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Twenty-First Century Militarism: A Historical-Sociological Framework

The idea of 'militarism' has at best an uncertain status in contemporary international studies. The concept is academically marginal: strategists, and with them many historians, eschew the term because of its associations with political opposition to military power as such. Moreover even those who recognise its historical relevance may doubt its contemporary applicability: thus Volker Berghahn and Hugh Bichen (n.d.) suggest that '[w]ith the end of the Cold War, the concept of militarism has lost most of the ideological steam that seemed to make it worth discussing. It is rarely used to describe present-day systems and policies but instead is seen as a phenomenon of the past to be examined with the tools of the historian.' Contrary to this judgement, the idea has undergone a revival in the last decade, but (potentially reinforcing the criticism that it is a political rather than scientific concept) in the hands of critics of the Global War on Terror. For Michael Mann (2003) and Andrew Bacevich (2004), US militarism involves excessive reliance on military power, out of kilter with its more limited economic, political and ideological capabilities. Although polemically framed, these are serious analyses (Mann's derives from his major study of power (1986/1993), which involves probably the most extensive analysis of 'militarism' in recent scholarship) which have demonstrated anew the concept's potency. Thus criticisms of the very idea of militarism are as misguided as some of the simpler polemical uses of the term, because the concept refers to enduring and important sociological realities. If 'militarism' has done little serious analytical work in International Relations, this suggests a failure of the field to address some important questions.

The most common usage of the term, proposed by Vagts (1937:11), refers to the state of society that 'ranks military institutions and ways above the prevailing attitudes of civilian life and carries the military mentality into the civilian sphere'; this idea is frequently summarised as 'glorifying' military power. Mann (2003: 16-17) defines it more broadly as 'a set of attitudes and social practices which regards war and the preparation for war as a normal and desirable social activity.' It is sociologically unenlightening to restrict the meaning to ideology: the core idea is the 'carrying' of military forms into the civilian sphere, and this is not merely a matter of 'mentality' or 'attitudes' but (as Mann notes) of 'social practices'. Moreover the military forms which are carried may not necessarily 'rank military institutions and ways above the prevailing attitudes of civilian life', let alone 'glorify' war in a simple sense. While the differences between ideologies which glorify war and those which don't are significant, glorifying and non-glorifying ideologies may equally *justify* war and military power, and in this sense have the same core social function. Therefore we need a common term for all such ideologies, which we may distinguish by qualifying adjectives (e.g. fascist militarism, democratic militarism). Furthermore, a narrow ideological definition separates ideology from the social relations of

which it is a part. The core meaning of 'militarism' should be specified not in terms of how military practices are regarded, but how they *influence* social relations in general. Militarism develops not just when ideas of war are strong, but when military relations widely affect social relations and practices. Hence I have proposed (Shaw, 1991: 9-15) that militarism denotes *the penetration of social relations in general by military relations*; in militarisation, militarism is extended, in demilitarisation, it contracts.

Another advantage of this approach is that it pre-empts the political abuse to which the ideological definition easily lends itself. Invariably, 'their' war-making and war-preparation is aggressive, destructive, glorifies war and is 'militarist', 'ours' is defensive, humanitarian, does not glorify war and is not 'militarist'. The deeper sociological definition removes the simple negative connotation and in principle allows that arguments justifying militarism and militarisation may be plausible, although it retains critical potential. It is possible to use it in a coherent social-scientific manner, in ways which tie it neither to a particular political critique nor to the analysis of the past.

The re-emergence of the problem of militarism in the 1980s

The conference on which this book is based called for revisiting the 'forgotten literature of the 1980s', the last period in which 'militarism' was widely used. Themes in the social sciences are strongly influenced by the international political context, so that interest in 'militarism' has waxed in periods of militarisation in Western societies like the Second Cold War of the early 1980s (Halliday, 1981) and the 2000s' War on Terror, and waned in periods of demilitarisation such as that after 1989. Until the 1980s, the growth of IR and strategic studies in US and Western academies was centred on the Cold War and the nuclear arms race, and had little place for ideas of militarism. Certainly, a secondary focus on 'war and society', growing out of military-historical work in Britain enabled some attention to the problem (e.g. Howard, 1978). However the Second Cold War particularly stimulated new theoretical approaches to war and military power, with important general conceptualisations and theorisations.

