How Rebellious Non-State-Actors acquire weapons

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Abstract

Recent events in world politics, such as the civil wars in Syria and Iraq and conflicts between powerful rebel groups and weak governments in Africa, underline the need for a comprehensive theory to explain how Non States Actors (NSAs) acquire weapons and the factors that influence these efforts. Rebellious activity has been an integral part of political life since ancient times and has taken diverse forms. There were always those who revolted and took up arms against central rule. Weapons were not necessarily the most important factor but rebels needed weapons to fight and usually revolts erupted after the organizers acquired some weapons while many revolts lost their momentum, and operations were not carried out or effective due to shortages in arms and ammunition. Conflicts between governments and armed NSAs have always outnumbered inter-state wars and are not a new phenomenon as some scholars claim. In the last decade NSAs have accelerated the acquisition of large sophisticated weapons systems. They could be better armed than states’ armies because of their access to advanced technologies in the possession of supporting countries or international arms markets. Other NSAs, lacking external support, employ Mao’s principle of self-reliance. They live on their enemies’ arms stocks and improvised weaponry.

Available literature on armed NSAs is incomplete because it addresses partial aspects of the problem. This thesis is an attempt to construct a substantive theory explaining NSAs’ arming, offering generic phases and principles that characterize past and present NSAs and probably the NSAs of the near future. The thesis also checks how globalization has affected the way rebellious NSAs acquire arms. In spite of dramatic political and technological changes, rebel groups in different periods have employed similar methods to acquire weapons. Self-production, looting and stealing, external support and arms trade were always the major methods for NSAs to acquire armaments, though the importance of each method and the type of arms changed remarkably over time. Persistent principles have shaped the arming of NSAs. Initial engagements between rebels and states usually highlighted the superior force of the latter, but because of states’ interests and constraints weapons and military technology have been leaking from states to NSAs by different methods.

A set of factors, political, social, cultural, technological and organizational, both facilitated and constrained NSAs’ ability to practise the four methods of arming, making it a dynamic process. From the nineteenth century, NSAs have employed mainly external sources to acquire weapons rather than domestic sources because the technology of modern weapons is
more difficult to improvise. Another dramatic development, dating from the second half of the twentieth century, is the intensive use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) by armed NSAs, enabling them to reduce the power imbalance against the state. Present NSAs can easily acquire and ship weapons systems over long distances using the mechanisms of globalization. They are customers of the global illicit arms trade that integrates government and non-government actors, creating complicated structures, often beyond the control of national states. Still, arms smuggling remains a time-place-based challenge for NSAs, while governments improve their counter-smuggling skills. In the near future NSAs’ efforts to obtain weapons will dominate their conflicts against states.
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Introduction

The Research Question

Qualitative research is conducted because existing interpretations of a significant social problem are demonstrably incomplete. This thesis explains the question of how Non-State-Actors (NSAs) buildup their forces. Syria’s civil war, the armed conflicts between the governments of Nigeria and Mali and Jihadist groups in Africa, the war in Afghanistan between the central government backed by NATO troops against the Taliban, the United States’ long conflict with al Qaeda, and the armed conflict between the Indian government and the Maoist Naxal are just a few contemporary engagements in which NSAs have sustained lengthy wars through their ability to acquire arms and ammunition. Statistics of illicit trade of arms are important but they do not tell us why and how NSAs act as they do, or the context of their smuggling activity. The following thesis focuses on rebellious NSAs and the buildup of their forces.¹

Rebelloous activity has been an integral part of political life since ancient times and has taken diverse forms. There were always those who revolted and took up arms against central rule; slaves against their masters, peasants against their landlords, ethnic and religious minorities against the majority’s government, national movements fighting European colonialism, Marxist insurgencies against pro-western governments, terror groups and many more. This research employs a generic definition of the rebellious NSA—any organized resistance against central rule. It deals with two types of NSAs or two aspects of NSAs’ activity: within and across the state frontiers. This research defines smuggling as the illegal transport of goods, especially across borderlines.²

Conflicts between governments and armed NSAs have always outnumbered inter-state wars and are not a new phenomenon. Salehyan argues that rebellion is a strategy for winning concessions from a government. At the extreme, rebels will demand—and sometimes win—complete removal of the regime in power or the establishment of an independent state. Rebels may ask for significant political, economic, or social reforms, power-sharing with the

incumbent regime, or for some form of regional autonomy. Unlike a state, which, in principle, already commands coercive power, rebellious NSAs must obtain arms in order to issue and carry out threats if their demands are not met. NSAs’ armament has been vital for the buildup of their forces that enables both the execution and sustainability of those forces. In addition to an examination of command and control apparatus, personnel, training, doctrine and operations, a study of NSAs’ arming is important for the analysis of their struggle against states.3

Recent events in world politics underline the need for a comprehensive theory to explain how NSAs acquire weapons and the factors that influence these efforts. Arms smuggling might be seen as a tactic but it is associated with significant political, economic and cultural processes; a greater knowledge of arms smuggling could help understand state-NSA conflicts. In particular, researching NSAs’ efforts to acquire weapons could be a valuable building-block to better analyze NSAs and contemporary armed conflicts.4

Available literature on armed NSAs does not provide a ready explanation of how NSAs buildup their forces. War theorists discuss small wars and focus on operational and psychological aspects and counterinsurgency techniques but hardly mention the issue of NSAs’ buildup of forces and armaments. Some scholars undermine the need to theorize about NSAs, arguing it is useless because conflicts between NSAs and states around the world are extremely heterogeneous. Older history books on guerrilla warfare and insurgency deal with NSAs’ weaponry. Since the publication of these books, more recent important developments have shaped the arming of NSAs, such as global supply chains of weapons, transnational NSAs and suicide bombing. Dealing with multiple aspects of rebel groups these books could not elaborate on political and economic mechanisms that encourage or discourage the arming of NSAs.5 Post-9/11 books on NSAs focus on terrorism and terror groups, but barely cover the arming of NSAs; weapons are “easy to obtain,” is a common statement.6 A number of scholars offer detailed accounts of contemporary NSAs’ arming activity, but they are

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4 Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry, 39.
regionally based and because they analyze only one, or a few NSAs, lack comprehensive analysis.\(^7\)

The Small Arms Survey (SPIRI) is the major research center monitoring NSAs’ arming, providing detailed reports on arms smuggling across the world, mainly in war zones like Côte d’Ivoire, Congo DR, Sudan, Iraq, and Afghanistan and post war zones such as Cambodia. They are most interested in weapons designed for personal use while a number of military NSAs possess heavier weapon systems. SPIRI researches arms proliferation, gun violence, arms control and disarmament, therefore theorizing about NSAs’ arming is not the focus of its work. For instance, it does not question how NSAs’ operational approaches are affected by the acquisition of new weapon systems and how NSAs and their patrons use global trade to smuggle weapons. The implications of suicide bombing tactics on state-NSA conflicts are very briefly discussed as well as states which clandestinely supply weapons to client NSAs. The International Crisis Group (ICG) and the RAND Corporation publish manuscripts on security issues including arming of NSAs; mostly they cover specific groups and countries. Thus, existing publications and research on NSAs arming are incomplete or inadequate, and do not capture the complexity of the problem.\(^8\)

The thesis debates the concept of Martin Van Creveld and General Rupert Smith about the arming of NSAs that is part of their general theory about modern warfare. Both argue that post-World War Two warfare has particularly features conflicts between powerful states and weak NSAs. The former have been equipped with modern weapons systems based on state-of-the-art technology and the less sophisticated NSAs have possessed old light weapons and small arms. The military superiority of states does not guarantee victory over the much weaker NSAs and they have gone down in defeat.\(^9\) Martin Van Creveld has argued that twentieth century armed forces “are helpless in front of small groups of often ill trained, ill funded, ill equipped terrorists.”\(^10\) Similarly, General Rupert Smith argues that contemporary wars are waged “amongst the people”, between multinational coalitions of states and NSAs that might be parties to a civil war or an insurgency, whether operating as


\(^10\) Van Creveld, *Changing Face of War*, 264.
formed armies or guerillas or terrorist groups or the band of some warlord. NSAs are formless and ill armed. The AK-47 and the machete continue to kill people by the millions as well as the effective suicide bomber. They are the tools of war amongst the people.\textsuperscript{11} Still, the thesis debates that past and contemporary NSAs have not been a homogenous and monolithic category but extremely diverse especially regarding their weaponry. Today, some NSAs are well-funded and better-armed than the countries they are fighting or at least they are able to sustain longstanding conflict because of their advanced weapons. That affects the profile and outcomes of states-NSAs’ conflicts that are not linear.

This thesis is an attempt to construct a substantive theory explaining NSAs’ arming. The research questions how NSAs have acquired their weaponry through the history of rebellions, and how has globalization affected the way rebellious NSAs acquire arms. The survey examines both the arming of NSA through history and the importance of globalization. The research examines how, in each period, new military and general technologies affected NSAs’ arming and their role in illicit trade. Compared to previous works on NSAs and arms smuggling, the current thesis is a consistent historical check on NSAs’ arming methods, containing case studies from around the world, offering a holistic approach to NSAs’ military buildup that integrates the aspect of security with economic, political and cultural factors. The theory that emerges out of the data argues that rebellious NSAs have used similar methods of arming in different periods despite technological and political changes. This theory aims to be relevant and connected to events; one can use it to explain NSAs’ behavior, to interpret their arming policy and it can be varied and adjusted. By reviewing past and present insurrections and revolts from across the world, the thesis aims to be meaningful in a wide range of areas and understandable to all readers. Moreover, by examining the arming spectrum, the thesis could provide a unique historical account of state-NSA conflict, and highlight the need of the political science discipline to promote studies of political violence, terror and insurgency. The thesis is updated as of early 2014.\textsuperscript{12}

Armed NSAs are fighting governments and that influences all aspects of their activity. But unlike Van Creveld and Smith the current study is focused on NSAs instead of the Western armies. The study explores the uniqueness of different NSAs rather than presenting

them as a monolithic entity, believing this is the way to clarify the complicated field of NSAs and help to fight them.

**Theoretical Framework of the Thesis**

The thesis integrates two components: rebellious non-state-actors of different types and the arming activity of these NSAs. The thesis is primarily based on qualitative analysis resulting in theoretical-empirical generalities based upon the empirical picture. It is situated in relation to several principles and concepts:

**Military thought and theories on insurgency.** One component of the war system is NSAs’ acquisition of weapons; it is part of the buildup of their forces. By acquiring weapons, NSAs establish their military force so as to conduct operations. NSAs engage in small wars, also called low-intensity wars, against states. Both strategically and tactically, the small war has special features which directly influence NSAs’ arming efforts. At the outset of the conflict, governments have regular armies while rebel groups need to build a military force. When they do, the power balance between the two parties is weighted against the NSA because of its smaller size and types of material resources at its disposal in relation to those available to the state. As early as the eleventh century BC, a classic Chinese military book advised rebel movements to locate weapons in the immediate environment, arguing that military tools are to be found in ordinary human activity. NSAs require the ability to operate for a long period of time to practise the strategy of winning by not being beaten, to irritate enemy soldiers and undermine the civilian-political home fronts’ will to continue the fight. NSAs must sustain their forces including acquisition of arms and ammunition. In fighting small wars, NSAs focus on the psychological aspect which influences their arming activity. To illustrate this point, modern NSAs possess long-range rockets which could irritate and deter their foe.

In the twentieth century, NSAs became significant actors in world politics, being used by rival countries – mainly neighbors – against each other. Outside support of NSAs, especially in providing weapons was crucial for victory, and scholars argue that a rebellious NSA could defeat a state if supported by a patron state. For NSAs, external support is a

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precondition to move from guerrilla warfare to a higher form of operations, to create a regular army. Mao Tse-Tung emphasized the importance of a base area, often located in a neighboring country, where rebels organize the volunteers and improve their operational skills, while intensifying their attacks against the government. Rebels use the host country to stockpile weapons, maintain them, and smuggle weapons into the target state. In order to secure support, NSAs might need to adopt their backers’ agenda into their own. By accepting outside aid rebel groups lose some of their organizational autonomy. Moreover, rival states could prefer to attack each other with a proxy NSA.15

The systems theory. The system approach is a valuable tool to analyze the arming of NSAs which are dynamic entities operating in a chaotic system. They draw information from the environment, which causes them to evolve and change. Complex operations of arms smuggling in recent years could be explored by either the Systems of Systems (SOS) or Federation of Systems (FOS) models. Reflecting the global world, both describe how disparate, diverse, autonomous, and synchronized entities work together, without losing their individual sense of purpose, in order to realize some higher-level otherwise unattainable purpose.16

The role of globalization. Discussion on current arms smuggling is embedded in globalization issues, especially the question of the state system in a global world and time-space convergence. Using modern technologies, armed NSAs could target states’ interests across the world. Furthermore, advanced communication and transportation, global commerce and free trade agreements have dramatically improved NSAs’ capability of trafficking weapons over long distances, especially when they are assisted by a patron state’s logistic apparatus. Container shipping manifests the global economy and at the same time strengthens NSAs’ ability to threaten state security. The internet and mobile phones facilitate the command and control over NSAs’ operations including acquisition of weapons and sharing knowledge of how to build Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). The inevitability of data flowing across borders makes the task of controlling information almost impossible or, at the least, very costly. Yet modern technologies also improve states’ counter-smuggling

skills, targeting the arms cargoes of rebel groups. Being able to acquire weapons, transport and smuggle them into the target state, today’s NSAs, especially transnational NSAs, can pose significant security threats. The sovereign state remains the center of international politics, but it operates in a fast-changing global context. Many states fail to secure their borders against arms smuggling and cannot resolve smuggling problems by acting alone. Losing authority, these countries cannot secure their weapons arsenals which become the weapons source of rebel and criminal groups.  

The Methodology of the Thesis

Analyzing NSAs’ arming throughout the history of revolts and insurgency is too complex to be done according to dependent, independent and intervening variables. To illustrate this point, analyzing the arming of Palestinian militant groups in Gaza researchers should pay attention to the geography of the Gaza Strip, the political situation in Sudan, Eritrea and Yemen and the relations between Egypt and Israel. They should explore the culture of smuggling in the Horn of Africa and the Sinai Peninsula as well as the role of underground tunnels to the economy of Gaza. Thus, smuggling of Iranian weapons to Palestinian groups is much more than a case of state sponsorship.

The current thesis is influenced by a tradition of qualitative writing, especially grounded theory – formulating a question for research rather than hypothesis; focusing on the context and special features of different eras instead of universal explanations. The current thesis gathers data from various sources and analyzes that data; focusing on the manner in which the players interpret their environment; translating the data into insights and identifying the nexus between them. The inductive approach leads the current research; themes about NSAs are built “bottom-up,” by organizing the case studies of arms smuggling into increasingly more abstract units of information. Also, the research looks for clues to the existence, or the footprints, of important questions within the data. These questions derive from the literature, and from common sense, in order to avoid the problems associated with an inductive approach based solely upon what the analyst sees in the data. For example, how new military technologies facilitated the arming of NSAs; what are the characteristics of arms dealers and smugglers in different time periods; and what is the connection between the

17 Jarice Hanson, 24/7. How Cell Phones and the Internet Change the Way we Live Work and Play (Westport, CT: Prager, 2007), 17.
structure of NSAs and their military buildup. The historical account addresses these questions.19

The thesis demonstrates an emergent design because phases of the research process changed or shifted after the researcher entered the field and began to collect data. The original plan to focus on three contemporary NSAs while conducting a brief historical review was shifted to a more general analysis of present armed NSAs, supplemented by a much broader historical analysis. The research commenced with a theory testing approach (deductive), aiming to collect data on NSAs’ arming to test theories of globalization and guerrilla warfare. It was replaced with a theory of generation (inductive), combining the emerging findings with a number of theories to form the basis for a new theoretical explanation of the military buildup of NSAs.20

Initially, the researcher read major historical textbooks on guerrilla warfare and insurgency - Robert B. Asprey, “The Guerrilla in History”(1975), Walter Lacquer “Guerrilla”(1998) and Martin Van Creveld, “The Encyclopedia of Revolutions and Revolutionaries — From Anarchism to Zhou Enlai” (1996). These books provided the data base of armed NSAs from antiquity. The research examines every revolt and uprising, lasting three years or more. In the second phase, using primary and mainly secondary sources each case study was analyzed through the spectrum of arming of rebel groups. Data on more recent NSAs has been collected from general books about insurgency - Stephen Sloan, Sean K. Anderson, “The Historical Dictionary of Terrorism”(2009), Cindy C. Combs and Martin W. Slamm, “Encyclopedia of Terrorism,” (2009) and the United States State Department’s Country Report on Terrorism published annually. Data on the twenty-first century’s NSAs has been collected through major online news websites and secondary sources. Claims about states arming NSAs or NSAs smuggling arms have to be confirmed by at least two different sources. In total, the thesis reviews about one thousand cases of insurrections and revolts from approximately 2000 B.C. to 2014.21

The codification process of the data starts at an early stage. The unit of analysis is a single event or a number of arms smuggling events by an NSA. Arms acquisition of NSAs divides into four methods: self-production, stealing and looting, state sponsorship and illicit

19 Russel Bernard and Gery Ryan, Analyzing Qualitative Data Systematic Approaches (Los Angles: SAGE, 2010), 266.
20 Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry, 39.
21 Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry, 41.
arms trade that are assembled into two groups – domestic and external sources. For example, the method of outside support of an NSA could refer to a superpower, regional power, previous NSA state or another NSA. A long list of factors that influence arms smuggling emerges out of the data and categorized, such as the geography of the target states, the political regime under which the rebels operate, and domestic traditions.\textsuperscript{22} Different concepts evolve out of the cases, for instance, persistent principles affect NSAs’ arming, such as that rebels begin their armed struggle with any weapons they can find in the immediate environment. The research links data of different categories, for example, data about military technology comprises a cause of the method of arming by rebels and details about the political system of the target state explain the rebels’ method of arming. Saturation occurs when new cases of arms smuggling no longer require more testing.\textsuperscript{23}

The outcome is a substantive-level theory, that is, a theory developed for an empirical area of inquiry which is the military buildup of rebellious NSAs. The theory of NSAs’ arming is a combination of concepts (force buildup, force execution, smuggling, insurgency and terrorism), variables (outside support, political regime, military technology, geographical conditions, religious beliefs of the rebels and globalization) and propositions (such as contemporary NSAs that enjoy external military backup have a greater chance of sustaining a long-standing struggle and even defeating a government). The theory of NSAs’ arming does not come “off the shelf,” nor is it pre-defined but rather is generated from data in the case studies. This involved a “logic diagram,” where the researcher presents the actual theory in a visual mode, in this case general historical trends in arming methods of rebellious Non-State-Actors (Figure 3, p. 293).\textsuperscript{24}

This thesis is perhaps the first attempt to conduct a systematic historical review of the arming efforts of NSAs. Given the huge timeframe the author believes that any attempt to use specific hypotheses would be too limiting such as the suggestion that poor NSAs are more likely to be defeated; the argument that states are better armed than NSAs and NSAs acquire light weapons because they do not hold territory. Too many historical changes and intervening factors are involved. Still, the available literature about NSAs and the

\textsuperscript{23} Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry, 64, 160; Asher Shked, Words of meaning. Qualitative research- Theory and practice (Tel-Aviv: University of Tel-Aviv Publishing house, 2003), 143 (Hebrew).
\textsuperscript{24} Creswell, Qualitative Inquiry, 67.
globalization process suggests a number of propositions about the arming of NSAs that are examined through the study but without enforcing a narrow theoretical spectrum:

- The arming of NSAs in the pre-globalization era depended on sources they could find in their close environment and region, primarily self-production and looting and stealing.
- The arming of NSAs in the global era features more options due to advanced transportation and communication, especially acquisition of weapons through state sponsorship and overseas arms markets.
- The arming of NSAs in the pre-globalization era demonstrated relatively simple systems in terms of the number of role players, division of labor and geographical deployment.
- The arming of NSAs in the global era reflects more complex systems including many participants, division of labor that is more differential and larger geographical dispersion.

The Outline of the Chapters

Following the introduction, chapter one offers concepts and models of globalization and system theories, useful for the analysis of NSAs’ arming. The empirical research is divided into two parts: the first part focuses on the arming of NSAs in the pre-globalization era. It includes chapters two, three and four that explore rebel groups’ efforts to arm themselves from antiquity to the end of the Cold War (around 1990). Each chapter addresses questions of how the emergence of new military technologies influenced the arming efforts of NSAs and what role NSAs played in illicit trade. Each chapter discusses propositions about the complexity of arming activities of NSAs. The historical chapters establish the background for the second part of the thesis – the arming of NSAs in the globalization era – consisting of chapters six and seven that discuss current armed NSAs. These chapters review arming trends of NSAs in light of Van Creveld and Smith’s models of modern warfare. The eighth and final chapter of the thesis presents a theory of NSAs’ arming that explains how rebel groups acquire weapons over the history of warfare and the factors that have shaped this activity.

Chapter one presents some theories and models potentially useful for analyzing arming efforts of past and mainly present NSAs. Under the title “globalization” a number of theories
and concepts could help answer the questions why NSAs acquire weapons in a certain way and what stands behind their activity. These problems cannot be adequately studied at the level of nation states, that is, in terms of national society or inter-national relations. Rather, they need to be theorized in terms of transnational processes beyond the level of the nation state. The chapter introduces the concept of transnational social spaces and the model of globalization and globalization to analyze global arms smuggling. Another segment discusses the growing proliferation of conventional weapons as an outcome of global process while the United Nations has failed to monitor arming and disarming of NSAs. Globalization creates technological facilitators assisting NSAs to arm themselves. The chapter emphasizes how smugglers could easily exploit developments in aerial and maritime transportation, such as the use of containers and air delivery services. Arms smugglers and terrorists use wireless communication, mobile phones and the internet extensively, to execute complex operations. The chapter suggests examining complex operations of smuggling of weapons by NSAs as a System of Systems (SOS) or Federation of Systems (FOS). The chapter discusses the military theory of the jihadist strategic thinker, Abu Musab al Suri, who as early as 2000 was pressing a future generation of Jihadist operatives and recruiters toward a new modus operandi of terrorism based on globalized concepts.

