weaponry; few states outside the industrialized world count even as 'third tier' arms producers (Anthony, 1993; Kinsella, 2000). During the Cold War, great power patrons tried to walk a fine line. Supplying clients with the quality and quantity of weaponry they demanded risked destabilizing already volatile regional rivalries – in the Middle East, South Asia, Horn of Africa, and elsewhere – and complicity in widespread human rights violations at the hands of a well equipped security apparatus if and when the government turned on its own population. Not supplying clients with the weapons they wanted prompted them to look to other potential providers, including members of the opposing Cold War bloc. The consequence of the Cold War balancing act on the part of the superpowers and their arms-exporting allies was the capital-intensive but dependent militarization undertaken by many developing states. This is not to

suggest that the Cold War competition for clients resulted in a uniform diffusion of advanced weaponry throughout the developing world. In fact, the global military order remained hierarchical, in terms of both the arms trade and the development of arms production capacity (Krause, 1992). The point is that capital-intensive militarization, over space and time, was conditioned by the integration of several developing states into an international social structure defined predominantly by the global competition between US- and Soviet-led blocs (Thee, 1977; Kinsella, 1994, 1995; Kanet, 2006).

Although dependent on foreign arms suppliers, states deemed by the superpowers to be strategic clients were able to exercise considerable leverage over their patrons' military assistance policies. But dependent militarization also needs to be understood in the context of a prevailing global military culture, perhaps shaped by the experience of the Cold War, but analytically distinct from it. As emphasized above, capital-intensive military postures have become emblematic of modern statehood. This observation moves us from questions of preference formation – driven by threat perception and systems of patronage – to questions of state identity formation. Constructivists suggest that 'security environments in which states are embedded are in important part cultural and institutional ... [and] affect not only the incentives for different kinds of state behavior but also the basic character of states' (Jepperson *et al.*, 1996: 33; Alderson, 2001). Thus, states not only acquire military capability in accordance with cues received from the structure of shared knowledge of which they are part, they are also defined or constituted by that structure.

If capital-intensive militarization is a socially constructed symbol of modern statehood, then the agents of socialization can be found in the training of developing state militaries, including the officer corps, often by former colonial authorities and then by the principal players in the Cold War competition. The process also operated, and continues to operate, through the arms trade itself because 'the joint possession of weapons systems and appropriate organization creates agreement about what constitutes military power' (Kaldor, 1981: 144). Developing states internalize a particular conception of military capability and modern statehood by virtue of being embedded in a prevalent global military culture through which, according to Luckham (1984: 32), 'symbols of meaning prevalent in advanced capitalist societies are imposed on other societies.'

Evidence links the movement toward isomorphism in military procurement patterns to the extent of a state's immersion in this global culture. Eyre and Suchman (1996), for example, observe a correlation between the possession of symbolically significant weaponry, like supersonic aircraft, and newly independent states' membership in intergovernmental organizations. Rarely have analysts taken the position that capital-intensive militarization in developing states is driven solely by sociocultural forces operating at the international level. Attention to the symbolic importance of technologically advanced military postures, internalized through states' integration into the global military order, does not necessarily imply that the capability afforded by capital-intensive militarization does not have functional utility. That governments have not limited the

deployment of advanced weaponry to military parades and other non-coercive displays of force is quite obvious. At the same time, given the resource constraints confronted by many developing states, a preference for capital- over labour-intensive militarization does not seem predetermined by the insecurities associated with international anarchy.

To summarize, the global diffusion of militarization of a particular form has been explained in terms of states' embeddedness in a global military order. Political-economic and sociocultural forces operating at the international level shape state preferences for capital-intensive militarization, and the arms trade and adjunct military relationships – licensed arms production, officer training programmes, joint military exercises, etc. – are means by which a socialization occurs and preferences are reinforced. Perceived threats to governments in some developing states, which drives their demand for militarization via advanced weapons imports, are a function not only of inter-state rivalry but also their integration into the world economy. Development strategies that concentrated capital within a limited number of economic sectors created a narrow echelon of stakeholders and left a much larger portion of the population as an unreliable base upon which to build the state's military capability; hence the turn to capital-intensive militarization. On the supply side, strategically positioned developing states were the recipients of a steady flow of weaponry by virtue of their integration into Cold War competition. Some scholars have alleged that this form of militarization, both capital-intensive and dependent, has been dysfunctional for developing states (e.g. Väyrynen, 1979; Rosh, 1988), but this is hard to establish with much confidence given the paucity of alternative forms available for empirical scrutiny.