Another feature of the intellectual context was that these developed in critical tension not only with strategy, but also with Marxism. The 1970s had seen an unprecedented adoption of Marxist approaches in the Western academy, coinciding with the expansion of the social sciences, especially sociology. However Marx and Engels had placed the mode of production, not war and military power, at the centre of their theory of history. Critical political economy was the dominant mode of the new Marxist analysis, and it did not find a considered theoretical place for war and militarism. This too reflected the international situation: in the decade of *détente*, Marxists were more preoccupied by the emerging 'crisis of capitalism' than by warfare, and mostly saw the military crisis of the time, in Vietnam, through the prism of imperialism rather than militarism.

Therefore the principal social theorists of militarism felt the need to transcend the perceived limitations of Marxist, as well as strategic, theory. Some were influenced by Marxism, but were

unconvinced of its capacity to deal with war and militarism: E.P. Thompson (1982) parodied the title of Lenin's famous pamphlet on imperialism in his essay on 'exterminism', developing a critique of Marxist 'immobilism' in the face of the danger of the nuclear-war-producing military system. Thompson argued that the arms race and the military-industrial complexes had their own dynamics, which had become self-reproducing and threatened to destroy civilisation; they could not necessarily be explained (or constrained) by the 'rational' political-economic interests of the superpowers in avoiding mutual destruction, although they could be challenged by international social movements. Yet Thompson did not develop a more general theory of war or militarism, and in his historical work he largely failed to explore their significance for the social movements he examined (Shaw, 1990). His critique was taken forward by Mary Kaldor (1982a), whose Marxisant language disguised a partially Clausewitzian theoretical framework. Developing Clausewitz's proposal that battle is to war what cash payment is to commodity exchange, she argued that the 'modes' of war and production should be treated as distinct but analogous, rather than the former being dependent on the latter. She proposed that the roots of war lay in the complex tensions between the two modes, particularly when warfare became a burden on capitalism. Kaldor (1982b) also used Clausewitzian logic to analyse the contradictions of Western weapons platforms, which she argued had become 'baroque', increasingly unusable and vulnerable to simpler anti-system devices.

The other main sources of militarism theory were neo-Weberian historical sociologists like Charles Tilly (1990), Theda Skocpol (1979), Anthony Giddens (1985), and especially Mann. These writers rejecting the fall-back Marxist idea of the 'last-instance' determination of economic relations: the autonomous role of military power was a core assumption. However like Marxists who considered war and militarism as extensions of capitalism or imperialism, these historical sociologists mostly considered the *role* of war and military power (for example in state formation and revolution), rather the *nature and internal dynamics* of war and the 'war-system' with which Thompson and Kaldor (following Clausewitz) were concerned: 'To paraphrase Marx's First Thesis on Feuerbach, the defect of most social theory of war and militarism is that it has sought to reduce war to rational, material interests: it has not considered war as practice, i.e. what people actually do in war. Hence again "the active side has been developed abstractly" - in this case by military theory.' (Shaw, 1988: 10, note 3)

Moreover only some of these theorists were concerned with militarism, and their analyses were often problematic. One reflection of the political context was the conclusion that new forms of militarism implied an *overall* extension of militarisation. Thus Thompson, from his examination of nuclear competition, asserted that there was a growing general militarisation through the Cold War system. Likewise Cynthia Enloe (1988), in a path-breaking feminist exposé of the militarisation of soldiers' wives, prostitutes, etc., concluded that there was a general 'militarisation of women's lives'. However others came to different conclusions. Military sociologists, such as Jacques van Doorn (1975) on the 'end of the mass army' and Charles Moskos (1988) who examined the 'occupationalisation' of the military, analysed processes of societal *demilitarisation* – and even the *civilianisation* of the military – rather than growing militarisation. Mann (1987) argued that Western militarism had bifurcated into an elite

'deterrence science militarism' and a popular 'spectator sport militarism', in which audiences consumed televisual wars rather like the Olympic Games. Only in the Soviet bloc did classical, early-twentieth-century mass-participation militarism remain – and this, of course, collapsed with the end of the Cold War. The trend was, Robin Luckham (1984) argued, towards the displacement of old-style militarism, centred on military institutions and culture, by 'armament culture', centred (in popular video-gaming as well as nuclear war-gaming) on the instant annihilation which high technology promised. Militarism remained important in a 'post-military' (post-classical-militarist) society, but its social-structural foundations were weakened and its cultural mechanisms were changing (Shaw, 1991).