Chapter two begins the historical review. It raises the question of how ancient rebels (slaves, vassal states, nomads) acquired their weaponry. Though using limited sources, the research finds that in ancient times rebels fought mostly with weapons they captured, produced or inherited and were taught to use from childhood. External support was less common and involved large forces from an ally or patron-state. Sometimes NSAs, rooted in a warlike tradition, introduced better weaponry than the state. Ancient NSAs’ main weakness was not necessarily shortage of arms but deficient organization and logistic capacity. The second part of the chapter discusses the engagements between medieval NSAs (peasants, people under foreign rule) and noble knights who were the military elite of that time armed with expensive weapons. A few popular movements whether of townspeople in the Low Countries, farmers in the Swiss valleys, or religious fanatics in Bohemia, showed that aristocratic armies of mounted knights could be effectively challenged. Those NSAs, although without military skills, effectively coordinated weapons and tactics that neutralized the knights’ advantages and exposed their weaknesses (being heavily equipped and vulnerable to missiles). These rebels used weapons they built using agriculture tools, such as
pole arms that combine a lance and an axe or mace, and which were efficient multi-purpose weapons. Skilled peasantarchers used the longbow.

Covering the history of rebellion from the late fifteenth century to the earlytwentieth century, **chapter three** interprets the role of NSAs’ arming in light of dramatic events, namely the discovery of the New World and early colonialism through the French Revolution and up to the Russian Revolution. It addresses the question of how the arming of rebel groups integrated with the emergence of various NSAs (native people fighting colonialism, religious groups, former slaves and international and revolutionary groups), new military technologies (firearms), and the rise of transatlantic trade. From the early Modern World the military balance between states and NSAs shifted further against the latter, because government armies and military industry controlled the production of firearms, followed by heavier and more complicated weapon systems (artillery). In later times this development served rebel groups because for the first time gunpowder made it possible to impart unfamiliar military skills to men who were themselves generally unaccustomed by upbringing to warfare. Lacking modern weaponry rebel groups of the New World were still subordinated to the principle of self-reliance in their military buildup and could not be a realmatch for the Great European powers. In a few cases native people sustained long wars against stronger European armies due to political and economic mechanisms, such as conflict between European rulers who recruited, armed and trained enslaved Africans and their descendants in the Americas, using them against each other. European traders enthusiastically traded firearms for lucrative commodities with native people. The last segment of the chapter discusses how the invention of high explosives affected the rise of modern terrorism.

**Chapter four** reveals dramatic changes in NSAs’ arming in light of European colonialism. NSAs faced stronger industrialized armies of European powers from the nineteenth century. Mass production of ammunition, necessary for lengthy conflicts, posed new challenges for NSAs with limited resources. For rebellious NSAs, self-production of weapons became a minor channel of arming themselves while external support became a vital one. The weakness in weaponry of most native peoples in Asia, Africa and Oceania facilitated the colonization of their continents. Yet the possession of sophisticated new firearms did not always guarantee success against indigenous weaponry and tactics. In South Africa, the Northwest Frontier of India and Southeast Asia, local armies and rebels lost the war, but not before they first offered ferocious resistance, challenging the prevailing assumption about the superiority of Western arms in the modern world. Assisted by supplies
of traditional weapons, geography, warfare traditions and better tactics, their knowledge of the terrain and high morale could balance NSAs’ inferiority in technology, weaponry and organization.

In the first half of the twentieth century NSAs’ arming challenges increased with the introduction of more sophisticated weapon systems - tanks, submarines, aircraft carriers, and mainly fighter aircraft. NSAs could no longer imitate the state military arsenal by themselves. According to chapter five, for victory, NSAs had to change their arming strategies. They could secure external support, from direct military involvement of a patron to covert supply of arms and ammunition only. Using examples from Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America, chapter five demonstrates how during the Cold War superpower intervention (the Soviet Union and the United States) dramatically improved NSAs’ forces, because of their great logistic capabilities and access to advanced weapon systems.

Chapter six focuses on the extent to which contemporary states provide weapons to rebellious NSAs. Using a survey the chapter demonstrates that the end of the Cold War resulted in a decline in state sponsorship. Cutting military aid, the superpowers and host countries of NSAs played an important role in ending state-NSA wars or encouraging rival sides to initiate peace talks, as in West Africa and Southeast Asia. Indirectly, governments are still deeply involved in arming NSAs using proxies, arms dealers and criminal groups to support NSAs. A major example is the weapons China and Pakistan supply to ethnic and religious-based insurgent groups fighting the government of India. States differ in the level of military support they offer to friendly NSAs. An extreme example is Iran’s military support of radical Islamic NSAs, mainly the Lebanese Hezbollah, rooted in religious motives. Hezbollah is probably the best armed NSA today. In the last decade both Iran and Syria supplied the organization with weapon systems characterizing regular armies such as surface-to-surface missiles, middle range rockets and anti-ship missiles. The research argues that Hezbollah is an operational extension of the Iranian regime rather than a regular alliance.

Chapter seven presents major trends in contemporary NSAs’ arming activities, many of which are products or manifestations of globalization. Aside from a major special case like Hezbollah, black arms markets have become the major source of weapons for NSAs. The most important are located in Southeast Asia, Yemen and East Africa, the Balkans, Libya and the United States. They connect transnational, heterogeneous and complex networks, integrated with trade in illicit goods, mainly the narcotics trade. Based on detailed research,
the chapter draws smuggling routes and describes exchange relations between rebellious NSAs and criminal syndicates. Privatization of transportation services and the rise of global trade provide more opportunities to camouflage military cargoes. The final section of the chapter focuses on IEDs and terror tactics that reduce the power imbalance between contemporary states and NSAs. The new transnational global jihad networks led by al Qaeda have employed suicide attacks, escalating explosives’ effects. Using the advantages of globalization, radical Islamic groups are sharing explosive skills, and collaborating in terror plots all over the world. But these NSAs are also being targeted by governments, using advanced surveillance technologies.

Chapter eight presents the outcome of the research – a comprehensive theory of NSAs’ arming. The theory argues that in spite of dramatic social and technological changes, rebel groups in different eras have employed similar methods of acquiring weapons. Self-production, looting and stealing, external support and arms trade were always the major method for NSAs to acquire armaments, though the importance of each method and the type of arms changed radically over time. The military buildup of rebellious NSAs has been influenced by consistent principles. A significant principle states that throughout history empires and greatpowers armed NSAs, using them against enemies, and occasionally these groups turned their weapons against their patrons. The thesis finds four other categories of factors that have changed the arming of NSAs: the type of NSA and its operational approach, the emergence of new weapon systems, the political framework, and social and cultural aspects. These factors shifted the focus of NSAs’ arming in different periods. The chapter debates that globalization has significantly improved NSAs’ opportunities to acquire weapons, smuggling them over long distances. Some NSAs are better armed than the armies they are fighting. The growing involvement of NSAs in trading of narcotics has provided in substantial funds to purchase weapons. But as weapons are physical objects, globalization cannot erase the subordination of weapons smuggling to time and space. States use surveillance technologies to intercept arms shipments. The final segment of the chapter discusses connections between the thesis and contemporary military thought. The thesis criticizes current approaches about a-symmetric wars and global Jihad terror. Rebellious NSAs are an old phenomenon and a diverse category, only changing their tactics. Many of today’s NSAs are well funded and armed, departing from the classical image of the guerrilla group.

Chapter One: Globalization as a Facilitator for NSAs’ Arms Smuggling
Introduction

Ritzer defines globalization as “the worldwide diffusion of practices, expansion of relations across continents, organization of social life on a global scale, and growth of a shared global consciousness.” General notions of global-ness have a long history, but talk of “globality” (the conditions) and “globalization” (the trend) has mainly arisen since 1980. The concept of globalization originally started as a description of the development of financial markets,
and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines globalization as “a process by which markets and production in different countries are becoming increasingly interdependent due to dynamics of trade in goods and services and then flows of capital and technology.”

There is considerable disagreement as to the beginning, pace, and significance of globalization. Some scholars predict a “borderless world” and global homogeneity with a single global society in the end. They portray an evolutionary process where society has evolved from tribal to national to regional and now to a global scale. Other theorists doubt whether globalization is “real,” arguing that trade and exchange of goods have taken place between states for many years, and events in one area have always had consequences for other areas, but because of poor communication it was not known. They claim that the globalization thesis is overstated and the processes it describes are not unprecedented. All globalization approaches agree that many important contemporary problems cannot be adequately studied at the level of nation states, that is, in terms of a national society or international relations. Rather, they need to be theorized in terms of globalizing (transnational) processes beyond the level of the nation state. Anthony Giddens notes that globalization is more than an economic process; it is also political, technological, cultural and economic. Globalization is a complex set of processes, not a single one, that operate in a contradictory or oppositional fashion. NSAs’ force buildup is connected to many of these processes.

Scholars make comparisons between globalization and similar terms to highlight the uniqueness of globalization and this comparison could enhance understanding of the meaning of globalized arms smuggling. For example, Scholte’s globalization theory challenges the categorization of arms smuggling as a globalized activity. He argues that the fact that people

30Larry Ray, Globalization and Everyday Life (Oxon, UK: Routledge, 2007), 24-26; Jonathan Friedman. “The Hybridization of Roots and the Abhorrence of the Bush,” in Modernities, Class, and the Contradiction of Globalization. The Anthropology of Global Systems, eds. Ekholm-Fridman, Kaja and Jonathan Friedman (Plymouth, UK: AltaMira Press, 2008), 296-297. There is no consensus about the time when globalization began. Some scholars argue that globalization began in the sixteenth century, following the first circumnavigation of the earth in 1519 to 1521. Others believe that globalization began after World War One with the establishment of the League of Nations or after World War Two with the establishment of the United Nations. Some even argue that there was just as much globalization in the nineteenth century as there is today. They bring evidence that the world economy was more integrated in the late nineteenth century than it is today. Also, in the 1890s the emigration rates out of Europe were proportionally higher than today (one million people a year after 1900); Jaffe D. Eugene, Globalization and Development (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2006), 17-18; Friedman, “The Hybridization of Roots,” 296-299.  
are smuggling weapons all over the world (universalization) and delivering arms across borders and between countries (internationalization) does not mean that arms smuggling is a globalized activity. Arms smuggling is a globalized phenomenon when it is understood in spatial terms as the spread of transplanetary and supraterritorial connections between people. That is, people who are located at points anywhere on earth could smuggle arms together, and the smuggling could transcend territorial geography. In this case, the smugglers are relatively dissociated from territory and their activity has qualities of transworld simultaneity (the smugglers could act across the planet at the same time), and transworld instantaneity (the smugglers could move rapidly anywhere). Yet Scholte emphasizes that territorial domains remain very important, subsequently influencing NSAs that conduct smuggling activity through hostile countries. Scholte rejects the idea of a “borderless world” where territory has become irrelevant. Moreover, the addition of supraterritorial qualities of geography has not eliminated the territorial aspects; for example the reappearance of regionalization within a state or as a trans-state. According to Scholte, social space in today’s world is both territorial and supraterritorial, and the relative simplicity of a territoralist-statist-nationalist world is fading.32

Likewise, D’Andrea distinguishes between “transnational” and “global”: the former refers to processes anchored across the borders of a few nation-states (such as the smuggling of drugs from Egypt to Israel and from the latter to Lebanon), whereas the latter refers to decentralized processes that develop away from the space of the national (such as a multinational network of drug traffickers who operate in many countries). Globalization is an organization of diversity, an increasing interconnectedness of varied local cultures, and a culture without a clear anchorage in any one territory. NSAs operate both as global and transnational organizations, because some NSAs are transnational, such as the al Qaeda organization, and NSAs conduct global efforts to smuggle weapons.33

32 Scholte, Globalization, 49-79.
**Globalization and Technological Facilitators**

Globalization could facilitate arms smuggling (as it facilitates smuggling of drugs and illegal workforces) because it transcends borders between states. Globalization breaks down traditional barriers between countries thus allowing the movement of goods, capital, people, and information. This process has sped up dramatically as technological advances make it easier for people to travel, communicate, and to do business internationally. NSAs are among the beneficiaries of the globalized era: they can easily transfer money from one side of the globe to the other to fund arms acquisition plans. They use computers, digital technologies and the Internet to plan and coordinate specific attacks as well as to mobilize support and influence perceptions of the conflict. They use mobile phones to coordinate operations in isolated areas and use the same tool to detonate bombs. They exploit transportation systems to get almost everywhere they want, and to transfer military equipment for their operations and buildup of forces. The following section attempts to address the question how modern technologies of transportation and communication have created better conditions for NSAs to smuggle weapons.34

**Transportation development and globalization**

Transportation is concerned with the movement of goods including weapons and people between different locations and the systems used for this movement. *Transport geography* is the study of the spatial aspects of transport. Transport is inherently spatial, as it develops because people and goods need to move from one location to another. People are rarely located in the same places as the things they want or need, and transport systems are, at their most basic, an expression of a need to link supply and demand; they are the manifestation of people`s desire to access goods, services and each other.35 Globalization is driven primarily by advances in technology, including transportation. Some scholars argue that without advanced technologies there would be no globalization. Both states and NSAs use transportation technologies to access weapons.36

Transportation has a role in facilitating trade and national development in the context of a globalized economy; in the same manner it has a role in illicit arms trade using new

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34Eugene, 1–4; Hanson, 24/7, 123.
Transportation is a key element for NSAs’ survival. The classical art of war argues that to defeat an enemy an army has to block the enemy’s access to its supply, and to prevent the enemy from using transportation and supply routes. Military history including guerrilla wars has clearly shown that the battle over transportation routes is vital for defeating the enemy, whether it is a conventional army or an insurgency. Harkabi argues that guerrilla groups capture their foes’ weapons and do not use long supply routes, but contemporary NSAs traffic heavy weapons systems from overseas, making them vulnerable to interception. Therefore, the interaction between transportation and the processes of globalization has a great impact on NSAs’ freedom of action. The increasing efficiency of transportation systems over time has resulted in increased time-space convergence, and thus greater integration over time.  

New developments in maritime transportation can serve NSAs’ efforts to acquire weapons. Globalization is the realm of maritime shipping, with containerized shipping at the forefront of the process. The container is useful to facilitate transfers between ports where the most important function in international transportation becomes transshipment. At the same time, the container can be an instrument of instability. Maritime transport is at the core of global freight distribution in terms of its unparalleled physical capacity and ability to carry freight over long distances and at low costs. Shipping is less limited by size constraints than other modes, and a bigger consignment does not necessarily imply a higher tariff. The maritime industry has changed substantially in recent decades. From an industry that was always international in its character, maritime transport has become a truly global entity with routes that span hemispheres, forwarding raw materials, parts and finished goods. In fact, it is one of the most globalized industries in existence. The illicit trade of goods including weapons is part of this process. The possibility of delivering weapon systems in kits rather than as finished systems and platforms facilitates the diffusion in production processes and

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components. For example, the Palestinian Hamas smuggled Iranian rockets in kits through tunnels into Gaza. Thus, Hoovestal argues that the container has reduced obstacles to global trade but can also be viewed as facilitating the activities of NSAs such as pirates, criminal syndicates, and international terrorists. These activities reveal the inadequacy of conventional national security structures that is based on the modern nation-state system.\(^{40}\)

The global maritime transport system is composed of a series of major gateways granting access to major production and consumption regions. Between those gateways are major hubs acting as points of interconnection and transshipment between systems of maritime circulation. It is no surprise that maritime transport was the first mode to pursue containerization since it is the most constrained by loading and unloading operations. Specifically, by placing goods including weapons in large sea containers of roughly uniform shape and size, containerization reduces the amount of time spent loading and unloading ships. Huge cranes specially built to lift, maneuver, and stack containers can empty and then freshly load a large ship in a remarkably short time. If ships spend less time in port, they can spend more time in transit, thus shortening the amount of time it takes to transport goods, allowing the shippers to charge less. That serves arms smugglers who face great security risks.\(^{41}\) Containerization also affects the links between forms of sea and land transport. Containers lifted from a ship’s hold can be placed directly onto rail cars or flatbed trucks achieving dramatic savings in costs and time compared to previous practices. Container ports, such as those in the Far East and in the Persian Gulf, have become important nodes within logistics networks. They have extended the boundaries of their interests to encompass the regional and/or global scale to such an extent that many of today’s major port operators have evolved to the level of multinational corporations. Infrastructural development has given international shipping lines greater choice than they would otherwise possess as to which ports they call at. Also, the entire transport sequence is now seen as a whole, rather than as a series of stages. There is a clear trend involving the growing level of integration between maritime transport and inland freight transport systems.\(^{42}\)


\(^{41}\)Rodrigue and Browne, “Introduction,” 163-164.

Hoovestal explains that international trade is less transparent and being exploited by NSAs because of the huge volume, the increase in the number of traders, the increase in the diversity of freight forwarders, and the growth in the number of flags of convenience. Links in the global supply chain have become increasingly open and thus susceptible to exploitation by NSAs. Goods move with little regard to borders; contraband moves readily together with legitimate trade, and it has become another set of commodities to be shipped and sold. For example, Lo notes that the Hong Kong Customs Department has foiled many attempts by Chinese criminal elements to smuggle firearms to foreign countries and criminal syndicates via the port of Hong Kong, one of the busiest container-ship ports in the world. Hoovestal notes that the Chinese resist American initiatives to tighten the inspection of container shipping, probably because China is involved in shipping illicit materials like missiles components for Iran.\(^{43}\)

NSAs smuggle weapons by air too. Although in terms of tonnage air transportation carries an insignificant amount of freight (five percent of total tonnage) compared with maritime transportation, its importance in terms of the total value of the global trade is much more significant: about thirty five percent annually as of late 2013. Air cargo is oriented towards high value or time sensitive products, including sensitive weapons systems. New aircraft are often more fuel-efficient than their predecessors, require less maintenance, carry more freight, and travel greater distances. Nowadays, the decreasing cost of transportation, and the increased speed at which goods can be transported has allowed some African countries, for instance, to export goods one would have considered impossible only a few decades ago. People in European cities can buy fresh flowers shipped from southern Africa, for example. However, the same aircraft could deliver weapons for an NSA or be used as a killing machine, as in the Al Qaeda attack on the United States in 2001.\(^{44}\) Technology can also make the goods themselves lighter and smaller, and therefore easier to transport. Airline freight operations are shared between integrators companies such as FedEx UPS and DHL which have global networks, and combination carriers which use dedicated freighters as well

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as considerable belly-hold freight capacity of wide-bodied passenger aircraft. NSAs can use the commercial cargo companies to smuggle multipurpose equipment that could serve terrorism such as electronics and computers. Armed NSAs use the expansion and privatization of air transport to expand and conceal delivery of military hardware.45

Smuggling and storing of weapons is a logistic activity. New modes of production of goods are connected with new modes of distribution, which introduces the realm of logistics, the science of physical distribution. Logistics concerns all the activities required for goods to be made available on markets, with purchase, order processing, inventory management and transport among the most relevant. International transportation is shifting to meet the increasing needs of organizing and managing its flows through logistics. It involves a wide set of activities dedicated to the transformation and distribution of goods, from raw material sourcing to final market distribution as well as related information flows. Logistics represents the material and organizational support of globalization. It has taken an increasingly important role in the global economy, supporting a wide array of commodity chains. The logistic apparatus is one of the centers of gravity of any NSA.46

International transportation of weapons and other goods too takes place at the highest levels of mobility that involve intercontinental and inter-regional movements. Globalization processes have extended considerably the need for international transportation, notably because of economic integration, which grew on par with the fragmentation of production systems and the expansion of international trade. Both processes are interdependent and require an understanding of the transactional context in which multinational corporations are now evolving. The heightened integration and efficiency has been expanded by logistics. Hoovestal argues that governments find it increasingly difficult to engage in activities that have traditionally been understood to be within their regulatory portfolio, including controlling the movement of goods. The implication for rebellious NSAs is the opportunity to acquire and smuggle large shipments of arms and ammunition.47

Mark Brawley, Politics of Globalization, The Politics of Globalization: Gaining Perspective, Assessing Consequences (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 25; Lutz and Lutz, 30; Graham and Goetz, “Global Air Transport,” 150-153; Jeffrey Price and Jeffrey Forrest, Practical Aviation Security: Predicting and Preventing Future Threats (Waltham, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2012), 372. Yet many major air carriers remain wholly or partially government-owned while there are still significant constraints on foreign shareholdings in airlines. This situation imposes silent constraints on the sector’s ability to respond to globalization.46

Rodrigue Comtois and Slack, Geography, 205-206; Rodrigue and Browne, “Introduction,” 157.

Rodrigue, Comtois and Slack, Geography, 194; Hoovestal, Globalization, 86.

46Rodrigue Comtois and Slack, Geography, 205-206; Rodrigue and Browne, “Introduction,” 157.
47Rodrigue, Comtois and Slack, Geography, 194; Hoovestal, Globalization, 86.
Information and Communication Revolutions

NSAs benefit from the information and communication revolution which began in the late twentieth century, because it reduces obstacles to interactions between people and business that were previously separated in distance or time. According to Giddens, globalization means *transformation of time and space* and “actions at distance.” Some scholars see the introduction of the World Wide Web (www) in the mid-1990s as the *main technological enabler* and driver of Globalization. Rebellious NSAs optimize the advantages and opportunities offered by the new modes of information collection and interaction. Hanson argues that new information and communication technologies enhance NSAs’ organizational and operational capabilities and strengthen their cohesion. Hoffman uses the phrase “revolution in terrorist communication”, noting that NSAs were quick to exploit the strengths of the Internet. The Internet has proved to be an especially beneficial communication medium for terrorists and insurgents – a key means for both external (propaganda) and internal (command and control and information) purposes. The following thesis is interested in the internal aspect.

Wireless communication

Communication, one of the basic features of any weapon system, is a channel to deliver information and commands among the operatives, and to coordinate within a single weapon system and between the latter and other weapon systems. As an NSA becomes larger it uses more communication channels, and it depends heavily on the functioning of the communication systems.