Arms transfers and militarism

The valuation of technologically advanced military postures as a mark of modern statehood is an essential part of a comprehensive understanding of militarization. A view common among peace researchers writing three decades into the Cold War was that 'the great powers produce the weapons, pave the ways, and set patterns for militarization of the international community.' And the impact of Cold War competition was not limited to the diffusion of militarization. Great-power militarism was also seen as 'largely the root cause and the driving force behind the global spread of militarism' (Thee, 1977: 301).

If militarization is a difficult concept to operationalize, then militarism is doubly so. Above I defined militarism as a disposition to employ military over non-military means of conflict resolution. Militarism represents not simply a militarily coercive course of action, or a policy orientation adopted by a state when facing a threat to its security or an opportunity to otherwise promote the national interest. As with the concept of militarization, militarism implies excess. Without the element of excess, the hypothesized relationship between militarization and militarism is straightforward and uncontroversial: militarization is a source of coercive capacity, which then serves a rationally chosen, albeit

militaristic, course of action. Incorporating excess into our definition is truer to the tradition of scholarship on militarism, but operationalizing such a definition requires subjective assessments about which there will be much disagreement. For researchers investigating the connection between arms transfers and military conflict – an important, but not the only, manifestation of militarism, as I have noted – the matter of excess is generally left unaddressed. Where arms transfers are implicated in the resort to military violence, they are judged to have contributed to a social ill. The view, not an unreasonable one, is that justifiable military violence is probably the exception and that empirical research should not be immobilized by the virtually impossible task of operationalizing the boundary between just war and militarism.

Empirical research on the arms trade and militarism proceeds from a recognition that factors driving state leaders to resort to military force as a means of redressing grievances are complex and multifaceted. Ayoob, for example, acknowledges that ‘weapons transfers even on such a large scale should not be seen as substituting for the root causes of conflict inherent in Third World historical situations.’ Yet he is among many analysts who believe that ‘the relatively easy availability of sophisticated weaponry certainly contributed to regional arms races and to the escalation and prolongation of conflicts in the Third World’ (Ayoob, 1995: 102). From this, one might take the position that more remote contributors to military conflict are more likely to be responsible for pushing state behaviour into the realm of militarism. That is, while we may not be able to identify the threshold beyond which a state’s national security policy becomes militaristic, it stands to reason that when the interests of extra-regional actors are actively engaged, as signaled by external arms supplies, the element of excess that marks militarism is more likely to be present, all else equal. This does not mean that all forms of extra-regional involvement encourage militarism; dependence on arms imports from outside stakeholders can sometimes encourage restraint (e.g. Kinsella, 1998). Rather, the conjecture is that when we do observe a correlation between arms transfers and conflictual state behaviour, we are on somewhat firmer ground concluding, following Thee (1977) and others, that this is a manifestation of ‘the global spread of militarism’. The conclusion is not unproblematic, though.

A fair amount of empirical research has accumulated to support the notion that military conflict in the developing world was, in part, an externalization of the Cold War by the superpowers. In most accounts, this externalization occurred because the superpowers and their major power allies ‘saw many local conflicts as expressions or extensions of their own rivalry’ and ‘viewed the outcomes of such conflicts as significant indicators of success or failure in their own wider struggle’ (Buzan *et al.*, 1998: 64). A rationalist explanation describes a geopolitical contest in which the superpowers competed by means of diplomatic jousting, arms racing, and brinkmanship, but never by means of overt military conflict, which in the nuclear age would have placed national survival at risk. Overt warfare in the periphery was sometimes encouraged, but was more often simply tolerated, manipulated, or managed with the purpose of steering events in

ways that would reflect favourably on the policies and interests of extra-regional actors. As instruments for the manipulation and management of local conflicts, arms-transfer relationships were far and away the most potent, even if they often did not result in the most desirable outcomes. Having to resort to external arms supplies did not reduce recipient states to pawns (Sislin, 1994). Although patron–client relationships could never be construed as balanced, the Cold War competition also created opportunities for manipulation by states in geopolitically pivotal positions.