The militarism theory of the 1980s was more influential in sociology, but IR's problem in dealing with war and militarism is not dissimilar to that of the Marxists and the historical sociologists. IR has been primarily interested in their role in interstate relations and international institutions (e.g. Holsti, 1989), rather than in the production of war and military power, how they produce militarism in society, and how these in turn re-enter interstate relations. Yet militarism is highly significant for the process of war, and thereby for international political processes of which war is an extension. In what follows I first lay out a framework for analysis, then I consider the contemporary implications.

Foundations of a historical-sociological framework

The study of war is too often conflated with the study of the current or last war, so that developments are examined without the benefit of long-term historical perspective and are endowed with excessive novelty. Recent reinventions of war studies have been no more immune to this problem than Cold War-era theorising: despite constructive reorientations in the study of armed conflict in the last two decades (notably much more attention to 'hot' wars in the non-Western world), continuities with the transformations of militarism identified in the final stages of the Cold War are often neglected. For example, US *remilitarisation* after 9/11 was largely restricted – like that of the Second Cold War or the Falklands War – to the ideological level (patriotic celebration of armed forces etc.), with little reversal of structural *demilitarisation*. Military participation remained mostly restricted to small professional forces: the roles of reservists and private contractors were enhanced, but forces remained small and specialised compared to earlier conscript mobilisations. The main paradox of late Cold War militarism – the decoupling of total destruction from the total mobilisation with which it had been inextricably linked in total war – continues.

Thus a sociological framework which encompasses societal militarism as well as interstate conflict must necessarily encompass successive historical transformations. Distinct types of social organisation and conflict together form *the general complex of the social forces and relations of warfare in a given historical period* (in Kaldor's terms, the 'mode of warfare'). Militarism in a given period depends, first, on the typical *social forces* mobilised in military power. Armed actors (states or armed movements) always mobilise social resources (economic, political, cultural) and social constituencies (nations, classes, ethnic and religious groups). In

the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Western states waged large-scale war by using expanding state bureaucracy to conscript rapidly growing peasant and working-class populations into mass armies, using industrial systems to produce increasingly lethal weaponry and complex weapons platforms, and mobilising new mass electorates through nationalism, party systems and mass media. Militarised revolutionary movements mobilised peasant production and used both nationalist and class ideology to mobilise peasants to support guerrilla war.

Militarism results, second, from the *social relations* of military power, centred on the always potentially antagonistic relation between armed actors (combatants) and civilians (non-combatants), which is in turn the foundation of distinctive social stratifications (hierarchies) embodied in military institutions and their relations with society even outside war. Peter Baumont (2009) argues of contemporary conflicts: 'In war all life is negotiated around weapons. Societies are reordered into sharply defined new hierarchies: into those who have weapons and those who have not. A man with a gun can walk to the front of the bread or petrol queue. With his militia friends he can take over a petrol station if he likes and reorganise the distribution while skimming money off the top. With a rifle you can order a woman to have sex. Weapons redistribute wealth through "taxes", protection rackets and straight theft. Scores can be settled, under the cover of generalised violence.' This is only the most recent form of core relations which exist in all organised warfare.

These fundamental categories are also keys to important secondary distinctions. For example, different social bases and methods of mobilisation, as well as different military methods, give us distinctions such as those between regular and guerrilla forms of modern war. The armed actor-civilian distinction enables us to distinguish between 'legitimate' war which is primarily between armed actors and in which civilian harm arises as an unintended consequence; degenerate war in which civilians are targeted as a method of pursuing war against an armed enemy; and genocide, in which civilian populations are targeted as enemies in themselves and where their destruction is an end rather than a means. The distinction of terrorism as a specific variant of warfare uses both distinctions, since if it has any social-scientific meaning it must imply specific types of military method and social mobilisation *and* a specific type of civilian targeting.