Wireless communication networks are diffusing around the world faster than any other communication technology to date. Digital technologies have been a major factor in increasing the speed and extent of social communications, and in many ways they epitomize

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49Hanson, 24/7, 122.
52Eado Hact, *Basic Terms in Military and in the Art of War*(Tel-Aviv: IDF, 2005), 41 (Hebrew).
the process of globalization itself. The Interpersonal Communication Technology (ICT) revolution is sometimes seen as the fifth revolution, increasing the speed and ease of communication between institutions, governments, firms, citizens, as well as NSAs, with immense implications for social life. The ICT facilitates the activity and the organization of global terrorism because it collapses distance while hugely proliferating the social contacts and networks available. Societies in the past have existed in socially organized space, which is being changed by methods of communication such as emails, Skype, chat rooms – all of which mediate between the local and the global in complex ways. The Internet is at the same time the most globalized and the most private intimate space often accessed in a solitary setting, and that facilitates the activity of NSAs.

Giddens argues that the communication revolution alters the ways in which people experience space and time, with important consequences for coordination, social cohesion, and the management of daily life activities. The development from printing to electronic mail and satellite transmission has significantly increased the level of information about other parts of the world. The association of the communication revolution with computerization creates a new world, with instantaneous information and an intensifying globalization. Social relations, which previously took place in a local context, are dissolved and reorganized across time and space. It is an intensification of worldwide social relations that connect distant localities in such a way that local relations and occurrences are shaped by events taking place thousands of kilometers away.

NSAs as operational entities benefit from the development of interpersonal communication across distance, mainly when they operate simultaneously across many countries and employ a decentralized structure. Being borderless, timeless, impersonal and anonymous, the Internet provides unlimited opportunities for NSAs’ activities including keeping in contact with each other, obtaining and sharing information, recruiting personnel, organizing operations, instructing operatives and promoting their policies. The virtual communities are fluid and without visual cues about the browsers, which creates new possibilities for falsifying the self. Frequently the Internet is a starting point for offline relationships; it provides a medium in which people engage in a communicative process of

55Giddens, Runaway World, 92-93, 174. Ling and Campbell, Reconstruction of Space, 251.
56Ray, Globalization, 134.
building up trust, and of exploring the other in relation to their reflexively constructed needs and desires. Hanson notes that the global network of communication makes transnational activities of all kinds easier and cheaper, creating more opportunities for non-territorial based activities, communication, and identities. Internet communication has become the main communication system of transnational terror NSAs like al Qaeda, because it is safer and more anonymous if they take the right precautions. Still, NSAs transfer weapons from one place to another, implying that even in the Internet era things have to happen in particular places and objects exist in a spatiotemporal relation to one another. ⁵⁷

NSAs’ activities are largely associated with an influential aspect of the communication revolution - cellular phones. In light of mobile communication people have changed their perception of coordination and control across time and space. An analysis of al Qaeda terrorist attacks, for example, reveals the vital role of mobile phones in planning, coordinating and implementing sophisticated terror operations. ⁵⁸

The use of mobile phones is part of a larger shift in the social order from placed-based sociability to decentralized, flexible network nodes supported by numerous transportation and communication technologies. The communication revolution embodies unique qualities that manifest in particular ways throughout social life, chiefly mobility. Mobility lowers the threshold for communication by loosening the traditional constraints of space and time. Mobile communication has meant that people call specific individuals, not general places. Regardless of where people are and where their intended interlocutor is, they are able to make contact, and instead of agreeing on a particular time to meet, people can iteratively work out the most convenient time and place to meet. For arms smugglers who need to be mobile and are organized as a network these technologies are crucial. ⁵⁹ Some communication theorists argue that the technology has become such a personal artifact that the lines distinguishing object from subject become blurred. Moreover, the personalization of mobile communication technology alters how people relate not only to the technology, but to space, time, and each other, often resulting in increased social cohesion. Therefore, the mobile phone does not

⁵⁷Hanson, 24/7, 3, 123.
⁵⁹Karatzogianni, Politics of Cyberconflict, 2, 255.
contribute to autonomy, but rather to group integration. Both traits are *preconditions* for complex smuggling operations.\(^{60}\)

The freedom of contact provided by the mobile phone allows people to free themselves from the place-based context of their interaction, shifting their frame of reference to the communication itself; that is, to a space of communication flows. This is a crucial issue for arms smugglers who stay on the road most of the time, and travel through insecure lands. The diffusion of mobile communication does not cancel space, but creates a new space that is local and global at the same time. Castells and others call it “space of flows”. Serving NSAs’ control capabilities, places are individualized and networked along the specific networks of individual practices, and they become a backdrop of communication, rather than the locality of communication.\(^{61}\)

**Information revolution**

The Internet serves NSAs’ operational requirements as an information space. Arriving in the early 1990s, the Web is an Internet service that functions as a hypermedia information management system for the purpose of global information sharing. Computers and networking fundamentally changed the way information could be stored, reuse and shared, while the Internet and management systems made the information findable, accessible, and searchable. Bernnres-Lee, the founder of the Web, argues that “the Web was not a physical thing that existed in a certain place. It was a space in which information could exist.” Some of the core requirements for the Web serve NSAs’ modus operandi, such as network accessibility, decentralized control, widespread data access and privacy.\(^{62}\) NSAs could easily find on the Internet information about transportation facilities, power plants, ports, and other vital centers, and access satellite maps. To illustrate this point, the investigation of the 9/11 terror attacks reveals that the Hamburg cell led by Mohammed Atta was systematically using the Web to organize the attacks, such as finding flight schools in the United States, casing potential targets, and booking flights. For security reasons, the terrorists rarely used their private PCs from home, but more often visited internet cafes and libraries.\(^{63}\)

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\(^{60}\) Karatzogianni, *Politics of Cyberconflict*, 12, 255.

\(^{61}\) Castells et al., *Mobile Communication*, 171-172.


\(^{63}\) Karatzogianni, *Politics of Cyberconflict*, 161; Hanson, 24/7, 123.
Communication and information integrate through mobile phones that offer Internet and camera services (the iPhone). Laptop computers are now equipped with a variety of wireless options to connect the user with the Web. Hanson calls it “a trend toward convergence,” by combining personal computing and mobile technologies in a way no device has done before. NSAs exploit this revolution for planning and conducting operations.\textsuperscript{64} Information and communication technologies are rapidly evolving and Hoffman assesses that this evolutionary process will continue, even changing the nature of terrorism itself. Using sophisticated communication in quality, content, and transmission capacity, terror groups could improve their operational skills.\textsuperscript{65}

\textbf{Proliferation of Conventional Weapon Systems}

In a global world NSAs have greater opportunities to acquire weapons, owing to intensive production and export of weapons around the world. Anthony Giddens describes a new military order as consisting of the industrialization of war, the flow of weaponry and techniques of military organization from some parts of the world to others, and the alliances which states build with one another. As a result of the massive destructive power of modern weaponry, almost all states possess military strength far in excess of that of even the largest of pre-modern civilizations. Many economically weak underdeveloped countries are militarily powerful. Giddens argues that regarding weapons there is no “Third World,” only a “First World,” since most countries maintain stocks of technologically advanced armaments and have modernized the military in a thorough way. Even the possession of nuclear weapons is not confined to the Super Powers.\textsuperscript{66} Martell articulates the problem from a post-Marxist view: he blames the rich and industrialized countries (mainly the United States, the top arms exporter, accounting for thirty percent of world deliveries) that while they are enjoying a peaceful environment, by selling ever more dangerous and destructive weapons to poorer countries who are conflict-ridden, they are enabling war in these regions. The arms trade is a profit-making enterprise in which capitalist corporations develop products for sale on the

\textsuperscript{64}Hanson, 24/7, 87-88.
\textsuperscript{65}Hoffman, Inside Terrorism, 228.
\textsuperscript{66}Giddens, Runaway World, 250-251.
market to be bought by states or other actors. The arms trade is a form of capitalist globalization.⁶⁷

*The Stockholm International Peace Research Institution (SIPRI) yearbook 2011* highlights the growing challenges to monitoring armaments and disarmament in a globalized era. The report argues that the world is changing faster than established security-related institutions and processes, which struggle to cope with the destabilizing results of the current time, including problems such as cyber-attacks, climate change, unregulated migration, transnational criminal activity, the proliferation of sensitive technologies, and illicit transfers of weapons, drugs and money.⁶⁸ Proliferation is associated with several strategic overlapping processes at national and international levels, which could explain the diffusion of conventional weapons to NSAs:

- **The growth of NSAs and quasi-state actors** in influencing and even shaping the global and regional security scene. These actors have managed to equip themselves with quality arms that they acquired from friendly states, arms markets and local depots. Also, to form an insurgency, to enable it to survive, and to weaken the government small arms and explosives are enough. A good illustration is the Afghan Taliban, carrying modest weapons, who maintain a lengthy war against the much stronger American army.⁶⁹

- **The growing intrastate conflicts.** The SIPRI reports that of the 29 major armed conflicts in the world in 2001-2011, only two were fought between states; the other 27 conflicts in this period were within states and involved a state actor in conflict with at least one armed NSA over a territory or over government. Karp had already described in the mid-1990s that since the end of the Cold War ethnic conflicts have become the most common form of warfare and it is almost certain to stay that way, for example the civil war in Sudan and the continuous conflict between government and insurgents in

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⁶⁸SIPRI Yearbook 2011, 11.  
Afghanistan, Somalia and Iraq. In light of the internal political crisis dominating the Arab World from 2011, this phenomenon has escalated further. According to the SIPRI report although the trade in major weapon systems continues, it has lost most of its military and strategic importance. Instead it is the trade in small and light weapons that poses the most immediate threat to human well-being and international stability, as these weapons are the most suitable for, and by far more deadly in, ethnic wars, rather than more sophisticated weapons.  

- **The rise of transnational threats.** Thachuk regards proliferation of weapons as a transnational security challenge in a global world, similar to human trafficking, illicit monetary transactions, terrorism and the drugs trade. Arms smuggling cuts across national borders and therefore is frequently beyond the control of national governments. Arms smuggling has been amplified by globalization of economic activity and communications as well as weak governments in a large number of states, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and the unstable regions from North Africa, through the Middle East, South Asia, Central Asia and Southeast Asia. She argues that arms smuggling has been overlooked as matter of domestic security or as outside the purview of structures more traditionally devoted to national security.

- **The prosperity of the global arms industry** in spite of the global economic recession. This trend is associated with the emergence of global and regional powers, such as China and India, which have dramatically increased their military spending and have developed an advanced domestic military industry. By 2013, China had become the fifth largest arms exporter; India and China are the top two arms importers. The new actors in the arms trade market have been looking for external markets and have been willing to export destabilizing technologies into regions of conflict, such as North Korea, since the 1980s selling Scud missiles and missiles production technologies to Iran and Syria, who later supplied Scud missiles to the Hezbollah.

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report refers mainly to top American arms-producing companies, and Martell describes the process that has allowed the arms trade to become more commercial and privatized, and where increasingly the contractors are agencies rather than governments.\textsuperscript{72} But in recent years almost every state, even very poor ones such as Sudan, and some NSAs (such as Palestinian militant groups in Gaza), have developed within their limited resources a domestic arms industry that produces light weapons, explosives, and rockets.\textsuperscript{73} Karp argues that an era of ethnic conflict implies the irrelevance of major powers and highly advanced states, and this is a field in which small countries with archaic industries can directly affect global welfare. Their goal is to maintain national security and to secure the military supply, especially if they are isolated states that are subjected to an arms embargo, such as North Korea and Eritrea. For countries with regional ambitions, such as Iran and Egypt, an indigenous arms industry can tip the balance of power in their favor and engender prestige and nationalist pride.\textsuperscript{74}

- **New sources of weapons arsenals.** The collapse of the USSR and the Eastern Bloc in the late 1980s resulted in the willingness of the new regimes to sell virtually anything short of weapons of mass destruction to anyone with the money to buy.\textsuperscript{75} This was a good opportunity for the arming efforts of NSAs; for example in recent years unconfirmed reports claimed that Hezbollah smuggled an anti-air missiles system from a Ukraine firm through the Balkans. Springe and others regard the widespread availability of weapons, mass-produced during the cold war in the Soviet Union, as a contributor to the emergence of the global jihad in the Middle East, Central Asia and Southeast Asia. Many of the weapons left from previous wars found their way to arms markets that serve NSAs’ smugglers, such as weapons left from the civil war in Yemen and American weapons that were left in Vietnam.\textsuperscript{76} Tsagourias and White are skeptical that international arms control will be efficient, “in the

\textsuperscript{72}Martell, Sociology, 301.
\textsuperscript{73}Martell, Sociology, 7-8, 231-234.
\textsuperscript{74}Karp, “Arms Trade,” 59-60.
\textsuperscript{75}Karp, “Arms Trade,” 59-60.
face of a post-Cold War world awash with conventional arms fuelled by a market-driven arms industry.” 78

- The increasing incorporation of civilian technology into the military sphere. Over recent decades the relationship between technology in the civilian and defense sectors has been reversed. It is not the defense community that is generating spinoffs for the civilian population, but the commercial arena that is producing an increasing amount of technology that is being incorporated into the design of weapons and other military equipment. Inertial navigation systems, communication systems and electro-optic systems are only a few examples of dual use equipment which is produced by civilian industry and therefore an NSA could purchase it more easily.79 Martell notes that the overseas production being established with more licensing of production but limited regulation, is another factor for the global diffusion of arms so that more and more actors are able to obtain them. 80

After years of debate, in April 2013, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the landmark Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), regulating the international trade in conventional arms. The treaty faces serious problems because major arms suppliers of NSAs, such as Iran and Syria (who were among the few states voting against the treaty) have not yet signed the treaty. According to the treaty, states will not provide weapons to governments who abuse human rights, or to terror groups. But the reports on weapons deliveries rely on country-members’ goodwill, lacking an enforcement mechanism. 81 Against this background, SIPRI editors admit that many of the organizations that are tasked with promoting peace and security find it increasingly difficult to generate the necessary political will and financial resources needed to meet their mandates. Another explanation is a lack of political will to establish governance mechanisms. Moodie explains this situation in that Western governments see the non-proliferation of conventional weapons as falling in the ‘too hard’

79Moodie, “Beyond Proliferation,” 74-75.
80Martell, Sociology, 77, 299.
category, whereas developing states consider arms control alien and not a high priority. The latter see arms control initiatives by the developed countries as an attempt to interfere with their national security needs. The North-South tension over arms control and nonproliferation makes it easier for NSAs to maintain their force buildup. Additional constraints are the argument of the legitimate right of developing states and NSAs to self-defense, and pressures for defense industries to sell arms in difficult economic times.82

The Implication of Globalization on Terror and War

Globalization facilitates the proliferation of weapons to NSAs and empowers transnational organizations. The Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, both occurring in 1979, and the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 resulted in an Islamic revival and a religious radicalization process which was characterized by the spread of radical Islamic social movements, networks and political parties. The “Global Jihad movement” in general and the al Qaeda terror organization in particular became significant actors. Both are based on the “Salafiya-Jihadia” ideology that emerged in Afghanistan during the 1980s. Al Qaeda’s attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001 – the most devastating terrorist attack in modern history – projected a new kind of terrorism, global and transnational.83

According to the INSS, since their establishment in the 1980s, al Qaeda and organizations identified with global Jihad have carried out more than 85 percent of the suicide bombings around the world (around 3,500 suicide attacks in total), and in 2013, they perpetrated almost 95 percent of 291 suicide attacks.84 Al Qaeda is the first terrorist group to have successfully conducted suicide attacks on land, at sea, and in the air. Hoffman explains that suicide terrorism has become increasingly popular because of its unique tactical advantages compared to those of more conventional terrorist operations. Suicide tactics are devastatingly effective, lethally efficient, have a greater likelihood of success, and are relatively inexpensive and generally easier to execute than other modes of attack.85

82 Moodie, “Beyond Proliferation,” 9, 72-73, 310.
85 Hoffman, Inside Terrorism, 132.
In late 2004, Al Qaeda senior member, Mustafa Setmaram Nasar (Abu Mus‘ab al Suri), a top Jihadist military theoretician, published a comprehensive book called “The Global Islamic Resistance Call” which was widely posted on jihadist sites. In November 2005 he was arrested in Pakistan, extradited to the United States and later handed to the Syrian regime. Based on his past military experience fighting in Syria and Afghanistan, and reading classical books on guerrilla warfare, Abu Mus‘ab al Suri developed a military doctrine on how the international jihad should be strategically and tactically fought against the United States and its allies. No other Jihadi leader has ever conceptualized a comprehensive doctrine of terror and guerrilla warfare after 9/11. Abu Mus‘ab al Suri’s themes are valuable for the following thesis because he regards globalization as creating a new type of Jihad and terrorism rather than being only a facilitator of the Jihad and he discusses the armament of the Moslem militants. 86

Abu Mus‘ab al Suri argues that in light of the end of the Cold War, U.S. military superiority and the global war on terrorism post 9/11, the “individual jihad” is the best method of defeating the United States and its allies rather than using regional, hierarchical, and elite type organizations or waging high-intensity war. Al Qaeda could no longer exist as a hierarchical organization, but instead has to become decentralized network. Moslems who want to wage jihad and be martyrs could act individually or in a small cell, conducting terror attacks and guerrilla operations against civilian and military targets. Individual jihad could be conducted anywhere in the Arab and Islamic world, even world-wide, because where it takes place is not dependent on particular conditions. The goal is to transfer individual jihad into an organized strategic phenomenon rather than a collection of responses. 87 According to Abu Mus‘ab al Suri:

…the necessity of planting the idea of globalized jihad in all fields… this is one of the axioms of the doctrine. Our new method for the jihad operations is the Global Islamic Resistance Call. Likewise, the present military theory is also dependent upon moving on a global horizon… the horizons for this operational activity open up regardless of borders and countries… it is a system of action (nizam al amal), not a centralized secret organization for action (tanzim lil amal). 88

87 Brynjar, Architect, 367-368, 393.
88 Brynjar, Architect, 393.
Abu Mus‘ab al Suri suggests that jihadi cells will be established spontaneously by those who wish to act or with the help of a builder from the central leadership of al Qaeda. The latter will use communication networks, mostly the Internet, to distribute military, political and educational programs, providing strategic guidance. The cells will share a common name, political program, doctrine and common goal; otherwise they are independent and should prepare themselves on their own. Therefore if one cell is disclosed, it will not influence the others who operate or intend to operate. The success of the individual jihad will spread through communication technology and many thousands of Moslems will join the movement until a whole nation is uprising resulting in the establishment of an Islamic caliphate.89

Being independent, the Jihadist combatant is responsible for acquiring his own weaponry, mainly personal weapons, home-made and military explosives. “It is basic weapons which move him to do whatever he is capable of, even using civilian weapons, if there is nothing else available.”90 In areas where Moslems are compelled to confront their enemy, such as in Afghanistan, the Jihadists need heavier weapon systems, including mortars, anti-tank and anti-air missiles. According to Abu Mus‘ab al Suri, the availability of weapons stockpiles is one of the preconditions of Jihadists waging guerrilla war, such as in Afghanistan and Yemen. Similar to classical theoreticians of guerrilla warfare, Abu Mus‘ab al Suri and other al Qaeda strategists have emphasized the limited weaponry of the Jihadist rebels compared to their foes who have superior equipment. But al Qaeda’s main requirement is to set up a state in what they called “Muslim lands,” and that implies the need for more conventional and better armed forces.91

In his book, Al Qa‘ida’s Doctrine for Insurgency, Abd al-Aziz al Muqrin, another Jihadist scholar, emphasizes the importance of arming terror cells. Al Muqrin commanded the al Qaeda branch in Saudi Arabia until killed by the Saudis in 2004. He assigned the logistic element of the “urban guerrilla” to collaborate with the “Mafia” or other smugglers “to supply everything the other units need in terms of weapons, tools, equipment, documents,
safe houses, vehicles, etc.” He suggested training the logistic personnel of al Qaeda’s terror cells “in ways of buying and delivering weapons and ammunition.”

Cruickshanks and Ali claim the ideas of Abu Mus‘ab al Suri have made a very significant impact, and it is likely that perpetrators of terrorist attacks in the last decade have been exposed to, and influenced by, his posting on jihadi websites. Moreover, Abu Mus‘ab al Suri’s military theory forecasts the structure and modus operandi of contemporary al Qaeda. Hoffman argues that al Qaeda exists more as an ideology that has become a vast enterprise – an international franchise with like-minded local representatives, loosely connected to a central ideological or motivational base but advancing according the center’s goals at once simultaneously and independently of each other. Hoffman emphasizes that al Qaeda’s strength is not in geographical possession or occupation of a defined territory but in its fluidity and impermanence. None of these factors could exist without globalization. Some scholars argue that al Qaeda’s central and global jihad affiliated groups have adopted Abu Mus‘ab al Suri’s strategy, understanding that use of the home-grown cell is an efficient way to fight the West rather than one centralized organization. The Boston Bombing of April 2013, conducted by two Chechen brothers, citizens of the United States, and the beheading of a British soldier in the heart of London in May 2013 by two British citizens of Nigerian origin, are just two examples of the growing phenomenon. Still, Ryan argues that lone-wolf terrorism is possible but not sustainable. The strategy of individual and small-unit terrorism is politically meaningless, exhausting the remnants of support for al Qaeda.