Arms transfers embody the transfer of military capability, allowing recipients and suppliers to influence the course of regional inter-state relations. Arms transfers may also signal a degree of commitment by the supplier to the recipient's security, whether or not transfers are undertaken in the context of military alliances, treaties of friendship, or other explicit statements of mutual support. This more social dimension of the arms trade is also likely to have an impact on states' preferences and behaviour, especially to the extent that ongoing arms-supply relationships, and not just equipment transfers, are perceived as security multipliers by recipients or their regional rivals. A constructivist perspective would, of course, emphasize this aspect: the forces driving militarization in the developing world also contribute to state socialization, a 'process by which states internalize norms originating elsewhere in the international system' (Alderson, 2001: 417). That is, recipient state identities were shaped by their integration into the superpowers' geopolitical competition via superpower arms supplies and other policies that encouraged the interpretation of regional events and developments through a Cold War prism.

Militarism, then, may be reached by two causal pathways that implicate the global arms trade. First, militaristic policies pursued by the great powers are partly manifest as a competitive scramble for global influence in which arms transfers play a central role. Because arms supplies enhance recipients' war-fighting capacities, they also expand the range of opportunity to embark on militaristic policies locally. Second, arms-transfer relationships are among the various forces of socialization operating on states. Their impact on militarism is not only mediated by the transfer of material capacity between states, but is felt directly insofar as recipient states internalize supplier states' security conceptions and priorities, and filter signals from their local security environments through them. These causal mechanisms do not operate always and everywhere, but where they are present, they are likely to work in tandem. To date, empirical research on the global arms trade has generated evidence linking arms transfers to competition and conflict among both suppliers and recipients, but it has not been designed to disentangle the relative merits of rationalist and constructivist explanations. This suggests some interesting areas for future theorizing and research.

At the global level of analysis, there is a positive correlation between the volume of arms transferred between states and the number of states involved in wars and militarized disputes short of war (Craft, 1999; Durch, 2000). This correlation, while consistent with arguments connecting the arms trade with the

diffusion of militarism, does not affirm the hypothesized causal connection, let alone whether the conflictual state behaviour in question amounts to militarism. The latter issue, again, will be extraordinarily difficult to resolve with any degree of certainty, and progress on the question of causality has required a closer examination of particular states and their interactions with regional rivals. Focused chronologies have revealed an association between weapons agreements (often in the context of friendship treaties) and increased risk-taking by the recipient, suggesting that the security commitments implied by arms deals may have as much of an impact on the onset of conflict as actual arms deliveries (Pearson *et al.*, 1989). But the acquisition of military equipment does matter. In a series of case studies covering multiple regions, Brzoska and Pearson (1994: 214–215) concluded that ‘arms deliveries clearly were a factor in decisions to go to war, because of considerations about military superiority, perceptions of changes in the balance of power, and interest in establishing links with supporting states’ and that ‘arms deliveries during wars generally prolonged and intensified the fighting.’

The quantitative literature covering the Cold War period generally has not distinguished the impact of US arms transfers from Soviet transfers. However, some studies conclude that the superpowers’ arms-supply relationships affected regional security in distinct ways. For example, in relations between the Arab states and Israel or between Iraq and Iran, Soviet arms transfers were associated with subsequent increases in hostility levels between rival states. Sometimes hostility was initiated by the recipient of Soviet weaponry, and sometimes by its opponent. That is, although opponents were themselves the recipients of US-supplied arms, these analyses suggest that their conflict initiation tended to be a preemptive response to Soviet transfers to the other side, not a response to their own arms acquisitions (Kinsella, 1994, 1995).

Militarism may also take the form of internal repression and research suggests a link between arms imports and human rights violations (e.g. Blanton, 1999). But greater attention needs to be focused on small arms and light weapons, which figure prominently in internal warfare and rebellion. Unfortunately, reliable data on the small arms trade are less readily available than data on the trade in major weapons systems (Kinsella, 2011: 223–225), so empirical research on the impact of small arms circulation on internal repression and warfare is much less developed. Still, there is some systematic evidence (and a great deal of anecdotal evidence) to suggest that the importation of small arms and light weapons are associated with longer, bloodier internal wars and ‘hurting stalemates’ (Sislin and Pearson, 2001; Zartman, 2000).