The concept of the mode of warfare brings to the fore a series of key analytical questions: How should we specify particular modes of warfare historically? When and why do transitions between different modes arise? How are transitions between modes of warfare related to transitions in other social domains? Of course these are very large questions which I cannot answer fully here. But modes of warfare should be specified on the basis of their own internal characteristics, rather than on the basis of prior concepts of transitions in the mode of production or international systems; the articulation of modes of warfare, production, etc. is complex; causality is not simply in one direction; and historical transitions in one mode are not mechanically synchronised in another.

Towards a historical theory of contemporary transformations

I propose that we should understand the forms of contemporary militarism as manifestations of the transition from the mode of *industrialised total warfare* to a new mode, *global surveillance warfare*. The advantage of the 'mode' approach is that it enables us to see continuous development of the potential for war in economy, society and politics, encompassing periods of relative 'peace' as well as actual warfighting.

Thus the dominant modern mode of industrialised total warfare is the general complex of social relations, processes and institutions through which wars were prepared, military power was organised and wars fought in the high modern period, as a result of changes in social relations in general from the eighteenth through to the twentieth century. This mode of warfare developed as the pre-existing practice and organisation of interstate warfare adapted to the rise of the modern nation-state, nationalism, mass politics, mass media of communication, and industrial capitalism. Its first major manifestation was in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars ('the first total war': Bell, 2007) From about 1840 onwards, the 'industrialisation of warfare' proceeded apace, leading to military-industrial sectors within the advanced national economies (MacNeill, 1982). The first major industrialised war took place in the United States in 1861-65, but it was not until 1914-18 that the wider potential of this new mode was more fully realised, chiefly in Europe, although the war was part of a global struggle between the European empires. World War II was of course much more fully industrialised, mass-politicised, mass-mediated and globalised (with Asia as a main theatre alongside Europe), and can be seen as the culmination of this mode of warfare.

Industrialised total warfare was accompanied by *classical modern militarism*: with mass peasant and worker mobilisation, armies and other state institutions penetrated society in unprecedented ways. Through conscription, which became general in continental Europe and beyond, young men from diverse local cultural and linguistic backgrounds were incorporated into national states. Compulsory military service served as a 'school of the nation', and adult male populations formed reserve armies of trained soldiers who could be re-conscripted in time of war. This institutional web was reinforced by a general cultural diffusion of military values: for example, popular literature (for children as well as adults) concerning military exploits in imperial locales; and images of soldiers, commanders and military crests nested in mass commercial products. The mass circulation press, the first truly mass media, enabled more persistent, widespread information about and celebration of military institutions and events. Finally, mass political parties also legitimised military values, while army and navy leagues mobilised society for military expansion. Thus classical militarism both *reflected* war and war-preparation and *facilitated* them.

Mass militarism also facilitated the view of the civilian population as part of the enemy: if civilians became participants in war - economically as well as politically and ideologically - then they were more easily seen as targets. Thus this kind of militarism was instrumental in the degeneration of war into systematic targeting of civilians, and even in its extension into genocide, where 'other' civilian populations were regarded as enemies in themselves, which had already been extensively practised in colonial locales (Kiernan, 2007).

We must emphasise the *dynamic* character of military relationships. This mode of warfare involved constantly developing forms of technology and armed forces, and relations with the economic, political and cultural spheres. The Napoleonic Wars, the US Civil War and the world wars represented four radically different experiences, each 'total' in distinctive ways. The forms of the dialectic between mass mobilisation and mass destruction changed, with a rapid acceleration in both technologies of destruction and the politicisation of mass mobilisation. The latter had profound implications for the ideological side of militarism, whose staples of patriotism and imperialism were re-cast within the framework of the global struggle between fascism, communism and democracy.

This mode of warfare represented a particular mode of articulation between military and other social domains. Especially in the period leading up to and during the Second World War, and continuing into the first phase of the Cold War, this mode of warfare increasingly *dominated* the principal other domains (economy, polity and culture), conditioning major social changes: war and arms economies; state-managed capitalism; and political and cultural arenas defined by international military confrontations. Militarism, in increasingly politicised forms, permeated social life more intensively than before or since.