That NSAs use suicide terrorism intensively across the world and acquire medium and long-range rockets and missiles characteristic of regular armies, has encouraged American military experts to argue, mainly since the 1990s, that the nature of war has changed and the classical theory cannot be applied to contemporary conflicts in the world. Accordingly, war in its classical form, involving set-piece battles between regular armies, has little future. They called “fourth-generation warfare,” 4GW, irregular warfare dominated by terrorists and NSAs’ insurgencies, as the major threat to international security. It is asymmetric warfare,

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93Hoffman, Inside Terrorism, 282-283.
that is, a vast discrepancy exists between the resources, the capabilities, and the doctrine of the combatants. While old wars were between nation-states and often over national territory the new wars common in recent years are taking place within failing or weak states, rather than over territory and state-building, such as the civil wars in Syria, Somalia and Iraq. These wars cannot end with decisive battles but only with the collapse of political will. The new wars are also more local or global than national, for example in Afghanistan the Taliban fights NATO forces and the security situation differs remarkably the provinces. In addition, war-making is more decentralized and less total; it may be less between symmetrical state armies than asymmetrical forces, and less focused on full-scale wars than sometimes on-and-off simmering or intermittent conflicts, as in the Israel-Palestine conflict.95

The apparent change in the nature of war led to the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), led by the U.S. military command and adopted by other western countries. The RMA implies the development of a new generation of sensors, long-range guided weapons, and data processing systems that integrate broadband wireless data communication networks. The common thread in these new approaches, when taken together, is the diminishing need for concentrating and maneuvering ground forces for the “linear” destruction of the enemy’s forces. Instead, information is collected and the enemy is analyzed as a system (and even as a system-of-systems) in order to identify vulnerability nodes in the system and to direct simultaneous standoff fire from the air and from decentralized land formations (which are not in danger due to their detachment from the enemy and their low signature) towards those vulnerability nodes. This creates various effects on the enemy system, among them “blindness,” “isolation,” “paralysis,” “decapitation,” and “a sense of being pursued.”96 These effects are designed to bring the enemy that could be an NSA to a state of cognitive-strategic collapse, thereby pushing it to adopt the expected behavioral change, which will consequently achieve the strategic objective of the war. At the center of the RMA is the “standoff firepower-based operations,” (SFO). The SFO approach is more than simple upgrading of the existing military machine, rather it is a buildup and organization of the fighting force, a concept of force utilization, and a fundamental change in the approach toward using military force in war while blurring the lines between the tactical, operative, and strategic levels.97

The new military thought argues that warfare against NSAs takes place simultaneously in and among the physical, the information, and the cognitive domains. Key elements of the transformation include: Information Superiority, Decision Superiority, Dominant Maneuver, Precision Engagement, Focused Logistics, and Information Operations. These factors form a network system; its components operate together effectively as one complete system to accomplish a mission. In irregular warfare, superiority in the physical environment is of little value unless it can be translated into an advantage in the information environment. Information is the key factor in military operations, and a new stage—the information age—has come, bringing with it fundamental changes in organization of all human affairs, including the use of military force. The new military thought dictates an increasingly dispersed battlefield, reducing the importance of centralized logistics and mass (either men or firepower), and a tendency for victory to come through the implosion of the enemy rather than its physical destruction. There are blurred boundaries—between war and peace, between civilian and military, between tactics and strategy, between order and chaos. Such war against NSAs cannot be contained in either time or space. Fighting NSAs, armies need to operate in the cultural domain, acknowledge the concept of narratives, which move to the center-stage of strategy at this time. 98

The RMA generated a revolution in the concept of the use of force and the force buildup in the US and the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). One of the main ideas behind SFO is force efficiency and a transition from “linear” warfare against NSAs to decentralized warfare. Simply put, while the classic war involves only one's own advance force and the enemy’s advance force, with the main body of the two sides’ forces waiting in the rear, SFO tries to generate a situation in which all of one’s forces fire simultaneously at the enemy’s entire deployment throughout the depth of the theater. Herein arguably lies a distinction of the SFO design from the classic doctrine whereby only about one fifth of the main ground forces are engaged at any one time, while the other forces secure the flanks and the rear and serve as a reserve force for unexpected developments. The argument is that the technological revolution enables one’s forces not only to fire simultaneously deep into the enemy’s formations but allows them to dispel the battle fog as well. According to some SFO designers, this means there is no longer a need to expend forces on reserves and on securing the flanks and rear. 99

The low intensity conflicts between a state and an NSA that take place simultaneously in different places, and the modern weapon systems which have long range capabilities, have blurred the difference between the front and the rear, and that has undermined the importance of the land. The advocates of SPO use the war in Kosovo (1990s) as a confirmation for their theory, because NATO forces apparently achieved their political objectives mainly by using aerial attacks against Serbian government military targets (although the Americans undoubtedly failed to destroy mobile targets from the air and the war lasted longer than NATO had planned). The fact that this campaign eventually helped to compel a change in Belgrade’s policy was later taken as some sort of vindication of air power acting alone.100

Most of the literature on SFO talks about the need for balancing SFO with the classic use of force and preserving the ability to maneuver deep into enemy territory, launch direct offensives, and maintain close contact. In practice, budgetary constraints, the focus on low-intensity conflicts, the increased aversion to sustaining casualties during ground maneuvers, and an over-enthusiastic adoption of the SFO revolution have led to its implementation at the expense of classic capabilities, including the land maneuver deep into enemy territory, the launch of direct offensives and maintaining close contact with the enemy. The SPO employs only light land components, and normally does not use tanks and armored personnel carriers.101 For example, in the years leading up to the Israeli-Hezbollah War of 2006, the scope of training and the allocation of resources for classic formations in the IDF were reduced to the extent that at its outbreak, it is doubtful whether the IDF had adequate classic capabilities.102

The RMA was heavily criticized by military experts on duty and by former servicemen. They claimed that new technology does not change the basic principles of war including against NSAs, and that some of the characteristics are actually well known in military history. The conflicts between states and NSAs, for instance, were also the most common warfare in earlier times, and the old AK-47 is still the most lethal weapon system. The theoretical basis of the new military thought was allegedly totally detached from reality and consisted of nothing more than mumbo jumbo intended to conceal a total lack of understanding of the art of war in general, and the battle against terrorism in particular. The new conceptualizations did not improve the understanding of NSAs, but led to organizational

100 Freedman, “Transformation,” 48-49.
failures and damage to the basic principles and ethics of Intelligence work. They dragged the military and the Intelligence community into areas that fell outside the arena of the military conflict, such as policy decision making and psychological and cultural analysis of the enemy, to problems for which the military had no solutions, and all this at the expense of concentrating on core military issues.\textsuperscript{103}

Small wars against rebellious NSAs were always the dominant warfare, but they have become a more efficient tactic to gain victory. Contemporary NSAs have better chances to win wars against states owing to globalization – they are more mobile, can target state interests anywhere, and they have access to modern military technologies. Most importantly, NSAs can use many media channels to advance their cause, such as justifying the use of terror against civilians. Still, war is not a calculable mathematical algorithm but a dynamic, changing, and complex human experience that occurs under conditions of pressure and exhaustion, and involves coincidence and errors by all parties involved.\textsuperscript{104}

Martin Van Creveld agrees that future war will be waged overwhelmingly by, and against, organizations that are not states. And since they do not own sovereign territory and consequently cannot be threatened with nuclear weapons, they will be able to fight each other, and the state, to their heart’s content. But Van Creveld argues that war in its elemental Hobbesian sense is not only alive but will be as deadly as ever. To win a war, militaries still have to target the NSAs’ forces and weapons in the field rather than seeking to spook or jam or saturate the enemy’s sensors, disrupt his communication and infiltrate his computers.\textsuperscript{105}

The critic against the new military thought argues that some new aspects of force buildup and the concept of utilization of forces derive from the United States’ unique need to respond within hours to situations anywhere in the world with long-range fire and sometimes inter-continental fire, or within days with airborne and seaborne expeditionary deployments, while maintaining joint global control of four separate armed services. Such considerations are, of course, irrelevant to smaller countries such as Israel. In the same manner, the SFO is a useful doctrine for a superpower that could easily impose its will on its NSAs’ enemies, but is less relevant for a weaker country. Therefore, the Israeli political and military leadership failed to understand at the outbreak of the war against the Hezbollah in July 2006 that the


\textsuperscript{104}Tira, “Limitations,” 47; Hanson, \textit{24/7}, 124-132.

bombing of Hezbollah headquarters in Beirut and the targeting of the organization’s long-range rocket depots alongside a very limited maneuver in the South of Lebanon could not deter Hezbollah from maintaining the shelling of Israeli inhabitants.\textsuperscript{106} Demonstrating the complexity of NSA, Hezbollah operated as a flat, decentralized structure that incorporated a network of autonomous cells with high redundancy and a central command. The Israeli commanders mistakenly thought that the employment of the SFO would create effects designed to generate a behavioral change in Hezbollah that would ultimately remove the rocket threat.\textsuperscript{107} At no stage of the war were the ground forces used according to an operational concept of direct and comprehensive handling of the problem of the short-range surface-to-surface rockets (such as total occupation and clearing all the launch areas). After thirty three days of fighting, the IDF was still unable to remove the threat of short-range rockets from the north of Israel. Learning its lesson, the IDF employed larger and more successful land maneuver in its war against Hamas in the Gaza Strip, launched in December 2008.\textsuperscript{108}

Van Creveld strongly criticizes the RMA calling on the IDF and the US army to “get rid of the seductive but nonsensical and extremely costly illusion that is called RMA,” and to focus on fighting terrorism and insurgency.\textsuperscript{109} But it could be argued Van Creveld’s concept about NSAs in the global era including their arming is too vague and monolithic. Van Creveld argues that twentieth and twentieth-first century armed forces “are helpless in fighting small groups of often ill trained, ill funded, ill equipped terrorists.”\textsuperscript{110} The latter employ the strategy of long conflict using guerrilla and terror tactics and enjoy domestic and international support because they are weaker than their opponents and are justified in using any and every means available. Failed counterinsurgency campaigns result in states’ withdrawal from foreign land (like the withdrawl of the U.S. Army from Somalia and Afghanistan and the Soviets’ withdrawl from Afghanistan) local provinces and even disintegration (such as in Somalia and Sudan). Van Creveld argues that “insurgents can hardly establish the logistical infrastructure for operating heavy weapons”, and “quite a few never succeed inadvancing beyond the first [stage of Mao’s insurgency model]….They never

\textsuperscript{106} Tira, “Limitations,”15.  
\textsuperscript{107} Tira, “Limitations,”15.  
\textsuperscript{108} Tira, “Limitations,”22, 43-44.  
\textsuperscript{109} Van Creveld, Changing Face of War, 277-278.  
\textsuperscript{110} Van Creveld, Changing Face of War, 223.
succeed in conquering territory and hold on to it.” Van Creveld claims that state-NSA wars hardly ever ended with a physical collapse of the state that fight the NSAs (such as the United States and Israel). Future war will be waged overwhelmingly by, and against, organizations that are not states. And since they do not own sovereign territory and consequently cannot be threatened with nuclear weapons, they will be able to fight each other, and the state, to their heart’s content.

Similarly, General Rupert Smith argues that until the end of World War Two the old paradigm of “interstate industrial warfare” was dominant. It featured conflict between states, the maneuver of mass forces, and the total support of the state’s manpower and industrial base for the purpose of an absolute victory. In contemporary wars, on the other hand, the aim is to constantly undermine the stronger army and to demoralize the government and the people. It is a “clash of wills rather than the trial of strength.” These wars are waged “amongst the people,” between multinational coalitions of states and NSAs that might be parties to a civil war or an insurgency, whether operating as formed armies or guerillas or terrorist groups or the band of some warlord. These conflicts tend to be of indefinite duration, western armies fight to conserve their fighting forces and the ends for which they fight are not absolute objectives but more modest ones. NSAs are formless and ill armed. The AK-47 and the machete continue to kill people by the millions as well as the effective suicide bomber. They are the tools of war amongst the people. Smith warns that NSAs that fight the West have learned not to present a target that favors the weapons the West possesses and the way it uses them. Therefore, the major task of intelligence agencies is to locate people rather than items. In war amongst the people military equipment is less important.

McKenzie debates with both Van Creveld and Smith arguing against one dimensional paradigmatic visions that are narrow and incomplete whereas he views state-NSA conflicts as constantly evolving and varied. “The notion that any paradigm can summarize the intentions of wide ranging adversaries is contestable…. They tend to encourage uniform responses.” Both scholars overstate the transformation of war. McKenzie argues that the world is a heterogeneous place and does not advance in linear fashion. Therefore, when inadequately

111 Van Creveld, Changing Face of War, 223.
113 Smith, Utility of the Force, 180, 175.
resourced and correctly directed by states, conventional military forces can defeat NSAs such as when the US military destroyed Al Qaeda’s infrastructure in western Iraq in 2007. Smith and Van Creveld refer to all NSAs as national and local-based but as this thesis aims to prove NSAs have diverse characters. Some Salafi-Jihadist groups, for instance, are transnational rejecting nationalism because they are subordinated to the idea of the Moslem community of believers.  

Van Creveld argues that reviewing counter insurgency campaigns reveals “a long almost unbroken record of failure… to the present day.” He notes that passing time has not changed this trend. Still he is very selective choosing his case studies which in retrospect dramatically changed in the opposite direction illustrating the dynamic of state-NSA conflicts. Van Creveld views the withdrawal of Indian forces from Sri Lanka in 1991 as a victory of the Liberation Tigers for Tamil and Eelam (LTTE), but the change in India’s policy toward the LTTE was a strategic development helping Sri Lanka’s armed forces to defeat the LTTE in 2009. Van Creveld ignores India’s effective counter insurgency efforts against rebellious NSAs in the Northeast. He rightly criticizes the poor performance of the IDF in the 2006 war against the Lebanese Hezbollah but since that war Hezbollah has not fired rockets over Israel.

The Nation-State in light of Globalization

Being the principal actors in the international political system since the seventeenth century, states have always faced the major challenge of arms smuggling. Formally arms smuggling is a criminal activity, conducted across borders, while state boundaries are perhaps the most fundamental institution in the modern state system, and territoriality an integral part of what it means to be a state. The following sub-chapter debates the status of the nation-state in light of globalization effects (many discussed in previous sections). When an insurgency regularly manages to smuggle weapons into a state’s territory it is clear evidence of a weak government that does not control its territory. For example, the Taliban are smuggling arms and ammunition from Pakistan to Afghanistan through the unguarded borders between the two states. Cross-border smuggling of weapons could be linked to a broader subject. Some scholars claim that borders serve a diminished function or are no longer important in

117 Van Creveld, Changing Face of War, 219.
regulating international affairs, implying *decline of the national state* as a result of globalization.\(^{119}\)

Significant debate exists concerning the extent to which globalization has eroded the system of nation-states, and about the future of sovereignty. The outcome of the debate implies how serious the problem of smuggling of weapons by NSAs is.\(^{120}\) Some globalization theorists suggest that nation states are imploding under the dual pulls of devolution of functions to local or sub-national levels and the transfer of sovereignty upwards to international institutions and processes. According to this view, if there is a role left for the territorially based state, it is one of regulation of flows of capital, commodities and risks across its borders. The global begins to replace the nation state as the decisive framework for social life. Daniel Bell famously expressed it as, “too small for the big problems of life and too big for small problems.”\(^{121}\) Smugglers belong to the relatively new force that consists of terrorists, NGOs, economic corporations, drug cartels, and insurgents. They all find a space to move and operate independently, within the nooks and crannies of the international system. Power is shifting away from nation-states, up, down, and sideways. In such an atmosphere, the traditional applications of national power, both economic and military, have become less effective. \(^{122}\)

Globalization theorists provide many examples for the decline of the nation-states. States have less authority to make decisions about their own policies. Globalization has been facilitated by states forming and joining supranational organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union (EU). From the 1990s, globalization has been manifested by a dramatic rise in the numbers and influence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), pursuing public purposes outside the formal apparatus of the state (such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace and Doctors without Borders). All these NGOs are widely dispersed across geographic areas and affect the everyday lives of large numbers of people almost everywhere.\(^{123}\) Fareed Zakaria calls it “the

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\(^{121}\) Ray, *Globalization*, 76-77.


\(^{123}\) Ritzer, *Globalization*, 4-5.
diffusion of power from states to other actors.”

States cannot provide solutions to issues of pollution, terrorism, arms smuggling, the drug trade, currency crises, and global pandemics such as AIDS. States share power with international organizations and political space is no longer determined by politically defined territories.

According to Price in a global world rulers are unable to keep out unwanted signals and information. The cultural bonds and localities that once seemed to be within the control of the state are now less so. Governments operate under international regimes and international norms such as human rights, preventing a ruler from excluding information even when it is technically capable of doing so. These new conditions make states’ effort to contain rebel groups harder.

NSAs are a product of new forms of organizing and networking across national boundaries that have evolved, expanding the arena of political action beyond the nation-state and thus changing the nature of world politics. For example, al Qaeda militias in North Syria are integrated with al Qaeda forces in West Iraq, associated with radical Sunni groups in Lebanon and supported by elements in the Gulf States. These subnational and transnational identities cannot be contained in the nation-state system.

Other scholars argue that the decline of the nation state has been overstated, and that the territorial state remains a key factor in the global system and a significant form of social solidarity. The existence of exceptionally inept states and respect for their borders in a competitive global environment is cited as evidence that sovereignty matters. Although globalization presents new challenges, the territorial nation is still a fundamental actor in world politics. These scholars claim that never in history was sovereignty absolute or indivisible. The capacity of states to act was always conditional on treaties, balance of power, resource limitations and home and international social movements. Yet many key policy areas of the national state – taxation, infrastructural planning, immigration, education, research, development and training, social policy – all remain essentially national even if conditioned by international bodies and agreements.

Ray claims that the nation state as an ethnically homogenous realm is relatively new and has co-existed with other forms of state organization throughout the modern period. But because populations are now diverse, and

127 Hanson, *24/7*, 212-214.
128 Hanson, *24/7*, 102.
economic, cultural and political lives are complex, it does not follow that the state and territoriality are no longer significant. On the contrary, the state has arguably become more significant as an actor in the global area than it was previously. These arguments imply that rebellious NSAs still face much stronger rival states.  

Some theorists argue that globalization has strengthened rather than weakened the nation state and that although the global system of financial regulation has been undermined, national policy differences still affect capital flows. States have always been challenging from within and without, and today they are in many ways better able to respond and adapt to armed NSAs than in the past. For instance, scholars argue that governments use the new communication and information technologies much more efficiently than NSAs, and these channels actually strengthen existing power structures, both domestically and internationally. Governments can afford to exploit modern technology to its limits, especially advanced surveillance technologies, allowing them to monitor their citizens more effectively. The mobile phone system, in particular, enables secret services to target specific suspects. The best illustration is Edward Snowden’s exposure of many thousands of classified documents of the U.S. National Security Agency, revealing a huge amount of surveillance activity at home and abroad. Governments could use these advanced technologies to improve the war against the smuggling of illicit arms.  

Art Scholte represents a third approach to the debate on the nation-state. He argues that on no account does the rise of trans-world and supraterritorial relations spell the end of national identities; however, sovereign states in contemporary times of globalization differ from those of earlier generations. The state nation framework has become less dominant as a specific kind of nation, and globalization has encouraged a diversification of types of nations to include micro-nations, region-nations and transworld nations; that is, the growth of alternative frameworks of collective identity, both national and non-territorial. An example is the micro-nationalist movements among many ethnic groups which are striving for recognition and autonomy or independence; they have not challenged the principle of

129 Ray, Globalization, 80.  
130 Hanson, 24/7, 86.  
131 Hanson, 24/7, 182-183.
nationhood, but have rather reproduced it in new forms. These NSAs could wage armed struggle against the state.\textsuperscript{132}

\textbf{The Creation of Transnational Social Spaces}

\textit{Transnational spaces} could be a fruitful paradigm for the analysis of NSAs’ arms smuggling because they touch on a different aspect of smuggling activity. Transnational spaces are pluri-local, border crossing sets of ties among persons, networks, communities and organizations. Their formation was facilitated by technological progress in transport and communication. Also, the concept of the nation state after World War Two has intensified ethnic-religious conflicts and the multicultural policies of western countries that actually encouraged minorities to maintain their cultural differences and ties to their country of origin, including mobilization of resources. The current study deals with cross-states activity (arms smuggling), and with actors who maintain connections across various states (for example, Sri Lankan Tamil immigrants in Europe and North America). Therefore transnational spaces are a productive analytical tool worthy of elaboration.\textsuperscript{133}

“Space” does not only refer to the physical aspect but denotes the cultural, economic and political practices of individual and collective actors within territories or places. Transnational spaces can be differentiated along two dimensions: their degree of formalization and their durability. The degree of formalization concerns both the internal characteristics of group organization and the extent of common or even shared values and symbols. The durability dimension represents the potential durability of different kinds of transnational space.\textsuperscript{134} The arms smuggling of NSAs is concerned with two types of transnational space:

- **Issue networks.** These are a set of ties between persons and organizations in which information and services flow for the achievement of common goals. Often, there is a shared discourse around a specific issue such as human rights

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{132}Scholte, \textit{Globalization}, 226-239.
\item \textsuperscript{134}Faist,”Beyond National,” 279.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
or a profession. Transnational criminal and arms smuggling networks operate in a similar way to the issue networks, because they also have a common goal and exchange information and services. Criminal transnational networks differ from Transnational organizations (such as the UN), as the latter are characterized by formal internal hierarchy and systematically structured controls of social ties. In this context, historians Osterhammel and Petersson argue that globalization grows where the contacts and interactions become networks, and the durability and frequency of relations affects whether interactions become a stable network.135

- **Transnational communities.** These communities comprise dense and continuous sets of social and symbolic ties characterized by a high degree of intimacy, emotional depth, moral obligation and sometimes even social cohesion. The most basic types are village communities in the emigration and immigration states, whose relations are marked by an extended solidarity over long periods of time. Diasporas, such as Cubans and Irish in the United States, Tamils in Canada and Europe and Palestinians in Arab counties, belong to the category of transnational communities. During periods of domestic unrest, they feel committed to help their ethnic group. According to Salehyan they can play an active role in opposing the governments of their homelands in multiple ways: mobilizing political support among the host governments, contributing money and other resources for rebellious NSAs in the homeland. The transnational communities run much of their activities through the Internet, using communication and new information technologies.136

Salehyan argues that domestic conflicts in states are greatly influenced by NSAs that are transnational organizations. Rebels seek resources, including weapons, and mobilization opportunities outside of the territory of the state, beyond any one state’s legal, political, and coercive reach. This gives such actors a strategic advantage over state agents who are less mobile. Migrant diasporas, terror networks, and criminal organizations, are contributing to violence directly or indirectly. These elements are aided by advances in technology, which lower transaction costs within the organization as well as raise the destructive capacity of

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135 Martell, Sociology, 14.
136 Martell, Sociology, 285-287; Salehyan, Rebels, 34-36; Hanson, 24/7, 198.
small groups. Salehyan claims that state-NSA conflict becomes transnational but he emphasizes NSA activity from neighboring countries and the importance of location near the target state, arguing it is quite costly for state forces to cross national boundaries in pursuit of transnational rebels. Dealing mainly with cross border NSAs, Salehyan’s theme could be explained in terms of international relations and proxy war rather than transnationalism and globalization. Extraterritorial bases do not make NSAs transnational.\textsuperscript{137}