Because the small arms trade is not dominated by the major powers to nearly the same extent as the advanced weapons trade, we can suppose that the international social dimension attached to small arms transfers is less important, and that the impact on militarism is more likely to turn on the material war-fighting capacity delivered to recipients. The distinctiveness of the small arms trade also pertains to an aspect of militarization that was not examined in the previous section. A preoccupation with capital-intensive weapons procurement strategies,

as encouraged by arms-transfer and other military relationships with the major powers, is but one manifestation of the militarization of states in the developing world. Another is the widespread availability of light combat weaponry, in both open and underground markets, and the emergence of gun cultures, especially in post-conflict societies where stability and the rule of law remain tenuous. Here too – and notwithstanding frequent references to *global* gun culture – it is likely that socialization at the international level is secondary to the impact of the local forces, both material and social, driving this low-technology but still worrisome dimension of militarization.

Conclusion

The end of the Cold War ushered in period of reordered (or perhaps disordered) international security relations. The Cold War was a key feature of the international social structure and the arms trade served as a conduit for the transmission of not only military capability, but also conceptions of the value of capital-intensive militarization for regime security and, more generally, for modern statehood. Arms transfers were often part and parcel of security relationships and those relationships conveyed ideas that impacted security preferences and state identity, particularly for those states that were enlisted as allies in the Cold War competition between the superpowers. Although the destructive capabilities of transferred weaponry may be predictable in relation to past arms transfers, the ideational content of these security relationships does not remain the same in the present period now that the Cold War social structure is no longer a feature of global politics.

If there is presently a contender to fill at least a portion of the international normative void left by the collapse of the Cold War, it is probably the ‘global war on terrorism’. I will, at any rate, conclude with some speculative comments on the arms trade and the diffusion of militarism in this conjectured global setting. Whereas the primary divide during the Cold War was between East and West, a divide that was superimposed on certain regions within the developing world, the primary divide emerging in the war on terrorism (or whatever one wishes to call it) is between advanced and militarily capable states, on the one hand, and both rogue and failing states, on the other. The latter are where transnational terrorist organizations are most likely to find either willing support or large ill-governed zones in which to take refuge and base their operations. It is too early to see any imprint of this new divide in global arms trade patterns. Instead what we see is simply a loosening of the Cold War structure. That structure has not disappeared completely. Many arms transfer relationships established and nurtured during the Cold War continue because they serve the post-Cold War interests of suppliers and recipients, and the transaction costs of establishing wholly new relationships can be high. But with the ideational support of the East-West competition gone, arms demand and supply no longer responds to Cold War imperatives.

To the extent that unstructured market forces are now relatively more important in directing global weapons flows, this is likely to yield increasingly to

patterns structured along a new divide. Governments that are more reliable partners in combating terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and those with good prospects of establishing their authority over ungoverned spaces, are candidates for (further) militarization by means of the arms trade. Although rogue regimes and failed states, on the other side of the divide, may have limited access to international arms supplies, their isolation and insecurity will continue to drive indigenous militarization, to the extent that internal resources can be mustered and pressed into service.

Militarism in the contemporary era is already taking form as a greater willingness of major powers to intervene forcefully in the domestic affairs of other states. Increasingly, these interventions are preceded by the generation of sufficient support among the members of the Security Council that they are undertaken with the authority of the United Nations. Whether the situations are deemed 'threats to regional peace and security' or the failure of governments to fulfill their 'responsibility to protect' civilian populations, an ever-present motive is to reverse or preempt internal developments that redound to the advantage of non-state groups hostile to the interests of the major powers. Such groups thrive in environments of lawlessness and discontent; they are unimpressed by the niceties of international law designed to promote stability among nations, and are unresponsive to the traditional tools of statecraft. With few proven means available to deal with this threat, it is reasonable to expect that states will continue to turn to militaristic policy tools and that the global arms trade will continue to shape and serve those ends.