How did this system unravel? The same dynamics that produced it played central roles in its transformation: they were determined primarily *within* the war-system. The outcome of the last major total war, the Second World War, was the replacement of the wider inter-imperial conflict by Cold War bipolarity; its military-technological outcome was the increasing displacement of mass armies by high-technology weaponry. These twin developments decoupled the central dynamics of destruction and social mobilisation. The implications for militarism were major: shifts from conscript armies to professional forces, and from extensive, mass-production equipment to more intensive, high-technology military industry. Much of the cultural paraphernalia which had celebrated modern militaries also started to lose their meaning.

These structural changes in warfare articulated with major transformations in economy, polity and culture during the later Cold War. The changes in warfare removed much of the logic for state control of the economy, enabling Western governments to liberalise, and for the state control of mass media, allowing more open media systems. Political and cultural life increasingly escaped from the Cold War straitjacket of Atlanticism vs. Communism. The loosening of military demands allowed state forms in Western Europe to develop the Cold War internationalising dynamic beyond the Cold War, into an expanded continental European Union. Chiming with these developments, the dynamism of the post-war Western economy, media and culture made the Soviet system seem increasingly atrophied, even before its breakdown. And despite the intensity of the Cold War at crisis points, there was a secular trend towards managing the potentially ruinous superpower conflict, which ultimately led to the new *détente* of the late 1980s through which the Cold War system dissolved.

Of course there was great variation in the way these changes were implemented: Anglo-American warmaking had long had a greater steer towards technology, leading to a

distinctive 'liberal militarism' (Edgerton, 1991), and the UK and USA led the move from conscription. This was initially resisted in other West European countries (for reasons of continental location, tradition and politics) and even more in the Soviet bloc, and only realised across most of Europe after the Cold War. However an indicator of the military significance of the change was that the Western states that led the way in changing military organisation were those most likely to fight wars. The perception of the 'Vietnam syndrome', the US failure (mistakenly) believed to result from inadequate management of that 'first television war' (Hallin, 1986, Mandelbaum, 1982), was instrumental in seeking new ways of war-fighting in a context of media surveillance. In the 1980s, wars like the UK's Falklands campaign allowed glimpses of a new form of militarism centred on mass-mediated limited war, with media management rather than direct control (Glasgow University Media Group, 1985).

Global surveillance war and the new militarism

With the end of the Cold War, it became clear that these were the beginnings of a more fundamental change, which lead me to argue that a new mode of warfare has been developing. It is important to emphasise that since a 'mode of warfare' is an abstract representation of a general complex of military relations, the decline of one mode and the development of a new does not imply linear or even change. On the contrary, it is evident that industrialised total warfare remains important in the twenty-first century. First, states in Asia, especially, retain mass armies (although not always conscript-based; in poor, populous societies recruitment is possible without direct coercion) and sometimes deploy them in ways reminiscent of the world wars. Second, nuclear weapons remain and the danger of nuclear war is still real: the total-destruction dynamic is now embedded in regional conflicts and arms races (India-Pakistan, Israel-Iran, etc.). In combination, these two trends could still produce major wars, and at the limit even drag the world (including the West) back into a mid-twentieth-century type of conflict.

Despite these continuities, however, major changes in society have produced radical changes in warfare.

First, economy and society are increasingly developing on a global basis. The collapse of the Soviet bloc and the dynamism of China's market economy has increased world economic integration, even if national and regional segmentation remains important. A single economic framework, in which production, trade and especially finance are carried on to a significant extent in global markets and more or less according to shared rules, has deepened interdependence. Although naïve ideas of interdependence as a key to peace must be rejected, the costs of interstate wars between great powers are internalised in political ideology: there is a growing understanding (partly inherited from US-Soviet relations) that despite continuing huge military investments on all sides, common interests rule out major war between big states. Moreover as Kaldor (2006) argues, whereas in the old political economy, war was often productive and economically mobilising, now it is generally parasitic and demobilising. 'Military Fordism' is over (Kaldor, Albrecht and Schmeder, 1998). States which have become centres and sites of prolonged war, such as the former Yugoslav states, Iraq and several in Africa, have

suffered very serious consequences. War has now to be calibrated with conditions in world markets, especially financial markets, so as not cause deep damage to states' economic interests.