Anthony D’Andrea sees smugglers—like traders, handcrafters, DJs, and alternative therapists—asan example of \textit{neonomads} (or global nomads) who are a phenomenon of cultural globalization. Both traditional-pastoral nomads and neo nomads have deployed mobility as a tactic of evasion from dominant sedentary apparatuses. Neo nomads exercise their skills along the way, as do the nomads seasonally moving animals into better pastures to accommodate larger flocks. Displacement does not define nomadism if economic activities lie ahead of or behind those on the move (such as labor migrants and business people). All nomads value the ownership of goods and tools. Insofar as they remain able to move and use free spaces, they have little interest in owning or remaining attached to land. Their de-territorialized relation with space is a central feature of nomadic culture and mentality, one that reinforces their will to move.\textsuperscript{138} Thus, a positive correlation exists between mobility and autonomy, and nomadism is the best method of adapting and surviving. For nomads mobility is more than spatial displacement; it is also a component of their economic strategies, as well as of their own modes of self-identity and formation of subjectivity. Yet, neo nomads differ from traditional nomads by projecting in a context of globalization hypermobile formation, digitalization and reflexivity, new forms of subjectivity and identity.\textsuperscript{139}

\textbf{Glocalization and Grobalization}

Arms smuggling might be an outcome of local traditions integrated with global trends. A useful concept for the analysis is \textit{Glocalization}, defined by Ritzer as “interpenetration of the global and the local resulting in unique outcomes in different geographical areas.”\textsuperscript{140} Ritzer argues that globalization is not simply about the “disembedding” of the “local” by the “global,” it is rather about creation of a new global-local nexus, about exploring the new relations between global and local spaces. It manifests the dialectical nature of globalization

\textsuperscript{137}Salehyan, \textit{Rebels}, 19-40.
\textsuperscript{139}D’Andrea, \textit{Global Nomads}, 17-27.
\textsuperscript{140}Ritzer, \textit{Globalization}, 13.
which comprises two entirely contradictory processes of homogenization and
differentiation.\textsuperscript{141} There is a complex interaction between localism and globalism whereby
local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. Local
transformation is as much a part of globalization as the lateral extension of social connections
across time and space. The outcome of this process is a set of changes acting in a uniform
direction, but consists in mutually opposed tendencies, for instance the apparent contradiction
between globalization as a force of homogenization, and the disintegration of countries in
Africa, and in other parts of the world, and the so-called revival of nationalism.\textsuperscript{142}

Glocalization theory presumes that the world is growing more \textit{pluralistic}; there are
differences within and between areas of the world. Individuals and local groups have great
power to adapt, innovate, and maneuver within a glocalized world. Therefore Thai boxing by
Moroccan girls in Amsterdam, Asian rap in London, Irish bagels, Chinese tacos are all
manifestations of globalization, as is a tribal Bedouin from Egypt who buys a Chinese AK-47
rifle in a weapon market located in Eritrea. These are all examples of \textit{hybridization}, that is, an
increasing diversity associated with the unique mixture of the global and the local. A cultural
hybrid involves the combination of two or more elements from different cultures and/or parts
of the world. \textsuperscript{143}

Arms smuggling is associated with another aspect of glocalization – the
commodification of local cultures by external influences but through the existence of flexible
specialization that permits the tailoring of many products to the needs of various local
specifications. That is, the interaction of the global market with local markets leads to the
creation of unique glocal markets that integrate the demands of the global market with the
realities of the local market. The black markets of arms in East Africa and in South East Asia
are part of the global trend of proliferation of weapons; yet their activity has been modified
by local factors, such as geographic location and the security situation. \textsuperscript{144}

Ritzer draws a contrast between glocalization and \textit{grobalization}; the latter is an
approach that “focuses on the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations,

\textsuperscript{141} Scholte, \textit{Globalization}, 79. Likewise, Scholte argues that it is mistaken to set up opposition between the global
and local, and both terms have enabling and disabling potentials.

\textsuperscript{142} Sklair, “Globalization,” 330; Ritzer, \textit{Globalization}, 13; Alex Callinicos, \textit{Social Theory. A Historical

\textsuperscript{143} Ritzer, \textit{Globalization}, 13-14.

to impose themselves on various geographic areas.” They seek to see their power, influence and profits grow. Globalization involves such phenomena as Americanization and MacDonaldization, as well as capitalism. Ritzer argues that the two approaches would give a more balanced view of the globalization that would represent both cultural convergence and cultural hybridization. While glocalization left the local sphere with some autonomy and sees the world as growing more pluralistic, the globalization approach implies that it is increasingly difficult to find anything in the world untouched by globalization, and the world is growing increasingly similar.

The researcher is advised to look at social process as a continuum ranging from glocalization at one end to globalization at the other. Therefore, glocalization cannot be discussed without considering globalization. For example, the Olympic Games are a spectacular event demonstrating unity-in-difference (glocalization) and make a serious contribution to global homogenization (globalization). Yet globalization is well demonstrated through many elements that surround the games, including western companies that fund individual athletes, fast food branches that operate in the Olympic village, and the key role played by Western TV networks that are central to the globalization of sport. NSAs’ efforts to acquire weapons could also involve both glocalization and globalization because NSAs could be fighting local governments by carrying weapons they obtain via the global arms trade, using traditional tactics and smuggling routes.

**Globalization and Systems Theories**

Possessing complex structure and goals they wish to achieve, NSAs could be analyzed as a system. Mario Bunge defines system as “conceived of a complex object, concrete or abstract, composed of interrelated items, and possesses some systemic or emergent properties absent from its constituents.” This definition emphasizes the nature of emergence while other definitions of system are goal-oriented. Rather than reduce an entity (for instance, the human body) to the properties of its parts or elements (organs or cells), systems theory focuses on

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the arrangement of the relations among the parts that connect them into a whole. The connections are non-trivial and non-linear. The particular organization determines a system, which is independent of the concrete substance of the elements (for example, cells or people).\textsuperscript{149}

Unlike living sciences, systems theory failed to become an influential force in social sciences and was neglected for many years. Sociology and political science have not embraced the concept of systems, probably owing to a more deep-seated post-Parsonian aversion to the very term ‘systems’ in those disciplines. Some scholars claim that as a movement and scientific ideology, systems theory for the time being was finished. The system approach, however, could provide a closer examination and a fruitful analysis of arms smuggling, especially for the more complex and geographically spread smuggling network. It could also help in analyzing alliances between NSAs and friendly states, such as the Hezbollah-Iran-Syria alliance.\textsuperscript{150}

This segment discusses a relatively new research discipline – the Systems of systems (SOS) and the Federation of Systems (FOS). Both models are making disparate, diverse, autonomous, and synchronized entities work together, without losing their individual sense of purpose, in order to realize some higher-level and otherwise unattainable purpose. Originally, the SOS and FOS refer to engineering, technical and sociotechnical systems, but might be useful for the analysis of complex smuggling networks too.\textsuperscript{151}

The SOS exists when “there is a presence of a majority of the following five characteristics: operational independence, managerial independence, geographic distribution, emerging behavior, and evolutionary development... SOS means large-scale integrated systems that are heterogeneous and independently operable on their own, but are networked together for a common goal.”\textsuperscript{152} The Internet, transportation systems, the Al Qaeda organization, the United States Armed Forces, a hotel chain, and the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) – when it engages in a military campaign as in Bosnia (1990s) and Libya (2011) –


arose some examples of SOS; they are very large and complex systems which consist of many autonomous units. Thus, one of the major contemporary characteristics of large systems is that they are often formed from a variety of component systems, potentially offering different perspectives of situations.\footnote{Boardman and Sauser, \textit{Systems Thinking}, 155.}

According to Sage and Cuppan large systems have five unique characteristics that seem very relevant for NSAs’ force buildup:

- **Operational independence of the individual systems.** SOS are composed of systems that are independent and useful in their own right. If SOS are disassembled into the component systems, these component systems are capable of independence, performing useful operations independently of one another. For example, the Al Qaeda organization headed by Ayman al Zawahiri consists of several regional commands including al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Jabhat Al Nusra (Syria). They pledged allegiance to al Qaeda leaders but usually operate on their own.\footnote{Andrew P. Sage and Christopher D. Cuppan. “On the Systems Engineering and Management of Systems of Systems and Federations of Systems,” \textit{Systems Management} 2 (2001): 326; Yoram Schweitzer and Aviv Oreg. “Al Qaeda’s Odyssey to the Global Jihad,” \textit{INSS Memorandum} 134 (March 2014), \url{http://d26e8pvo5o26x3r.cloudfront.net/uploadimages/systemfiles/memo132f.pdf} (accessed 18 March 2014): 41.}

- **Managerial independence of the systems.** The component systems cannot just operate independently, but generally do so to achieve an intended purpose. They are managed in large part for their own purpose rather than the purpose of the whole. The component systems are generally individually acquired and integrated and they maintain a continuing operational existence that is independent of the SOS. This is a coalition of partners that has decentralized power and authority. For instance, the US, the UK and other European countries have employed troops in Iraq and Afghanistan as NATO members. But each country has its own interests and policy and that explains why sometimes their troops differ operationally in the combat zones.\footnote{Andréa’s Talk, Kevin M. Adams and Charles B. Keating. “Toward Intelligence-Based Systems Engineering and System of System Engineering,” in \textit{Intelligent-Based Systems Engineering}, eds. Andreas Tolk and Lakhmi C. Jain (Berlin: Springer, 2012), 9.}

- **Geographic distribution.** Geographic dispersion of component systems is often large. These systems can readily exchange only information and knowledge with one another. Exchanging substantial quantities of physical mass or energy is either
impossible or requires considerable effort. Al Qaeda operatives are deployed mainly in central Asia, the Middle East, North and East Africa and that implies tremendous logistic and coordination efforts.156

- **Emergent behavior.** SOS performs functions and carries out purposes that do not reside, nor are they possible, in any component system. These are emergent properties of the entire SOS and not the behavior of any component system, such as NATO military involvement in Libya (2011), and the American wars in Iraq (1991, 2003). Likewise, a tunnel, automobiles, and a highway, are sub-systems of an SOS; they have an emergent behavior or property in slowing down the traffic.157

- **Evolutionary development.** SOS are never fully formed or complete. Development of these systems is evolutionary and with structure, function and purpose added, removed and modified as experience with the system grows and evolves over time. The systems engineering and management of these systems families pose special challenges. Sage and Cuppan argue that a conventional system could also be very big and complex, and it is the evolutionary development aspect that makes the difference. NATO operations across the world have created special task forces that were dismantled once the missions were terminated, such as Operation Joint Endeavor (1995-1996) conducted by the NATO-led multinational peacekeeping force in Bosnia and Herzegovina.158 This operation manifested the complexities and difficulties associated with the employment of SOS (the operation involved troops from more than thirty countries). Azani distinguishes between ad-hoc, short-lived, and relatively speaking simple SOS on the one hand (such as military operations), and long-lasting, continually evolving, and complex SOS (such as human colonies) at the other end of the continuum. Al Qaeda is an evolving and complex SOS because during the last decade new Jihadi groups have joined the organization and some of them have had disputes with the leadership in Pakistan.159

- **Connectivity.** SOS are based on the ability of a collection of communicating entities to share specified information and operate on that information according to a shared operational semantics in order to achieve a specified purpose in a given context.

Connectivity may comprise any means necessary, either directly or indirectly, to exchange information between constituent systems of an SOS. The internal machinery of the receiving system makes use of the information for the benefit or detriment of the SOS as an interdependent system. A distinguishing feature of an SOS is that the internal connectivity of the SOS is not presciently designed but emerges as a property of present interactions among the systems. For example, the US intelligence community, which contains sixteen separate agencies, has a traditional weakness in sharing information due to internal conflicts over prestige and authority. The September 11 commission called it unacceptable, outmoded, and excessively secretive. The director of national intelligence (DNI) was formed (2005) to “integrate intelligence analysis and collection... to strengthen partnerships to enrich intelligence.” Although the DNI has made some progress in information sharing, in some respect it is still seen as an agency in search of a clear mission, and the issue of intelligence collaboration remains a big challenge for the DNI. Dickerson notes that information exchange between autonomous systems of SOS is both central and critical for the SOS. Dickerson exemplifies his theme with a U.S. military command force in a mission context. A complex smuggling network might operate similarly.

- **Cooperation.** Cooperation is based on an actor’s interest in cooperating. Jamshidi presents a similar term, integration, which combines cooperation and connectivity, and this is probably the key viability of any SOS. Integration of SOS implies that each system can communicate and interact with the SOS regardless of its characteristics, or nature. Therefore each needs to have the ability to communicate with SOS or part of the SOS without compatibility issues such as operating systems, communication, and so on. Integration also implies the control aspects of the SOS because systems need to understand each other in order to take commands or signals from SOS systems. However, diversity is not necessarily a problem or a licence for anarchic design but an opportunity for a system’s development. For example, Israel’s ability to suppress the

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Palestinian terror activity from the West Bank by 2004 and to maintain security in this region derives, among other things, from close cooperation in counterterrorism activity between the General Security Service (Shabak), the Military Intelligence in the General Staff, and the Central Command of the IDF.\textsuperscript{164}

The parts of conventional systems have no choice in belonging since they have no reason for existence and no dynamics to contribute without belonging (such as parts of a car). They are integral and the system cannot function without them. In an SOS the parts are capable of being integrated and they negotiate about belonging with the SOS which has to accept them. For example, in 2005 al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) under the leadership of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi joined the al Qaeda organization and Zarqawi was appointed as the amir of al Qaeda in Iraq. Both groups had longstanding debate about the Shi’ite and attacks policy. On February 2014, the General Command of al Qaeda led by al-Zawahiri denied any connection with the Islamic State in Iraq and al Sham (ISIS) led by Abu Bakr al- Baghdadi due to organizational disagreements but that did not prevent ISIS from becoming powerful.\textsuperscript{165}

Apparently, Hezbollah, Iran and Syria are independent organizations with different characters. Therefore the theme of Federation of Systems (FOS) which refers to a system less centralized and more heterogeneous, could be useful to explore this alliance. In FOS, there is little central power and authority, and the participation of the coalition of partners is based upon collaboration and coordination to meet the needs of the federation. FOS is generally characterized by significant autonomy, heterogeneity, and geographic distribution or dispersion.\textsuperscript{166} Krygiel argues that FOS faces the same dilemmas identified for SOS but they differ in three dimensions: autonomy, heterogeneity, and dispersion. The FOS is more heterogeneous along trans-cultural and trans-national socio-political dimensions, often managed in an autonomous manner without great central authority and direction such that they satisfy objectives and purposes of an individual unit in the federation, and there is often much greater geographic dispersion of organizational units and systems. Heterogeneity is a strong driver of system complexity. Usually increasing geographic dispersion will lead to greater autonomy and consequently also increase heterogeneity. The UN, the Arab League, the African Union, and business cooperation between air-flight companies are examples of


\textsuperscript{165}Boardman and Sauser, \textit{Systems Thinking}, 158; Schweitzer and Oreg, “Al Qaeda’s Odyssey to the Global Jihad,” 41.

\textsuperscript{166}Sage and Cuppan, “Systems Engineering,” 327.
anFOS, since they are geographically spread, have a heterogeneous character, and a loose command and control apparatus. 167

The commitment of Hezbollah and Iran to rescue the Assad regime might manifest one of the principles for SOS and FOS management – the notion of *alliances*, which are difficult to manage or lead. Each alliance is unique, to be lived with rather than managed, better built on mutual respect and shared interests than on administrative or legal documents and tight controls. Power needs to be shared, autonomy granted, and the cooperation held together by trust and common goals. These types of considerations for system engineers seem useful for the analysis of close cooperation between state and NSA and an arms smuggling system. 168

This chapter demonstrates how armed NSAs could use modern transportation and communication to improve their operational and logistic skills. Globalization improves NSAs’ chances of winning a war against a state because globalization offers NSAs better access to weapons while multiple *media* channels serving NSAs play a significant role in state-NSA conflict. States continue to rule world politics, but globalization poses greater challenges to states’ authority. Globalization mechanisms constrain governments’ capacity to oppress rebellious NSAs and diffuse power from states to sub-states and transnational organizations, some of which evolve into large complex systems. The next chapters explore how past rebel groups acquired weapons without the advantages of globalization.

Chapter Two: the Arming of Ancient and Medieval NSAs

Introduction

The purpose of the following chapter is to explore how ancient and medieval NSAs acquired their weapons, and the factors which facilitated or constrained this activity. The thesis outlines that in the pre-globalization era NSAs practised arming patterns that continued through the era of globalization and which should be addressed. The historical background is vital to understand contemporary NSAs’ armament acquisition processes, and especially to examine the role of globalization. The research probes three dimensions: weaponry of rebellious NSAs; NSAs’ role in arms trade; and the effects of military technology on NSA tactics. The current chapter covers a very long period of time therefore it can touch on only a small number of past NSAs and provide a few examples of NSAs’ rebellions and insurgency. The historical review reveals that ancient rebels acquired weapons in similar ways to rebels of the present global era.

Conflicts between empires, kingdoms and NSAs have been a permanent part of the history of warfare. One of the first ever recorded conflicts between state and NSA is the biblical description of Abraham and his allies, an alliance of tribal NSAs who fought the combined armies of the four kings – each of them the leader of a state, one of them actually an emperor. If this presents a true incident then it occurred at approximately 1800 to 1900 BC. Yet, writing on the armaments of ancient NSAs is a great challenge since evidence is patchy, and there is a lack of indigenous sources about many NSAs that were illiterate. Researchers have to rely on western and Chinese records that were biased against their nomadic foes, and reflected only certain aspects of nomadic life. NSAs challenged and defeated ancient and medieval empires such as ancient Egypt, the city-states of Greece, Rome, Byzantium, and powerful dynasties in China and India, but were not represented fully in the sources. Rulers and the upper classes are over-represented in the historical sources while the latter dealt with NSAs such as rebels, tribes, “bandits”, and “barbarians” from a narrow perspective. Roman historians felt ashamed when they described insurgency as a war, and at times would totally ignore revolts as they regarded nomadic tribes as less worthy opponents. When ancient historians referred to military aspects of NSAs they often focused
on operations rather than on force design and logistics.\textsuperscript{169} Thus, Thompson accused ancient historians of being class biased and concealing information on insurgents against social order.\textsuperscript{170}

The employment of the term NSA in the pre-state era is problematic since often ancient governments had neither the will, nor the legitimacy or the means to disarm their subjects. Decline and collapse of empires, chiefly in the Middle Ages, blurred differences between states and NSAs; many states lacked central rule and were fragmented into independent or semi-independent principalities, kingdoms and city-states. Yet, states did exist before modernity and ancient and medieval political systems featured armed conflicts between sovereign and central authority against rebels. Therefore, the following chapter employs a broad interpretation of NSA to conduct an analysis of contests between rulers and rebels. In the past NSAs were largely an organized uprising against the rule of the local elite or an external power that was driven by political, social-economic, religious and national ambitions.\textsuperscript{171}

The Arming of Rebellious NSAs in Antiquity

Ancient NSAs armed themselves mainly with tools they found in their environment and by plundering defeated enemy troops and garrisons. An early example is presented in The Six Secret Teachings (1997) – strategic advice and tactical instructions given in the mid-eleventh century B.C. by a famous general, T’ai Kung to KingsWen and Wu, the founders of the Chou dynasty. Sawyer claims that this is the only ancient Chinese military classic written from the perspective of revolutionary activity, because it served the Chou kings’ subversive plans against the powerful Shang dynasty, to overturn its six hundred years of domination. The former were compelled to consider employing limited resources and limited forces to attack a vastly superior foe. T’ai Kung advised King Wu to acquire his weapons in the immediate environment, arguing that the tools for supplying the military are all to be found in ordinary human activity. Specifically, hoes can be used as spears and spear-tipped halberds, large

hoes, axes, saws, mortars and pestles are tools for attacking walls; raincoats of straw and large umbrellas serve as armour and protective shields.\textsuperscript{172}

Similar rebel activity was recorded in the Roman Empire. In the 180s A.D. Maternus, a deserter from the Roman army formed a band of ex-soldiers and peasants, which was active in both Gaul and Spain. Since they were military men they probably carried their weapons with them. At first they plundered small villages and estates; as more men joined them, they began to attack large cities and release prisoners. Presumably, the rebels could acquire additional weaponry with the great wealth and booty they collected. Eventually, the rebels infiltrated Italy and Rome, and an unverified report claimed that they devised a plot to assassinate Commodus the emperor, which was thwarted at the last minute. Maternus was betrayed by some of his companions; he was caught and beheaded in 187 A.D.\textsuperscript{173}

The Jewish rebellion against Rome (66-74 A.D.) started as a mass movement armed mainly with stones and incendiaries but some of the rebels had their own weapons. They seized a vast quantity of Roman military equipment from a Roman garrison they looted in Jerusalem and from the defeated Roman army of the governor of Syria, Cestius Gallus, including spear-throwers, stone-throwers and battering-rams (66 A.D.).\textsuperscript{174} Josephus argued that the leadership of the Jewish rebels made an effort to organize a regular army out of the rival paramilitary groups during the months before the arrival of Vespasian's expedition. Josephus was nominated as the military commander of Galilee and claimed that he fortified that region, armed his soldiers, and trained them to become a disciplined military unit based on the Roman model, though some scholars doubted his contribution. All over Jerusalem insurgents were forging their spears and suits of armour. Price argues that Jews might also have purchased arms from local manufacturers who supplied the Roman army.\textsuperscript{175} Yet, the Jewish rebels had limited military skills and could not cope with the far stronger army led by Vespasian and Titus, particularly in the open fields and against Romans artillery. The former carried mainly short swords and daggers and specialized in stone-slings. They lacked a

\textsuperscript{172}Six Secret, 2, 88-89, 112-113.
significant quantity of heavy artillery (javelins, sling engines) with a longer range; nor did they have cavalry or skill in archery, or the defense of body armour. Yet, Jewish rebels in Jerusalem deployed the artillery systems taken earlier from the Romans to defend the city during the long siege (70 A.D.) reusing ballista balls that had fallen in the city. Josephus stated that they had 300 spear-throwers and 40 stone-throwers, though he possibly exaggerated. Archeological finds, such as in Gamla, revealed that the besieged Jews used any heavy tools they could acquire against the Romans. It seems that they were not short of weapons during the long siege, thus lack of weaponry had no role in the fall of the city.