Second, the global economy also depends on developing global political infrastructures. Despite many tensions, the main dimensions of Western Cold War internationalisation have continued and broadened in developments which underpin an expanding, if messy, set of global state institutions (Shaw, 2000). Faltering Western supremacy since the global recession of 2008-9 - with developments such as the G20 which enhance the role of major non-Western states - has increased this tendency, which draws states into common economic and political arrangements which, in turn, increase understandings among elites and indirectly reduce further the likelihood of wars between the main powers.

Third, the development of a global media space, in which information is communicated worldwide and instantaneously via the internet as well as traditional media, resulting in a more integrated, internationalised multi-media environment, radically changes the information context of global politics and war. This media integration deepens the political communication of elites, but it also affects the practice of war. Military events can be (although they are not always) reported very quickly and universally, and it is increasingly difficult for armed actors to control information and comment in the way that happened in the period of total war, or even in recent extreme cases of managed-media wars (e.g. the Falklands).

Finally, the development of formal global legal frameworks, including institutions designed to enforce the international humanitarian law, while lacking full enforcement or consistent support from major states, has increasingly provided foci for attention to the practice of armed conflict. This development, reinforced by civil society monitoring (by human rights organisations, social movements, etc., which have direct and indirect access to global media), means that military events are likely to be legally monitored in new ways. Thus excesses (of course, a normal product of war) are increasingly, if still very variably, capable of being legally actioned.

The combined results of these changes are that major states are constrained to fight mainly against smaller states or armed movements: hence the predominance of what is called 'asymmetric war'. War also continues much more between lesser states, between lesser states and armed movements, and between different armed movements, mostly in regional conflicts which are sufficiently confined so as not to radically disrupt power relations among major states.

These new general conditions are creating the basis for a new mode of warfare. In these new conditions, preparations for, the practice of and outcomes of war are subjected to *extensive, multi-dimensional global surveillance*. In preparing or carrying out military actions, armed actors of all kinds (major powers and other states, international organisations and armed movements) must recognise the constraints of global surveillance. Armed actors face not only a much expanded version of the *mutual* surveillance that is the norm of war (expanded because

the means of information-gathering are enormously greater), but a *comprehensive* surveillance *by many different actors*: not only other states, but international governmental and non-governmental organisations, civil society including social movements, a hugely expanded range of media institutions, and of course, in unprecedented ways because of internet access, individuals. Therefore whereas in total war, states and armed movements typically controlled economy, politics and media over a wide territory, with a real possibility (even if not always realised) of economic, political and informational autarchy, now armed actors of all kinds are forced to recognise multiple economic, political, media and legal pressures which limit their freedom of action even within territory they theoretically control. In the mode of total warfare, warfare tended towards *dominance of* social life in general; in the mode of global surveillance war, war tends principally towards *being constrained by* economy, politics and media.

It is important to emphasise that these are statements of tendency: just as in total war there were always extensive social constraints on warmaking, so in global surveillance war, armed actors still have distinct *possibilities* to mobilise the new social conditions for warmaking to make war possible in new ways. How these possibilities are mobilised enables us to identify the emerging forms of the *new war* and *new militarism*. To do so in general is more difficult than in the context of total warfare, since the power disparities, captured by the idea of asymmetry, are if anything even more acute than in previous periods, and different armed actors, perhaps even more than before, vary radically in their situations and therefore their ways of mobilising for war. Although total warfare had guerilla as well as conventional variants, global-surveillance warfare is reflected in radically fractured between different types of armed struggle.

New militarisms: 21st century variations

Two types of actors appear to have been particularly innovative in mobilising the new conditions to create new ways of warmaking: Western states, especially the USA, and global Islamist terrorists, notably al-Qaida. Since Western states are most influential in setting the terms of global surveillance, through their roles in international organisations and legal institutions and the location of the most important global media, NGOs, etc. within their societies, they are simultaneously most vulnerable to *exposure* (in violation of global norms). But they are also the most able to *manage* global surveillance institutions to promote their projects. On the other hand, because global terrorist organisations are not burdened by the necessity to manage state infrastructure, account to electorates or manage international relations, they are able to defy international norms and exploit media environments in ways which are not open to states or even to other types of armed movements.