Shimeon Bar Kokhba commanded the second Jewish revolt against Rome (132-135 A.D.) during the rule of Emperor Hadrian. Jewish rebels planned the revolt against the Romans for a long time and stored weapons in underground hideouts. They acquired weapons from weapon-factories built by the Roman army in Judea to supply its Middle-East troops and staffed with Jewish workers who purposely manufactured sub-standard weapons. After a weapon was disqualified by Roman quality-control inspectors it was transferred to the rebels rather than being melted into raw material. Sling stones and arrowheads belonging to Bar Kokhba’s army were discovered in hidden complexes mainly in Gamla, the Judea Plain and Desert. Stiebel argues that mainly in the last phase of the revolt Bar Kokhba’s rebels modified weapons due to a shortage. At a hidden cave in Judea Desert he found a wooden spear, the head of which was made of a catapult bolt probably taken from the Romans. Rebels collected and reused arrows and arrowheads. Scholars argue that Bar Kokhba had a pirate fleet, originally fishing ships given to him by Rebuy Alazar Ben Kharsom, a wealthy Jewish noble. The rebels used the ships to smuggle weapons and combatants into Palestine. The Romans killed Ben Kharsom because of his support of Bar Kokhba.

176 Price, Jerusalem, 53-54, 121, 190, 212; Josephus, Jewish war, 190, 212.
Decline of empires and the dismantling of their armies created more opportunities for NSAs’ looting activity. For example, in 411 the Vandals invaded Spain, then crossed to North Africa where they captured Carthage and an imperial fleet in 425. They established a kingdom in the region of Carthage that posed the first serious challenge to Roman domination of the Mediterranean since the Punic Wars 650 years earlier. The Vandals became pirates, sacking Rome in 455 and a decade later used fire ships at Syracuse to repulse a naval expedition dispatched from Constantinople.180

Rebellious slaves faced more constraints to arm themselves compared to other NSAs. They sought their freedom though usually lacked weapons, food, and other supplies. Yet, huge slave uprisings, each involving many tens of thousands, broke out first in Sicily and then in Italy between 140-70 B.C. These were the First and Second Sicilian Slave Wars (135-132 and 104-100 B.C. respectively) and Spartacus’s rebellion (73-71 B.C.). Scholars argued that Rome’s policy toward the slaves was wrong in many respects including the security aspect.181 Strauss notes that farmer slaves of the plains who worked as herders of livestock were left free and were legally armed to drive their herds from pasture to pasture. Their knowledge of the backcountry made them experts at hiding from the authorities. Many slaves knew how to use weapons well, since many were prisoners of war who had been trained in foreign armies.182 The Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus argued that the rebel army in Sicily armed themselves with any working tools they could get, such as axes, hatchets, slings, sickles and even cooking spits as well as slings, and fire-hardened spears. The rebels slaughtered thousands of the inhabitants of Sicily, sparing those skilled in the manufacture of weapons, probably swords; they put them in chains and set them to work in workshops. They were also able to supply themselves with a large quantity of captured weapons and to pursue their aims with greater confidence.183

The Spartacus Slave War took place south of Rome and the rebels began their revolt with kitchen knives and cooking spits. Being ex-gladiators Spartacus and seventy-four warriors were familiar with weaponry and warfare; they armed themselves with wooden clubs and daggers that they seized from travelers on the roads. They went on to make such homemade weapons as vine-woven shields and fire-hardened spears. According to the second

century Greek historian, Appian, as the rebellion grew stronger Spartacus’ group became an army with 70,000 soldiers (120,000 when they marched to Rome), armed with contemporary weapons including swords and spears that they forged in the slave barracks. They also purchased iron and copper and had large quantities of basic metals for weapons. Therefore Spartacus’ rebels were well supplied and able to stage frequent raids and employ a cavalry force. In 71 B.C. Spartacus’ revolt was ended by the army of Marcus Crassus.  

Many NSAs produced their own weapons based on available resources (wood, iron) and the local tradition of craftsmen (such as sword-smiths and bowers).

- The Celtiberians who inhabited central and North East Iberia rose up against the heavy burden of Rome’s rule in 154-133 B.C. They were the most warlike and best armed of the peninsular races and conducted efficient guerrilla warfare against the Romans. Only after many defeats did the Romans finally conquer the capital, Numantia, in the great siege of 133 B.C. Livermore argues that the Celtiberian military strength derived from their superior weapons – especially the short stubby thrusting sword which was based on that of their Celtic ancestors and the fact that Iberia was rich in mines. Arribas argues that Iberian craftsmen excelled in metalwork and especially in the making of weapons and the use of pure iron was one of the reasons for the high quality of their swords. Arribas notes that foreign merchants visited ancient Iberia and Iberian metal traders travelled to other regions including North Africa and Italy. Originally from Greece, the famed Iberian weapon of antiquity – the falcatasword— was probably introduced to the peninsula by Iberian mercenaries.

- Queen Boudica of the Iceni tribe led the people of East Anglia in a rebellion against Roman rule in 60 A.D. Celtic blacksmiths and bronze workers were very skillful and the Iceni produced fine iron swords and light chariots that enabled them to overrun East and South Anglia. Webster argues that the natives were weak in weaponry in comparison to the Roman army because they produced fine individual pieces for the chiefs and their senior warriors.

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184 Strauss, 195-196; Brent D. Shaw, *Spartacus and the Slave Wars. A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2001), 140-143.
only. The idea of mass-production of weapons and armour for the levies never arose; they were lucky to have a reliable sword. The limited armament (spears and fire) of the Britons was sufficient for the initial phase of the revolt as they trapped the Roman colonists and ambushed the Roman Ninth legion. The far more organized and better-trained Romans defeated and slaughtered the rebels a few days later in a set-piece battle in the Midlands.\textsuperscript{187}

- Goths played an important role in the collapse of Rome and were expert smiths. Penrose claims that Goths were not dependent on Rome for high-quality weapons. They made use of extensive, accessible iron deposits throughout Germany. Penrose notes that archaeologists have found evidence of sizable workshops probably used by the Goths from the first century A.D. The skills of Germanic smiths and other craftsmen were as good as or better than those from the Roman Empire. The magnificent gold and garnet-decorated equipment and pattern-welded blades are clear evidence of their ability and surpass the mass-produced weapons of the late Roman arms factories. Once they crossed the Danube Goths plundered superior Roman equipment and defeated the Romans in the battle of Adrianople (378 A.D.).\textsuperscript{188}

To a lesser extent foreign forces supported friendly NSAs in wars against their foes. Judas Maccabee who commanded the Jewish revolt against the Seleucid Empire (167-160 B.C.) mobilized Jewish soldiers from the Diaspora. At the outset the Jewish rebels were weak in weaponry, their first weapons privately purchased or manufactured or improvised from farming tools. Lack of siege weapons forced the Jewish rebels to conduct longer sieges over Seleucid forts. However, the two Books of Maccabees describe the Jewish rebels acquiring modern weapons as loot after surprising and defeating Seleucid forces by employing guerrilla tactics.\textsuperscript{189} Yet these books, the main sources on the revolt, do not classify the Jewish troops. Researcher Bezalel Bar-Kochva has argued, based on analysis of the course of a few battles (at least one of them frontal) and examination of Josephus’ version of the Maccabee’s revolt, that having armed themselves with their enemy's weapons, long pikes and shields, the Jews


\textsuperscript{188}Ammianus Marcellinus, 421; Jane Penrose, \textit{Rome and Her Enemies. An Empire Created and Destroyed by War} (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2005), 274.

\textsuperscript{189}2 Maccabee, 8:33, 8: 39; Michael Avi Yona, “The Hasmoneans State,” in \textit{The Hasmoneans during the Hellenistic Period}, eds. Uriel Rappaport and Israel Ronen (Tel Aviv: The Open University, 1993), 193-196(Hebrew).
adopted their enemy's tactics employing infantry as well as cavalry in some of the major battles after the purification of the temple (162 B.C.). Judea was not a horse-breeding country, and the Jews in Palestine had no tradition of cavalry and phalanx warfare. Bar-Kochva assumes that at least some of the phalangites and cavalrymen were Jews from abroad, mainly soldiers in the Egyptian Ptolemaic army – a major rival of the Seleucid Empire that might encourage such revolt and maintained close contact with theirirreligious center in Jerusalem. Cavalry arrived also from a former Ptolemaic kingdom in trans-Jordan that allied with the rebels. Moreover, Judas and Jonathan, his brother, were politically astute and signed a treaty of friendly alliance with Rome (161 B.C.) – at that time a newly emerging great power and already a rival of the Hellenistic kingdoms (the Romans had fought and defeated the Seleucids a few decades before). There is, however, no evidence that Rome provided military support for the Jews.

Securing military support including direct intervention from a third party could be significant for the outcome of an NSA revolt. This was probably a major reason for the failure of the Mytilenean revolt against the Athenian Empire (428-427 B.C.), as told by Thucydides: Mytilene was an oligarchy on the island of Lesbos that aligned with Athens during the first phase of the Peloponnesian War (431 B.C.). They were under Athenian rule but could keep their own army, mainly their fleet. The Mytileneans’ leadership secretly collaborated with most of the Lesbian communities to secede from the alliance with Athens and declare a unified independent state, relying on the buildup of their army (they recruited archers and collected supplies from the Black Sea region) and hoping to gain the support of Sparta. After the plan was discovered Athens rapidly set a naval blockade against the Mytileneans who pleaded for Sparta’s intervention. The Peloponnesian League decided to rescue Mytilene by attacking Athens from land and sea. Yet they were slow and unenthusiastic in executing their plans while Athens tightened the siege against the Mytileneans and sent a large fleet as a show of strength along the coast of Peloponnesus. Lintott argues that a Spartan military advisor did arrive at Mytilene and gave arms to the local people hoping they would fight Athens, but the former rose up against their own rulers because food supplies in the city were running out. Thus, Spartan ships arrived at Lesbos too late to help the government of Mytilene, which had already surrendered

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190 1 Maccabee, 8; 2 Maccabee, 12:24.
to Athens (427 B.C.). The Spartan and Peloponnesian ships quickly backed away, pressured by the Athenians. 193

Similarly, Persian expansion in Asia Minor in the second half of the sixth century put local Greek communities under Persian control. As subjects of the Persian Empire, Persian satraps had to pay tribute to the king and provide troops and rowers to the Persian armed forces. They were not disarmed and could keep their fleet. Miletus, a major Greek city in Ionia, on the western coast of Anatolia ruled by Aristagoras the tyrant, and other Greek cities defected and revolted against the Persians (499 B.C.). Aristagoras took command of the Ionian fleet sailing to Sparta in an unsuccessful search for allies; he had more success in Athens and in Eretria on the island of Euboea. The Athenians voted to send twenty ships to assist the Ionians who commenced their revolt and then raided Sardis, the seat of the Persian satrap, but failed to capture the well-fortified city, and were defeated by Persian reinforcements. At this stage the Athenians sailed back home and kept out of the conflict, leaving the Greek cities to stand alone against the Persian Empire. The much stronger Persian army recaptured Miletus after defeating the Ionian navy near the island of Lade in 494 B.C. 194

Conversely, Agesilaus the First, ruler of Sparta, traveled to Egypt (361 B.C.) with a large expedition of mercenaries and Spartan military advisors to liberate the Egyptians from the Persians. Greek sources claimed that his military expertise played a significant role in securing the Egyptian victory over the Persians. Athens also sent great expedition (354 B.C.) to Egypt to help the locals in another revolt against Persian rule. 195

Neighboring countries could assist in the buildup of NSAs’ military force. For example, Quintus Sertorius, a Roman commander and governor, led a Celtiberian rebellion against Rome (80-73 B.C.) and inflicted remarkable defeats against Roman generals by conducting land and marine guerrilla warfare. At the start of his revolt he used the Canary Islands and Mauritania as sanctuaries where he could reorganize his troops, build a fleet of light ships, and ally with the Berbers who sent an expeditionary force. Back in Spain he used the mountains of South Spain as a base, breaking Roman supply lines by means of ambushes,

193 Andrew Lintott. Violence, Civil Strife and Revolution in the Classical City (London: Croom Helm, 1982), 105.
flanking movements and surprise forced marches, and cut off provisioning by blockading the coast with pirate vessels. Roman historians claimed that he remained undefeated but fell victim to an assassination plot of conspirators among his deputies.\textsuperscript{196}

\textbf{Facilitators and Constraints of NSAs’ Arming in Antiquity}

Lawrence Keeley describes warfare between pre-state societies, mainly tribes, based on ethnographic and historical records and compares it to modern war. His work exceeds the scope of this thesis and it is only addressed because Keeley highlights the significance of the arming of NSAs. He states that war between non-civilized entities was characterized by limited logistic capabilities in comparison to civilized armies, and that affected tribes’ ability to sustain combat and continuous maneuvering (after a few days their ammunition and food were exhausted) but not necessarily their capacity to conduct war. Keeley attributes that deficiency to the lack of strong centralized leadership, a lower level of surplus production, the smaller population of non-state societies and limited transportation capacities. Yet, these deficiencies were determined by the social organization, economic efficiency and cultural values of tribal life, rather than being disorganized, unprofessional, weakly led and so on.\textsuperscript{197}

Rebels in the ancient world coped with tremendous obstacles and challenges. In addition to powerful and ruthless regimes they were poor in resources and logistics. Their weaponry served their needs as long as they were on the move in search of fresh supplies, with short term goals being robbery and pillage; otherwise they were incapable of supporting armies for a long period. When food and plunder were not available their military strength diminished. This fact and chronic lack of discipline meant that rebels could rarely conduct campaigns with long-term objectives. Usually, ancient NSAs could crush state armies only by surprise and in set-piece battles the latter’s technical superiority ensured their eventual triumph.\textsuperscript{198} For example, among the Germanic tribes facing the early Roman Empire only chiefs and richer warriors could afford horses, swords, shields, body armour and helmets. Tribesmen dedicated many swords to the gods of war and deposited them in bogs, usually after they had been smashed or bent. Most Germanic warriors fought on foot with spear or long lance; they were naked, without body protection except when they were fortunate enough to take it from a fallen foe. The throwing axe (called \textit{Franciska} among the Franks)

\textsuperscript{198} Ellis, \textit{Barrel}, 38-39.
was widespread in Germany and elsewhere because it delivered a powerful amour-piercing blow and yet was still economical in its use of iron – an important factor in metal-poor societies of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. 199

Yet, political and technological factors facilitated NSAs’ operational plans and the buildup of their forces. In the pre-state era people faced fewer constraints on acquiring weapons and could carry them openly. In many tribal communities all men were expected to carry a weapon; in Athens and in Rome the right to bear arms was the mark of a freeman. 200 Ancient NSAs could fight with weapons they produced based on raw materials they found in their immediate environment. That is, the simplicity of the old labor division facilitated the acquisition of arms, and rebels did not need a complex logistical operation to get weapons. In this context, most ancient weapons served single warriors (swords were sometimes named by their owners); they were relatively simple to produce and easy to use. To some extent, that probably balanced power differences between NSAs and powerful imperial armies. 201 In Neolithic China, for example, weapons were crafted from stone, bone, and perhaps bronze. Arrows and spears comprised the missile weapons; combat axes, knives, and staffs, the shock weapons. 202 According to Khol in late Bronze Age Eurasian steppe settlements nearly everyone seemingly could – at some level – fashion or rework their metal tools and weapons; functional bronze tools and weapons were increasingly available in central Asia. 203 Xenophon, the Greek historian of the fourth century B.C. recounted how a plotter against the regime of Sparta visited an iron-market in the city and showed his colleague many knives, swords, skewers, axes, hatchets, and pruning-knives. The plotter argued that all the tools with which men work earth, wood or stone, were all weapons. 204 Finally, according to Bedoyere, in Roman Britain and among the Goths, urban, military and village settlements produced evidence of metalworking, including weapons; it was an everyday craft or skill that virtually every settlement would have had someone reasonably competent in. 205


201 Bradbury, Routledge, 249.


Ancient political systems and systems of subordination are among the most fundamental factors that shaped the armament of NSAs. Old empires usually employed controls that facilitated the planning and commencement of revolts. Wees argues that in the classical age, when a conquering state annexed a territory along with its inhabitants, the latter were not necessarily reduced to subordinate status but given equal rights. In other cases the defeated communities had to pay tribute and send troops on demand, and were not called enemies but subordinate allies. That is, potential rebels were not expected to disarm themselves. To illustrate this:

- Mieroop argues that Assyria of the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. did not want to exert direct control over regions beyond its traditional borders. The intention was to exact tribute and enforce political obedience, and local rulers were left in power as long as they complied with Assyrian demands.

- Member-states of the Peloponnesian League (formed in the sixth century B.C.) led by Sparta and the Delian League (477-404 B.C.) led by Athens were under the latter’s hegemony but could keep their armies and fleets, being committed to send troops in times of war. Therefore, when they defected from the alliance and rose up against Sparta or Athens they possessed ready military forces. But if the revolt failed – as it usually did – Athens and Sparta, like other old empires – would severely punish and disarm the rebels.\(^{206}\)

- Robinson argues that Rome considered conquered land and peoples only as *praeda imperii*, designed to enrich the conqueror, while disregarding the necessity of establishing a modus vivendi acceptable to the conquered. Roman unwillingness to undertake systematic military and administrative obligations provided a fertile breeding ground for resistance movements.\(^{207}\)

Ancient empires established powerful armies that conquered many countries and secured the superiority of their dominances for centuries. These empires employed NSAs as an


important asset in the buildup of their force, but consequently facilitated proliferation of weapons and military tactics among potential foes. Yallichev states that the Sumerians, Egyptians, Hittites, Assyrians, Israelites, Persians, Greeks, Macedonians and the Romans all resorted for diverse reasons to the hiring of mercenaries at various stages in their histories. Mercenary soldiering was an extremely ancient pastime, perhaps almost as ancient as organized warfare itself. Egyptian infantry included Nubian tribesmen used in the early New Kingdom (1565-1085 B.C.) as skirmishers; followed (from around 1200 B.C.) by the Sea Peoples, originally Indo-European tribal peoples, mainly Philistines. Rameses the Second looked for the latter’s specialty in metal-sword fighting. King David – himself a mercenary in the service of Achisk, a Philistine king before becoming a king himself – recruited a whole corps of mercenaries, mainly Philistines, Canaanites, Hittites and Carties. They captured the much-coveted Jerusalem in 1000 B.C. and served as the king’s bodyguard, willing to fight even their fellow countrymen. Yalichev argues that David could not have created his empire without the loyal assistance of his mercenary troops.208 Jewish cavalry archers accompanied Alexander to Egypt as the East has been archer country since an early period. Later, Jewish rebels employed archers, mounted and on foot, against Alexander’s heirs, the Seleucids.209

Germanic and Turkish tribesmen were recruited to the Roman army as mercenaries or auxiliary units under their leaders. They played an important role in securing the empire’s borders and prolonging its existence; many of the tribal chiefs and senior warriors were re-socialized to Roman culture and became part of the Roman aristocracy (Romanization). Yet many others kept their cultural identity and led their people in invasions of the empire’s territory, using knowledge and weapons acquired during their service. The more Rome relied on tribal soldiers and secured more autonomy and resources for the tribal communities, the easier they could arm themselves and challenge Roman authority. For instance, in 377 a Gothic unit of the Roman army rebelled before the battle of Adrianople and went over to the Visigoths’ army.210

Nomadic NSAs enjoyed an additional significant advantage – they had built up the core of their military force far away from imperial supervision, before arriving in Europe, China or other civilized cultures, thus managing to surprise their stronger foes with new weapons and tactics. The Sarmatians, for example, were steppe nomads from central Asia in the fourth century B.C. They invaded and defeated the Scythian kingdom (in Persia). One contributing factor may have been the Sarmatian nobles’ horses that enabled them to field heavy cavalry with both man and horse in armour. Supported by their own mounted archers, they must have enjoyed a real advantage over the lighter Scythian cavalry. Huns invaded East Europe from the Asian steppes in the fourth century A.D. Terrain (wide spaces) and climate (dry and cold) conditions in their homeland had a great influence on their military weaponry: cavalry composed of large even-tempered horses that could find grazing on their own, and the powerful composite bows shooting arrows tipped with bone that was the most powerful personal weapon in the early Middle Ages.

### NSAs and the Arms Trade in Antiquity

The arms trade has been an integral part of commerce since antiquity. Phoenicians, masters of trade of the ancient world, exported bronze weapons to communities along the Mediterranean, such as to southern Spain and France during the seventh century B.C. Artifacts from classical Greece found in graves of local rulers and nobles in Southern Russia, indicate that weapons produced in Athens (swords, shields) were imported. Chinese imported the chariot and the composite bow from west Asia forming one weapon system as early as 1500 B.C. NSAs could find it very difficult to engage in arms trade since empires (such as Athens, Rome, Persia, and Chinese dynasties) supervised and secured trade and trade routes, imposing taxes, collecting tariffs on goods and regulating the flow of commodities. Yet, some information implied that NSAs who were involved in insurgency engaged in arms trade. Against this background it seems that constraints over ancient foreign trade were limited. Mieroop, for example, argues that in the Near East of the early second millennium private entrepreneurs, without direct involvement with any regime, undertook trade activity, and often commercial concerns kept states from blocking traders even in times of war.

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212 Mieroop, History, 235; Bradbury, Routledge, 248.
Political boundaries did not seem to affect the work of sixth-century B.C. merchants in the Near East.214

Ancient commercial activity was characterized by international trade that resulted in collaboration between states and NSAs. Cunliffe argues that in the Hallstatt period (750-450 B.C.) the Celtic communities of the west (in the West Hallstatt region of the Rhine-Danube zone and the Mestea of Iberia) developed increasingly close contacts with the Mediterranean zone (Greek and Etruscan). Commodities such as metals flowed eastwards, while luxury goods like horses and weapons would have been used for reciprocal exchanges.215 Ellis claims that the Romans adopted the Celts’ better weapons (swords, lances, and pikes), military equipment (body armour, longer shields and iron helmets) and tactics (the use of javelins, war chariots and cavalry).