It is constructive to compare these two types of response. In what we may call 'the new Western way of war', the USA, UK and (through international alliances and coalitions) other Western states have re-invented warmaking, after the crisis of Vietnam, by packaging it as an inherently

limited, temporarily and spatially bounded ('quick-fix') affair. In their twenty-first century wars, risks to the state protagonists – of unwanted political, media, market and legal feedback – are carefully managed. Since at the heart of the political-media risks for Western states lie risks to their own soldiers, physical risk is systematically transferred to local allies and, despite protestations of concern, to non-combatant. Small 'accidental' massacres of civilians are a structural feature of Western campaigns - particularly but not only because of heavy reliance on aerial targeting - whose potential political and legal complications must be massaged.

Social-structurally, the new Western militarism maintains the sharp distinction between armed forces and society which developed in the late Cold War era. The new militarism avoids, above all, any deep social costs for the West's own societies: military policies are based strictly on professional force-projection, designed to insulate Western economies, societies and politics from anything more than superficial effects. Instead, Western militarism centres on the ideological nexus between governments and electorates/media audiences, who are mobilised through a combination of patriotism 'lite' and a nationalist emphasis on force-protection with global ideals of democracy-promotion, civilian-protection and humanitarianism.

The inevitable contradiction between these two sides, in practice - as force-protection increases risks of harm to civilians in war zones - is massaged through media-management which minimises the effects of serial mass killings. And although governments are the principal producers of the new militarism, they can never produce it independently: they rely centrally on the deep implication of large parts of the mainstream television and press media, as well as on the collaboration, indifference and/or structural dependence of the other main centres of surveillance: international organisations, markets, legal institutions and civil society. Moreover, a crucial catalyst of all the constraints on and possibilities for Western warmaking is the electoral test, since (unlike in total war, when democracies normally suspended elections) governments continue to face regular electoral cycles. Wars must at best maximise potential electoral benefits (on the model of the Thatcher government's benefit from the Falklands War), and at worst not cause serious electoral problems.

It can be argued that Western governments have been successful most of the time, in most wars, in producing and reproducing the new militarism in such a way as to support their campaigns. However there were conspicuous moments of crisis (for example, the Kurdish refugee crisis of 1991: Shaw, 1996) even before 9/11. The partial success of al-Qaida in projecting force back into Western societies with these attacks - which conventional state antagonists like Saddam's Iraq and Slobodan Milosovic's Serbia could not achieve - forced an accentuation of Western militarism, deepening its social penetration, so that armed forces and military symbolism have had an increased significance in Western societies since 2001. However the more ambitious military policies of the George W. Bush administration represented serious overreach, as critics like Mann, Bacevich and many others argue, and were at best only partially successful. In the end, Bush left with his major war discredited, and handed over the presidency to a critic; and Tony Blair failed in his bid to become first President of the European Council partly because he had alienated his centre-left base over Iraq. On the electoral test, the new Western militarism had had at most mixed results, as Bush's Global War on Terror mutated into

a still dangerous exercise of Afghan containment under Barack Obama.

Therefore it can be argued that some kinds of international terrorist have also been effective in mobilising the new conditions of war, perhaps more so than Western states. The term 'terrorism' is often abused, but it is accurately used to describe al-Qaida's strategy in the West, which has centred on producing political effects through spreading carnage and fear among the civilian population. Although in Afghanistan and Pakistan, al-Qaida and its Taliban allies mobilise local society and wage what might better be called guerilla war, al-Qaida has attacked the West from a position of extreme military weakness and with civilian weapons – airliners, home-made bombs, etc. However its terrorism has been extraordinarily attuned to the new conditions of war: 9/11 was spectacular theatre, owing as much to Hollywood disaster movies as to any military genre, impressively targeted at the greatest physical symbols of US power. Al-Qaida does not, of course, face the electoral test or the same kinds of legal and market constraints as its enemies, but only the more modest bar of maintaining financial and ideological support among a radical minority of Muslims worldwide, sufficient to reproduce its organisation and operations. This gives it greater, but not unlimited freedom in its actions: a rare demonstration of the limits was when it was forced to tell al-Qaida in Iraq to restrict its campaign of beheadings, which was damaging the movement's general credibility. However, despite attacks in Istanbul, Bali, Madrid and London up to 2005, the organisation's failure to sustain its campaign in Western cities during the subsequent five years may indicate that, while the 'war on terror' was unsuccessful, Western governments have been more capable in their use of surveillance to contain global Islamist terror.