From late first century A.D. extensive trade relationships evolved between the Roman Empire and the Germanic tribes across the Rhine frontier. Heather assesses that Roman merchants imported vast quantities of iron from Germanic Europe, probably to produce arms. German tribes in return imported Roman goods, including weapons, which came to be associated with high social status. Deposits of antiquities including Roman weapons and armour, dated from the first four centuries, were discovered in Denmark and various parts of Germany.216 Todd argues that as early as the first century B.C. Goths imported Roman weapons, especially swords, some in illegal trade.217

From another aspect, tradesmen were attracted to Roman military camps because these formed an important market, and contained a craft industry, chiefly a workshop (fabrica) that manufactured bricks and weapons as required. Merchants purchased metal products from Roman soldiers and sold them beyond the camps into the heart of the uncivilized countries. This is an early example of leaking of weapons from the state’s army to

217Todd, Everyday Life. 103.
NSAs. Sometimes these merchants acted almost as scouts before a conquest, going ahead of the soldiers; sometimes they followed on afterwards. Another example is the importation of bronze and iron weapons from China during the Han dynasty (second century A.D.) by different communities in Korea and Japan who were under China’s sphere of influence.\(^{218}\)

Asian NSAs, mainly nomads, facilitated international trade including arms via the Silk Road. Since the first century B.C. nomad groups and confederacies, such as the Xiongnu and Yuezhi in the Central Asian steppe, and to the west – the Wusuns and the Caravants – all engaged in trade relationships with the Empire of Han (China), Parthia (Persia), and Kushan (India). The nomads in Asia linked Europe and China and were part of a system of commercial routes on both land and sea.\(^{219}\) Liu argues that when empires declined (second and third centuries B.C.) and no great power controlled and protected the Central Asia Silk Road, large quantities of silk continued to pass through this region, thanks to autonomous trading networks sustained by NSAs including religious institutions, merchants’ organizations, and local communities. The Silk Road was an early manifestation of a system of systems since various independent social organizations collaborated in operating the route driven by different interests.\(^{220}\)

**The Arming of Rebellious NSAs in the Middle Ages**

**Implications of decentralization of political power over NSAs’ arming**

NSAs plundered and produced weapons during the Middle Ages more intensively than before. Harke argues that looting of weapons in Anglo-Saxon Britain had a social role; it brought in goods needed to attract and maintain social order. Looting supported the ideology of a heroic society\(^{221}\). Rebellious NSAs were supported by external forces but as a minor source of armament that usually included weapons and troops as one system. Against this background significant political and social changes that occurred in medieval Europe and Asia impacted upon NSAs’ armament efforts. The pre-nation-states era often featured a lack of strong centralized government, frequent internal conflicts within ruling elites, and the


emergence of local forces. Failures of governments to provide basic living conditions and security for the people encouraged rural and urban social groups to establish private armies. In some countries rulers encouraged local militias and defence forces as a precaution against banditry. Nobilities and warlords were first to take advantage of the growing political vacuum and they established autonomous military power (knights and mercenaries). NSAs that were not part of ruling elites such as nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, peasants, small merchants, and deprived peoples dominated by empires, also exploited the diffusion of political power to arm themselves. For example:

- After the decline of Rome in 486 and probably before, there was no longer central control over the iron mines in the Rhineland, and that probably facilitated rebel tribes to acquire metals for their weaponry. Newark noted that rebel tribes took over famous sword and armour workshops in Italy and elsewhere that used to be operated by the Romans.\textsuperscript{222}

- Since the second half of the eleventh century as Byzantine rule had weakened and its indigenous army dismantled, tribal NSAs were free as never before to collect booty, including weapons, across the Eastern Empire. A band of rebellious Norman mercenaries began to conquer Byzantine Italy for themselves; Turkish tribes that were asked to stabilize the Balkans, soon started roaming and raiding Byzantine territory, and when the government asked the Turks to suppress mercenary rebels, the former occupied the larger part of Asia Minor.\textsuperscript{223}

- The decline of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) facilitated many revolts in China from the eighth century. Most prominent were the An Lushan rebellion (755-763) and the Huang Chao rebellion (875-884) that resulted in the killing of millions of people and led to the downfall of the Tang Dynasty in 907. In the eighth century Tang’s central government no longer had the means to provide security or famine relief; droughts and famine in the Central Plains during the 860s and early 870s contributed to the misery and poverty that fed the ranks of bandits. Huang Chao, a salt merchant, toppled the Tang emperor and established a new dynasty. He began as a leader of


local militia of a few thousand of peasants and merchants and soon became a commander of more than 150,000 soldiers. His army besieged cities, defeated the demoralized government forces, conquered vast territories, and finally captured the capital city Chang’an in 881. Huang Chao declared himself the emperor of the new state of Da Qi that lasted for three years. His operations probably relied on acquiring large stocks of arms.\(^{224}\)

- Nizami states that the region of Ghur in Afghanistan possessed two of the most important requisites of war in the Middle Ages – horses and iron. The Ghurids who were subjects of regional empires exported armour, weapons and war equipment to neighboring areas, and paid it as tribute to the Ghaznavid and Seljuk empires. Sultan Masud al Ghayna employed Ghurid officers as specialists in siege warfare in his army. The Ghurids took full advantage of their resources when they rose up against their weakened masters, and from subjects of Muslim empires they became a Muslim sultanate that seized vast territory in central Asia from the mid-twelfth century.\(^{225}\)

Bradbury claims that West Romans and “barbarians” borrowed from each other and there was no clear distinction between the arms of one and the other on the eve of the disintegration of the Western Empire.\(^{226}\) Byzantium and its tribal foes fought with similar weapons for the simple reason that the Byzantine army gradually relied on non-Greek soldiers and tribal mercenaries (mainly German, Turkish and Slavic tribes) as part of a strategy of handling the imminent danger of nomadic attacks and incursions. They served as auxiliaries, supplied to the empire as complete units under their own chiefs by different tribes, and later they could be units serving under contract (mercenaries). Byzantium had neither the capability nor the interest in disarming its new subjects.\(^{227}\) Against this background, NSAs facilitated diffusion of military technologies. Luttwak notes that the Byzantine military manual, known as the Strategikon of Emperor Maurikios, describes various military items of Byzantium equipment as of “Avar type.” Luttwak assumes that the Avars (the first of the Turkic mounted archers to reach the west) acquired the designs of their

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weapons from China, from where they originated, and Iran whose culture they encountered on their way westward as soon as they reached the trading cities of central Asia. Ganshof claims that the Avars deployed sophisticated siege equipment for the conquest of Byzantine fortress cities during the late sixth century, and they shared this technology with their Slav allies. By the early 770s at the latest, the Saxons, who had even less direct contact with later Roman and early Byzantine military forces than the Avars and Slavs, employed stone-throwing catapults (petrariace) which could be used for knocking breaches in the walls of fortifications.\footnote{228 Benard S. Bachrach, \textit{Armies and Politics in the Early Medieval West} (Aldershot, U.K.: Variorum, 1993), 113-114; Luttwak, \textit{Grand Strategy}, 58-59, 275; Florin Curta, “Introduction.” In \textit{The Other Europe in the Middle Ages: Avars, Bulgars, Khazars, and Cumans}, eds. Florin Curta and Roman Kovalev (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 1-12; Mark Whittow, \textit{The Making of Byzantium}, 600-1025 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).}

In the middle ages NSAs produced their own weapons as before but as their state-foes weakened these weapons served them more effectively. Haldon argues that the victories of the Asian steppe tribes over Byzantium stemmed among other things from the fact that they held the self-manufactured powerful composite reflex bow that was not native to the empire. Therefore, in the ninth and early tenth century Byzantium recruited mounted archers from among the Chazars, Magyars and others.\footnote{229 Haldon, \textit{Byzantium Wars}, 86.} Vikings skillful in production of metal weapons helped the Vikings to gain an operational advantage over Byzantium, Gaul and other kingdoms. The iron ore found in bogs and lakes in Scandinavia was often of rather poor quality, but was a valuable source of raw material. Viking weapon-smiths produced most of their arms including swords (single and double-edged) and battle axes of many types, spearheads made of iron, bows and iron arrow-heads. They developed a warship with a shallow draught which could navigate small rivers and land on most beaches. It was small enough to be rowed rapidly yet sufficiently sturdy to withstand the surging ocean and with enough deck room to bear more troops and weapons than most opposing European warships. They also imported some of the finest swords and spearheads from the Frankish empire. The Vikings used their sailing skills and ocean-going vessels to dominate the long-distance trade routes of northern Europe in the eighth and the ninth centuries.\footnote{230 Anne Pedersen, “Viking Weaponry,” in \textit{The Viking World}, eds., Brink Stefan and Neil Price (London: Routledge, 2008),204-208; Paul F. Gavaghan,\textit{The Cutting Edge. Military History of Antiquity and Early Feudal Times} (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), 373; Ian Peirce. “Swords of the Viking Age,” in Introduction to the Viking Sword, ed., Ewart Oakeshott (Woodbridge, U.K.: The Boydell Press, 2002).} Sindak claims that Viking trade operated as a network. Long-distance exchange took place in bulk along routes between
specific localities, where large cargoes were loaded or unloaded. It is assumed that once nomad NSAs became settlers they could improve their production capabilities and trade opportunities increased. For example, Hoffmeyer claims that Toledo, well known for its fine blades, was prominent in the sword industry in Spain. The Jewish merchants of Toledo traded with swords and exported weapons to the entire Mediterranean world in the thirteenth century.

NSAs’ constraints - logistic and other military skills

The Byzantine, Chinese dynasties and other medieval empires succeeded in preserving their rule for centuries despite constant security challenges against a variety of NSAs. One reason for that was a difference in logistic skills. NSAs’ limited armaments served the utilization of their forces as long as they engaged in guerrilla warfare (small-scale raids, piracy) but their limited logistical infrastructures were a major constraint once they initiated national invasions and engaged in conventional warfare. Nor could they engage in siege warfare and capture well-fortified cities. Sedlar explains that an enemy force might invade Byzantine territory with relative ease, but without the benefit of an adequate supply system it could survive only by foraging. Byzantine military thinkers wrote detailed manuals on resisting sieges that prescribed long lists of weaponry which required raw materials. Contemporary NSAs were not capable of planning or producing on that level. Therefore, in the seventh and eighth centuries NSAs such as Avars and Saracen (Arab) forces blockaded Constantinople, but to no avail. In the power balance between NSAs and states of the early Middle Ages as in Antiquity superior state organization including logistical skills were key factors.

In this context, the disintegration of the Huns after Attila’s death (453) highlighted the implications of the logistical constraints of NSAs over utilization of their forces. Thompson argues that the armament of the Huns was critical to the rise and collapse of their power. Being steppe nomads, horsemen, often on the move, they did not have the resources or the infrastructure to manufacture their weapons on a large scale. They acquired their weapons (powerful dreaded bows, long cavalry sabres, and lassos) by plunder and mainly by trade.

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233 Todd, Everyday Life, 120-121; Gavaghan, Cutting Edge, 372.
with other countries since they could carry with them only a limited supply of raw materials—whether metal, wood, or textiles. Their bows were short and made of horn and bone because they came from a treeless region and to improve their mobility.\textsuperscript{235}

As soon as the Huns began to wage war on a large scale their slender productive resources failed them and they were forced to rely on the Romans for their weapons. In return for their imports the Huns gave horses, meat, furs, and slaves. The establishment of the Hun Empire in Europe was associated with an exclusive trade, including in arms, between the Huns and East Romans. Thus, Attila made sure that Romans would guarantee the open access to their markets vital for his people. He and his successors collaborated with a group of European traders who strived to benefit from the Hun Empire’s prosperity. Once the Hun Empire started to destabilize after Attila’s death due to internal division and wars, the East Romans cut off the supply of goods, mainly weapons, to the Huns. In 455/6 the Emperor Marcian decreed a law that forbade the export of all weapons to the “barbarians” and of all materials for making weapons, specifically mentioning bows, arrows, and spears. The East Roman government closed the market towns and cut off the Huns’ supply of weapons. Thompson claims that the Huns weakened mainly because they had no productive resources of their own, and they depended entirely on their subjects and on the Eastern Romans.\textsuperscript{236}

Often NSAs were less capable or inclined to absorb new weapons in contrast to their state-foes. For example, the Byzantine army adapted the Huns’ composite bow as their weapon while the Goths failed to do this though they lived and fought together with their Hun overlords for decades. Luttwak claims that the Hun bow was very hard to manufacture while Germanic tribes presumably lacked expert bowyers; the former demanded endless training to acquire and preserve proficiency. Also, Germanic warfare culture did not view archery as an appropriate method of fighting in contrast to the more honorable hand to hand engagement. Luttwak argues that Byzantines were superior to most of the NSAs they faced because unlike the latter they were able to fight with many types of weapons.\textsuperscript{237} The Scots who rose up against the English (thirteenth century) were mainly spearmen. Taylor argues that all attempts to supersede the spear by the bow completely failed although the superiority of the latter, in

\textsuperscript{235} Thompson, \textit{Huns}, 7, 57.
\textsuperscript{236} Thompson, \textit{Huns}, 59-61, 189-195, 189-200.
\textsuperscript{237} Luttwak, \textit{Grand Strategy}, 11, 24, 295; Hall, 17.
the hands of the English, was manifested in many bloody fields. The few archers to be found in the ranks of the Scottish army used low quality bows and were not skillful archers.\textsuperscript{238}

Furthermore, a vital test for a NSA – once it conquered a land – was whether it was capable of securing its borders and establishing an independent state. The design of the NSA force including procurement of new weapons was a precondition. Franks – originally NSA – were able to conquer and unite most of western Christendom during the eighth and the ninth centuries. The transformation of the Franks from tribes engaged in raiding and plundering to the Carolingian dynasty that conquered vast territories and successfully defended its borders dictated a change in military tactics and weaponry, namely transformation from infantry to heavy cavalry. Gavaghan explains that Frankish armies came to include strong detachments of heavy attack cavalry, armed with lance and long sword which helped them take control of the huge province of Gaul and secure it for centuries. The Franks inherited much Roman technology and used it to defeat rival neighbors and invaders, such as the Visigoths, Almanni, Avar, Burgundians, Lombard, and Muslims.\textsuperscript{239} As semi-nomadic tribesmen Franks fought on foot or mounted with mainly javelin and axe; and as conquerors they developed an integrated force well trained and disciplined to scale walls under daunting conditions in which a key role was played by acquired artillery (heavy stone-throwing machines, battering rams, compound bows), engineers and logistic support. As an auxiliary arm they employed cavalry equipped with well-made swords, horses and a naval fleet for transport. The ability of the Franks to sustain lengthy sieges with an arsenal of weapons against fortress cities such as Barcelona and Tartosa was decisive.\textsuperscript{240}

Conversely, the Vandals, originally a nomadic NSA, established a kingdom in North Africa in the fifth century but failed to defend it due to, among other things, lack of military skills. They stayed committed to their mounted tactic armed mainly with spears and swords. They did not acknowledge the need to fortify their towns and acquire new weapons to defend their kingdom, thus making it much easier for the Byzantines to recapture Carthage in 533.\textsuperscript{241}

\textsuperscript{239} Gavaghan, \textit{Cutting Edge}, 342-343; Bachrach, \textit{Armies}, 2, 108, 115.
Social-economic dimension of medieval NSAs’ arming

The issue of western European States versus NSAs is rather more complicated than states versus NSAs in the ancient world and in later periods – in effect the feudal states themselves were very similar to NSAs in organization, especially when ruled by weak kings. The kings usually had a small standing army of noble knights and sergeants living in their court, directly under their command and serving as their private bodyguard. However, the majority of the feudal state's military strength was composed of a mobilization of the feudal vassals. By law each feudal vassal was required to respond when called by the king, however, in fact, each of the feudal lords was actually an NSA in his own right – and had under him a military force structured as a miniature of the king's, sometimes even larger than the king's private army. So if a feudal lord chose to rebel against the king's authority, though his army was ostensibly an NSA military force, it was identical in composition, weaponry, doctrine and training as the king's. In other words, there was no clear difference between the armies of a state and the armies of an NSA.242

Rebellious NSAs (such as peasants, nomadic tribes, peoples of vassal states) could not acquire the expensive weaponry of the knights and usually their revolts had limited effect, and failed to topple oppressive rulers, landlords and foreign invaders. For example, the English Peasants’ Revolt of 1138 erupted because of growing dissatisfaction over economic and political conditions.243 Lindsay and Grove argue that the rebels armed themselves with pole arms (billhooks, scythes, sickles) and with weapons they could carry according to the English law (swords, longbows). The authors explained that by training and arming the civilian population (some of them fought at the French Wars) King Edward III gave them weapons and later the mass turned their weapons against the upper class. He encouraged his subjects to use the bow. Intensive iron trade in Kent and communities of smugglers in Essex probably facilitated the arming of the rebels. They formed a large army (60,000 men), took control over substantial territories in East England and marched towards London. King Richard II manipulated the rebels when he granted their wishes and convinced them to return home; thereafter he did not keep his promises and hanged the rebel leaders. The rebels’

weaponry produced short-term gains, but they were not professional soldiers and could not
defend themselves successfully against the large military forces of the king and were finally
crushed.244

A few popular movements, whether of townspeople in the Low Countries, or farmers in
the Swiss valleys, or religious fanatics in Bohemia, showed that aristocratic armies could be
effectively challenged. Those NSAs effectively coordinated weapons and tactics that
neutralized the knights’ advantages (their capacity to break formation) and exposed their
weaknesses (vulnerable to missiles).245

- Medieval Welsh developed the longbow (1.8m in length with a 150-400m
range – longer than virtually any other bow), a deadly instrument of war that
could pierce a knight’s armour, and which provided the Welsh guerrillas with
exceptional firepower. Gam argues that the Welsh were among the most
outstanding practitioners of the art of partisan warfare. Because of the rough
mountainous forest ground in North Wales, lack of roads, wet weather and
limited resources for invaders, the Welsh longbow produced unusual
advantages for the local inhabitants who rebelled against the much stronger
Anglo-Norman rule during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The Welsh
longbow was relatively easy and quick to produce as it was made from a
single piece of yew wood. It was light, easily carried, and made no noise
when shooting at a rate of ten arrows or more per minute (although that
demanded long practice from childhood) in contrast to the heavily equipped
Norman cavalry who moved slowly forward thus being easy prey for the
Welsh ambushes.246 For decades Welsh terrorized their border with
England, looted and burned settlements and castles, while royal punitive
expeditions into Wales failed time after time. Finally the Welsh fell to the
English invaders, because among other things, they lacked logistic backup that
would enable them to sustain troops in the field over long periods. King
Edward the First who was impressed by the excellence of the Welsh archers

244 Kelly DeVries and Robert D. Smith, *Medieval Weapons: An Illustrated History of Their Impact* (Santa-
Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2007), 168.
245 Lewis H. Gam, *Guerrillas in History* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1971), 9; Michael Prestwich,
recruited them to his army and established an efficient bow-armed English infantry which shocked the French in the One Hundred Years War (1337-1453). Hardy’s detailed description of Welsh and English bowmen revealed that their armament was well integrated into their social status. “Norman Knights in mail armour on their costly, prancing destriers, their war horses were…..valiant and emulous and hot-headed but not often capable of imaginative cohesion or of the organization that could exploit advantages, or work together to counter reverses.” Conversely, often bowmen were drawn from villages and fields, poor, sometimes outlaws; men of no great estimation in the world but men of country skills and strength, accustomed to things of wood and finding a pleasing familiarity in the wooden bow. In this context, Robin Hood, English legendary folk hero of the fourteenth century, led a band of outlaws who robbed the rich to provide help for the poor. Their main weapon was the longbow.

- Swiss fought to establish independence from the House of Habsburg in the fourteenth century. On several occasions in the first half of the fourteenth century, an army of rural and urban rebels defeated several times the Austrian army that consisted largely of heavily armed knights. Much of the Swiss success depended on clever exploitation of the rugged Swiss Alpine terrain, and employment of self-manufactured weapons. In 1315 several thousand Swiss militia ambushed an Austrian expedition numbering between 2,000 and 3,000 soldiers, under the command of Duke Leopold of Austria. The invaders thought they would not face serious difficulty, but when they marched through the narrow pass between Morganton Mountain and Lake Aegeri, the Swiss moved out of hiding spots high on the steep slope of the pass, and sent rocks and logs down on the surprised Austrian knights. Smaller stones and arrows were also showered onto the cavalry column. Before the Austrians could regain order the Swiss infantry charged down the hill into the confused column. Using their famed halberd – with its cutting blade and vicious spike – the Swiss easily cut down most of the knights from their horses, killing them

248 Hardy, Longbow, 42, 56.
as they lay helpless on the ground. Deaths were numerous, with Duke Leopold himself barely able to flee. Halberds – a combination of an axe and a spear – were developed in Switzerland and became the most popular late medieval infantry staff-weapon, followed by the pike. The Swiss became the favoured late medieval mercenaries.250

Initial Implications of the Firearms Revolution for NSAs

McNeill argues that any major change in weapons and military organization affects politics and society by helping some people attain ends more easily than before, while putting new, perhaps insuperable, obstacles in the way of others. The advent of guns was such a change. Gunpowder for military use appeared in China in the ninth or tenth century and arrived in the Islamic World and then in Europe during the thirteenth century.251 Guns first appeared in China during the twelfth century, and they too 'travelled' through the Moslem domains to Europe, arriving there in the late thirteenth century. The emergence of firepower triggered significant worldwide political and economic processes that overshadowed NSAs’ activity. Hand-held firearms were generally less effective than longbows and crossbows – but the users could be trained to use them in a fraction of the time required to train longbowmen. Once models had been developed powerful enough to shatter castle walls towards the end of the fourteenth century, cannon were much more important in effecting tactical, strategic and political changes. The initial effects of the powerful firearms were negative regarding NSAs’ operational capabilities and the power balance between rulers and rebels. Yet the changes were gradual and the fifteenth century was the experimental stage before standardization of firearms’ production.252

Firearms were a crucial factor in the rise of highly centralized monarchical states in Europe and Asia. This was because the introduction of heavy cannon weakened the effectiveness of castles – whereas previously a rebellious vassal not strong enough to resist the king in the open could usually outlast the king’s army by withdrawing into his castles. Now kings could quickly punish rebellious vassals. Furthermore, the expense of manufacturing and

251 Hall, 41. According to Hall and other scholars non gunpowder “fire” was widely employed in China few centuries earlier.
maintaining large cannon-parks was prohibitive and usually only the royal treasury, based on taxation of an entire state, had the required funds. For instance, in central Asia the establishment of a group of “gunpowder empires” including the Ottoman Empire, the Safavid Empire, the Uzbek Khanate, and the Mughal Empire in India, controlled the major part of the continent during the sixteenth century. Eastwards, rulers of Burma, central Vietnam and Indonesia mobilized the new weapons to create centralized new states. In Japan the introduction of firearms in the 1500s hastened the unification of the country under a single ruler. Military warfare became more collective and less hand-to-hand in nature. In turn, the new weapons and the strengthening of the central authority also usually strengthened rulers’ power relative to that of rebellious NSAs who were almost incapable of acquiring the new technology.