As indicated above, although non-Western states and more conventional armed movements increasingly operate in the same general conditions of warfare, they mostly face less intense surveillance than the West, even if more than al-Qaida; and although they have adapted to the new global surveillance, they have generally done so less thoroughly than either Western states or al-Qaida. Major states like China, Russia, India and Pakistan remain more wedded to the mass army and traditional nationalist militarism, although of course they are hardly uninfluenced by the new context. As an example of a new form of mobilisation, we may cite China, in which the internet is being used to mobilise nationalist-militarist sentiments (transnationally among the Chinese diaspora as well) around the Taiwan issue.

For some non-Western states, total warfare is still more real: for example, Iraq under Saddam Hussein practised large-scale conscript mobilisation for its wars against Iran and the West (although less so in 2003 than in 1991), and its society was suffused with a more classical militarism. Perhaps as a result, non-Western regimes have been less effective than the West and al-Qaida in playing global media, even if Slobodan Milosevic was surer-footed than Saddam Hussein in this respect.

Nevertheless, smaller states and movements – at least in those conflicts which are of interest to

the West – also increasingly face surveillance challenges in the ways they fight their wars. In Darfur, for example, the Sudanese government's counter-insurgency, in alliance with Arab 'Janjaweed' militia, has had to deal with the interventions of the USA, the UN and African Union peacekeepers, Western humanitarian organisations and mass media, as well as civil society campaigning around 'genocide', all of which have constrained its room for action.

Conclusion: possibilities of anti-militarism?

This discussion has located the problem of militarism in the context of transformations of the mode of warfare, related to the larger socio-economic, political and cultural changes of the twenty-first century. Although it has not discussed the question of anti-militarism, it is evident that the possibilities of opposition to militarism depend on the character of militarism itself in the given period, as well as on these wider patterns. Classical anti-militarism exploited the contradictions of mass militarism – the unpopularity of conscription, the effects on civilian populations of mobilisation for and targeting in war, etc. Clearly opposition to militarism in the age of global surveillance will particularly reflect the contradictions in surveillance processes, but with globally varied forms, reflecting the different experiences of societies and groups within them of different types of military power.

Where the risks of war are transferred away from domestic populations and the restricted risks to soldiers are heavily managed (as generally in Western societies) anti-militarism will focus on the contradictions of military power-projections in distant war zones, notably 'accidental' small massacres, other violent blowback to civilian populations, torture and mistreatment of prisoners, etc. In societies affected by guerilla organisations and armed paramilitaries in conditions of open warfare, extensive anti-civilian violence, particularly mass rapes and kidnapping of young people will be the focus - for example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Where armed organisations merge with organised crime, problems of assassinations as well as kidnapping may be the front line of anti-militarism - as in Colombia and Mexico. Where terrorist organisations recruit, resistance to their penetration of community and religious organisations may be the focus - as in Muslim populations in Western countries. In societies which retain conscription and the military-authoritarian forms typical of the era of industrialised total war, anti-militarism will still focus around related issues - for example, the problems of bullying and mistreatment of conscripts in the Russian armed forces, and of involvement in illegal occupation in the case of Israel.

The potential of all these issues to generate substantial anti-militarist movements will depend partly on the nexus between the experience of harm and effective surveillance. In Western societies, the distance of the population from the systematic excesses of 'their' militaries may mean that, despite more developed and open systems of surveillance, even the repeated exposure of atrocities (which has been seen in the wars since 2001) may continue to fall short of what is required for extensive anti-militarist action. In the societies which are most directly experiencing the excesses of military power, in contrast, the weakness of domestic surveillance

institutions in the face of powerful (semi-)authoritarian regimes, compounded by the distance of global surveillance institutions, will often restrict the possibilities of anti-militarism. The contrasting circumstances of anti-militarist movements reflect the differences between indirect, ideological and direct, practical experiences of armed force, but also how they are mediated by socio-economic, political and ideological forces. Thus the new relations of militarism involve many sites of contradiction, but how, where and when these will generate large-scale opposition remains unclear. Social-scientific analysis, such as that proposed in this chapter, can help to elucidate the contradictions and clarify the conditions of action, but it is for the actors to define their practical possibilities.

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