Reid explains that acquisition and deployment of guns required more resources and better administration than local potentates could achieve. Governments had to buy copper and tin, control the manufacture of arms and raise infantry units trained to use hand-guns. The proper authority of the monarch meant, among other things, that if arms were to be sold they were sold to the ruler, and if any private trading arrangements were made, they involved the ruler. The purchase and manufacture of arms for defence against internal and external threats became a major concern of rulers worldwide. Increasing centralization of the political authority went hand in hand with increasing centralization, standardization and organization of standing armies. Hess claims that the increasing use of firearms from the mid-fifteenth century onwards allowed contemporary empires to expand using their new professional armies; it facilitated the emergence of European colonialism as most of the less developed nations (mainly in the New World and Africa) did not use firearms or refused to employ them. However, the firearms themselves, apart from the cannon, did not actually provide a great techno-tactical advantage over non-gunpowder weapons until the nineteenth century.


when improvements in firearms technology first increased the range, rate of fire and accuracy of these weapons to better than those of powerful bows. The true source of European superiority was organizational and logistical and, when faced by enemies who tried to fight from behind fortifications, cannon.\(^{256}\)

Governments acknowledged the potential risk in the diffusion of firearms, and attempted to tackle this. The Ottoman governments imposed a state monopoly on the manufacture of gunpowder and firearms. Commoners (Muslim or non-Muslim) were not allowed to bear weapons of any kind, including firearms. All weapons were to be stored in arsenals and only released for use by order of the sultan. Periodic searches were conducted to confiscate weapons in the hands of the population. By the end of the sixteenth century, Japanese rulers prohibited arms trade with foreigners and disarmed the peasantry to avoid social destabilization.\(^{257}\)

Yet, the initial stages of firearms provided a few hints that states could not gain full control on firearms proliferation, such as the declining prices for both gunpowder and guns in the late-fifteenth century along with the fact that saltpeter could be manufactured by anyone who had little more than a dry masonry cellar and animal manure and a certain tolerance for the odor.\(^{258}\) Thus, a few rebellious NSAs accessed firearms and used them to defeat stronger military forces. For instance, firearms were introduced in Vietnam in the late fourteenth century by Chinese traders and deserters. The Ming Empire conquered Vietnam in 1407, using its technological superiority over the Vietnamese by effectively employed firearms. This gap was rapidly lost and the battlefield humiliation of Chinese troops caused them to withdraw from Vietnam in 1427 mainly because the Vietnamese resistance movement under Le Loi captured more and more Ming weapons and other military supplies in major battles from 1418 using guerrilla tactics. Ming captives and defectors provided the Vietnamese with techniques for attacking city walls, models for protective shelters, primitive tanks, and Muslim catapults. Le Loi ordered the manufacture of weapons and equipment based on these models and distributed them to different places.\(^{259}\) Laichen argues that the Vietnamese troops


\(^{258}\) Hall, 58–59.

upgraded their operational approach and engaged in siege and open battle warfare as well as guerrilla warfare since they captured a large number of firearms (cannon, fire lance, rocket arrows and ships); otherwise their victories over the Ming would have been extremely difficult if not impossible. Summarizing the war Le Loi pointed out the important role played by Ming deserters and captured weapons.\(^{260}\)

China witnessed a rebellion against Mongol rule (the Yuan dynasty) in 1356. One of the rebel groups acquired cannon and used it against the regime. Pacey claims that while the Mongol regime had neglected firearms technology various unofficial groups had continued to innovate them. The Mongol emperor of China was expelled in 1368.\(^{261}\) In India from the sixteenth century onward local chiefs recruited skilled musketeers (mainly Sikhs, Baluchis and Bhatts) and revolted against the Mughal’s rule. At a later stage, peasant communities in different areas and Muslims from the vicinity of Delhi started arming themselves with muskets due to the low price of ordinary muskets, and rose up against Mughal authority. Wood notes that in Siam in the fourteenth century the city of P’ayao revolted against Siamese rule. While the Siamese erected a tower from which to shoot into the city, the people of P’ayao melted down the brass tiles on one of their temples and made a five-inch cannon, wherewith they destroyed the Siamese fort and forced the Siamese to withdraw from the city.\(^{262}\)

The Hussites were a Czech Christian revolutionary movement with social and national motives who fought against the Holy Roman Empire and the Catholic clergy (Hussite Wars, 1420-1434). According to Seldar the Hussites illustrated how a rebellious NSA with limited weaponry could deploy high operational skills against better armed professional troops. They lacked heavy cavalry, and developed wholly distinctive and highly successful battle tactics. Hussite general Zizka specialized in creating ways to neutralize the armoured mounted knight’s advantages – a key requirement for NSA’s military victory. Hall argues that like modern guerrilla leaders Zizka’s main task was simply to survive with a credible fighting force to defend successfully rather than risk defeat with bold attacks. The resources with which the Hussite army began their struggle looked hopeless compared to their foes,


\(^{261}\) Pacey, Technology 54; Khan, Gunpowder, 164-165, 173-182; R. W. Wood, A History of Siam (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1926), 78;.

multinational mercenary cavalries. The Hussites were chiefly peasants and townspeople who were, initially at least, untrained in the art of war.\(^{263}\) The peasants were armed with agricultural implements while townspeople carried pikes, lances, and sometimes crossbows. Zizka trained them to be skillful guerrilla warriors in a training camp he established on the steep hill of Tabor, southeast of Prague. This enabled them to attack neighboring Catholic monasteries to capture weapons. The only possible sources of armor were battlefield booty or looted castle armors.\(^{264}\)

The few resources at his disposal obliged Zizka to employ any means at hand, which meant the use of pole weapons, such as the grain flail, hooked or spiked bill, shafted clubs with spiked wooden heads, and mainly, the modification of farm wagons to carry small guns. According to Turnbull farm carts were already used in warfare as supply carts and Zizka’s innovation was to drive wagons as a mobile defensive fortification that could be erected rapidly. Zizka trained his peasant troops to move forward in a formation which allowed the wagons to form a closed circle at short notice, linked by chains. The horses were unhitched and kept within the enclosure.\(^{265}\) Zizka developed two types of carts, both drawn by four horses: an essentially defensive fighting vehicle against cavalry attack with built-up sides to provide protection for up to twenty men and operated as a firing platform for crossbowmen, handguns, and the rest with polearms and light bombard. A second type of war wagon mounted light cannon known as “snakes,” though Kinard argues that the cannon was not deployed as true field artillery in the modern sense. A few military scholars regard Zizka’s cart as the predecessor of the twentieth century tanks because it married firearms and some sort of armoured vehicle.\(^{266}\) Also, Zizka obtained access to a local arms manufacturer who supplied him with small handguns and primitive artillery pieces. Stibetr claims that Zizka was the first European commander to maneuver on the field with cannon of medium caliber, which he mounted on carts in the spaces between wagons. Therefore the Hussites defeated the armies of Emperor Sigismund five times; they repulsed them from Bohemia and from 1427 carried campaigns into Germany, Austria, and even arrived at the coast of the Baltic Sea (1433). Only internal division deteriorating into bloody internecine conflict weakened

\(^{263}\) Sedlar, *East Central Europe*, 231.


\(^{266}\) Turnbull, *Hussite Wars*, 23-34.
the Hussite movement and in 1436 they signed a peace agreement with Emperor Sigismund.267

**NSAs within Medieval Arms Trade**

In western Europe the Middle Ages witnessed growing efforts by rulers to block supplies of arms to external and internal foes, many of which were NSAs. The Frank’s decree of 805 prohibited traders who traveled in the territories of the Slavs and the Avars to take weapons with them to sell, and, according to Steuer, merchants were checked and had to show their goods to the king’s officials at the border posts.268 In 562 Avar emissaries who purchased weapons in Constantinople while on a diplomatic mission later had their purchase confiscated.269 Escalating clashes between Muslims and Christians intensified the efforts to supervise the arms trade. In the late twelfth century popes placed embargoes on trade of war material with the Muslim World, including horses, weapons and the wood necessary to build ships, though the embargoes were only partially respected.270

NSAs were involved in medieval arms trade as partners and facilitators including high-sea trade over long distances, coastal trade with nearby port cities and land trade. The more complex a trade network, the harder it was to control its activity. For example, the Scots exploited their traditional commercial connections with Flemish towns to import armour and weapons (spear, swords, and bows) that were essential to their First War of Independence against the English (1296-1328). Barrow argues that they associated with German merchants and English smugglers to acquire weapons. They also negotiated with Genoese firms for the supply of weapons and ships while England failed to place an effective embargo on Scottish ports. Barrow claims that Scottish ability to secure a continuous flow of weapons and armour (though limited in scope) helped them to secure their independence.271

Until the late Middle Ages weapons were a small part of extensive international trade networks that specialized in trade of luxury goods, mainly fur and silk. These networks were

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supervised by rulers and clergy and served their economic and political interests. But they contained independent players, such as nomad tribes and merchants, and it is assumed that rebellious NSAs could connect the trade networks through middlemen, particularly during the decline of empires.272

Martin argues that Volga Bulgaria, for example, was an international market and distribution center for northern luxury fur in the ninth and tenth centuries. Weapons were one of the luxury goods that local merchants traded for fur with hunting-tribes from the North and gradually with the Russ. They also obtained fur from local Bulgars, and tributaries. Khazar and Muslim merchants, paying in silver coin and a variety of Oriental luxury goods, purchased fur along with slaves, weapons, honey, and other goods. It seems that the Bulgar marketplace also contained weapons and other commodities. Khazar and southern Muslim merchants transported their purchases (including arms) by land or boat southward along the Volga River to Itil, capital of the Khazar Empire. There they sold their fur or carried it further by land and sea to other points in Byzantium and the Muslim world, as far as Spain and North Africa through the Black Sea ports. Itil was also connected to East Asia through commercial middlemen. Bulgar merchants conducted land caravans to Khwarezm, where fur was repurchased, again mainly for silver coin, by southern Muslim merchants who transported it further to the towns of the Semanid Empire and other Muslim centers. During the thirteenth century the fur network continued to operate under the Mongol Empire’s control.273

The Radanites, a group of adventurous multilingual Jewish merchants who operated in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, demonstrated NSAs’ role in facilitating an arms trade. They operated through the Muslim world between western Europe and China by land and sea. Among other things, they exported iron weapons (mainly swords) from Gaul to China and to the Muslim Mediterranean that was short in iron. Jewish merchants benefitted from the fact that Muslims were not interested in foreign languages and were unwelcome in Christian Europe while the former could claim a degree of neutrality in the Muslim-Christian struggles. Curtin calls the Radanites a single trade diaspora with a shared culture carrying trade over such a long distance.274

The emergence of firepower boosted arms trade, and developments in international maritime commerce facilitated the proliferation of military technology. Governments invited foreign craftsmen, supplied weapons to friendly states, and exchanged military technology. Initially, NSAs were minor players in this activity; for example, Chase argues that Japanese and Chinese pirates were part of a network of trade including arms trade that connected the southeastern coast of China to Japan and Southeast Asia and in turn to the global network of trade through the Spanish in Manila and the Portuguese in Melaka.  

Mostly, NSAs procured firearms and its technology from other states. According to Nicolle and McBride the Turks spent more effort in acquiring firearms from the first half of the fifteenth century for their better-organized army than their European rivals. Uyar and Erickson argue that the Ottoman leadership came to understand the potential and importance of firearms in a remarkably short time. Turks’ sources for firearms were fugitive Jews from Spain who landed in Turkey with expertise in gun manufacture, and illegal arms trade from Italy and Hungary. The arming of the Turks with firearms was important for their transformation from nomadic tribes with limited operational skills into a professional regular army that conquered vast territories in the Balkans and in Asia and established a worldwide empire.

Firearms experts served as mercenaries in foreign armies. In the 1530s, while fighting each other, both Burma and Siam hired Portuguese military advisors including for musketry. In the early sixteenth century Portuguese deserters were hired by the Mughal rulers of India to establish infrastructure for the manufacture of light cannon; they produced various different types of guns, and trained local artisans in the art of making European guns. The Mughals also used Iranian and Ottoman bronze gun-makers.


Khan, Gunpowder, 61-62, 69, 78; Wood, Siam, 102-103
Summary

While Smith and Van Creveld highlight interstate wars in the pre-global world, the historical review reveals that NSAs were a persistent phenomenon in the ancient and medieval world. There were always those who revolted and took up arms against central rule, and many of these combats were fought amongst the people. Sometimes they shaped dramatic events in political and military history though often being neglected and were the object of biased reports by past historians and chronicles. It can be assumed that lack of evidence mainly about ancient NSAs undermined understanding of their actual historical role. This chapter outlines a number of persistent principles that have shaped the arming of NSAs as the following chapters demonstrate too. Ancient NSAs managed to acquire weapons mainly by assaulting their foes, collecting dual-use artifacts, and manufacturing efficient war tools. They could also obtain foreign military aid at some risk. The weaker state authority had become, the more easily rebellious NSAs could acquire weapons.

Medieval NSAs’ armament is a more complicated issue since the official state was often actually very much like the NSA, and the non-state feudal barony was often like a little state. In this context, state-armies and NSAs’ armies used similar weapons and even acquired them in similar ways, though they differed in quality and quantity. Smith and Van Creveld emphasize present NSAs’ weakness in weaponry because they have limited resources compared to states’ armies. This chapter demonstrates that past NSAs too had poor weapons and some failed to use specific weapons but not so much because they were expensive or hard to acquire but because they demanded long practice and contradicted their military culture. The major weaknesses and challenges of past NSAs were – as Luttwak implies – organizational, structural and political, that is, lack of discipline, training, intelligence, logistics (of food and water), rather than armaments. Only a few NSAs overcame the obstacles and managed to defeat the stronger state armies. The key for the former’s victory was coordination between excellent leadership, exploitation of the terrain, use of guerrilla tactics and employment of effective weapons.

At least at first firearms manufacture was limited in scope and very expensive – it was an art known to a select few (almost a guild) so it was easier for rulers to control the sources. Over time, the knowledge was passed on so that more and more people could manufacture the weapons, gunpowder and bullets (soldiers carried the equipment to manufacture gunpowder and bullets on their own, and so could any civilian – manufacturing the weapons
required more skill and knowledge, but not beyond those of a good blacksmith) and so central authority gradually lost control of the manufacture and proliferation of small firearms, but retained the ability to control the manufacture and proliferation of cannon.

The growing international trade in the Middle Ages demonstrated a few characteristics of modern complex systems like the Federation of Systems (FOS) and Systems of Systems (SOS), though this trade activity cannot be called FOS or SOS. Operational independence of the individual systems hardly existed because rulers controlled the trade activity. Some of the arms trade systems were very small and simple. The components of the trade had limited communication links and the geographic distribution of the trade partners was small. Still, medieval trade reflected some diversity because it consisted of different entities including NSAs and the players cooperated in trade exchanges and some of them enjoyed managerial independence. The next chapter explores how the rise of European colonialism created new armed NSAs that had more opportunities to acquire firearms.
Chapter Three: NSAs’ Arming from early Colonialism to the French Revolution

The following chapter covers more than four hundred years of wars and rebellions witnessing dramatic geo-strategic and political changes. Like their predecessors, NSAs that operated in the early modern world were subordinated to the principle of self-reliance in their military buildup. The chapter emphasizes the dialectical outcomes of early colonialism. Native peoples and enforced African immigrants to the new world were abused by European powers because they lacked modern weaponry, but occasionally they were able to revolt and defeat their “masters.” Early colonialism stimulated international arms trade that initially served mostly colonial armies and local rulers; only in later stages did it contribute to the buildup of native-NSAs’ forces. The chapter describes how the French Revolution created national NSAs and revolutionary NSAs in Europe and in the Americas, both of which required weaponry for their struggle against European rule. The rise of the nation state encouraged new types of rebellious NSAs and arming methods including cross-border smuggling, growing use of state sponsorship and international arms trade to support domestic insurgencies, involvement of volunteers, ethnic diaspora, mobilization of the masses by political parties and international smuggling networks that collaborated with government and private entities. The last segment of the chapter discusses the invention of high explosives that increasingly empowered NSAs’ strategies and tactics. All these factors became stronger in the globalization period.

General Trends in Early-Modern Age’s NSA Arming

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, European arms trade evolved into an industry; production centers rose in northern Italy, the Germanic Empire, the Low Countries, London and Birmingham, serving mainly the ruling elites. The centralization of power in the hands of kingly or princely rulers favored the creation of court armories where craftsmen were appointed to work principally, if not always exclusively, for their sovereign masters. There was no mass-production of arms beyond the special requests of European rulers and noblemen, foreign governments, and charter companies. The creation of state arsenals and the distinction that was made between the producer of weapon systems and the people, who used them, strengthened the position of rulers. However, attempts at centralization and state
control did not significantly affect the flowering of free enterprise in the arms business. Some armorers were independent, and the weapons business was dominated by city merchants who were both producers and traders. Mainly in the Netherlands and Belgium of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the establishment of the arms industry involved aristocratic family companies that exported large quantities of weapons to European countries, the Ottoman Empire, North Africa and America, and attempted to monopolize the import of raw materials for the arms industry (iron, copper). Some of these companies conducted large scale business, using logistic assets that included outlets and offices across the world. They served ruling elites but occasionally they were willing to sell weapons to rebels, demonstrating a phenomenon that would escalate in the modern world. In 1582 a leader of a Portuguese rebellion against Spain received a substantial shipment of gunpowder against prompt payment from the weapon markets of the Dutch Republic that was at war with Spain. In 1640, the Portuguese and Catalans began an armed rebellion against the central government in Madrid, and England was divided by a long civil war, which ended only in 1649. Those rebels made intensive use of the Amsterdam arms market. Vogel argues that while strict export controls on arms and military equipment were imposed by the States-General, smuggling was comparatively easy, since all one had to do was to give a fake destination.

Until the sixteenth century warfare was dominated by men who learned their military skills in childhood and adolescence as a part of their cultural environment. For the first time gunpowder made it possible to impart unfamiliar military skills to men who were themselves generally unaccustomed to warfare by upbringing. State armies benefitted from this change, but so did growing numbers of rebels who were not professional soldiers. In this context, states’ efforts to restrict the spread of weapons were often ineffective mainly in militarized regions or when territory was vast and the central regime was weak. In the Ottoman Empire ordinary Muslim and non-Muslim subjects were not allowed to bear weapons of any kind. The Ottomans frequently searched for firearms and if found the owner was mutilated and executed. The manufacture of firearms was a state monopoly and those

who traded in them ran severe risks. Only the sultan could authorize the distribution and export of arms. Yet growing unrest in some parts of the empire encouraged the smuggling of firearms from Western Europe, Ragusa (Sicily) and from Algeria, and also encouraged the spread of illicit firearms within Turkey. For example, according to Elgood, Ottoman merchants of the late sixteenth century traded arms (handguns, daggers and bows) illegally across the Black Sea with the people of the north-west Caucasus, and Ottoman authorities’ attempts to stop arms smuggling was ineffectual. The production of fine weapons has a long tradition in the Caucasus which made it easier for local rebels to rise up.

Rebels who lacked financial support or access to arms markets, such as lower class groups, were compelled to use captured weapons. They were always short of weapons, had maintenance problems and therefore had little chance to conduct lengthy warfare. The German Peasants’ War (1524-1525), the greatest revolutionary movement in German history, erupted against the oppression of the peasants by the ruling classes of the Holy Roman Empire. Rebels from southern Germany and Austria carried pikearms as local militia members; some had military experience serving as laborers and carpenters in many campaigns in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. The rebels were organized as territorial bands of 4,000-12,000 men each, and acquired firearms either from plundered castles or from arsenals of those towns that agreed to assist in their struggle. They secured artillery but less than the feudal armies. Shortage of artillery and powder supply for the peasants resulted in unsuccessful sieges and defeats in field battles against the German princes’ armies. By the summer of 1525 the princes had crushed the German peasants’ revolt. On the other hand, the Dutch rose against the Habsburgs’ rule (Eighty Years’ War, 1568-1648) and were able to sustain a lengthy struggle and build a very powerful fleet in a very short time. They defeated the Spanish navy, and paved the way for an independent Netherland that soon became a trading and colonial empire. The Dutch revolt succeeded, among other reasons, because the rebels enjoyed financial strength and possessed a military industry.

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In the early modern world, European rulers viewed arms transfers for the first time as a potentially significant instrument in continental power politics. Rebel groups benefitted from the rulers’ will to influence alliances and the outcome of battles by sending weapons and troops, within and outside Europe. For example, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the powerful Ottomans failed to impose their rule over the Druzes in Lebanon who maintained self-autonomy (Sanjak of Sidon-Beirut). Abdul Rahim Abu Husayn explains that Druzes acquired large quantities of firearms (thousands of muskets and gunpowder) from European city-states in return for grain and other local products (the Ottomans blamed a Damascene merchant for facilitating this trade). Therefore, at times their weapons were superior to those used by the Ottomans. Venetians, who were frequently at war with the Ottomans, and major arms producers, smuggled firearms from their base in Cyprus to the Druzes and other Syrian rebels. The Druzes defeated a few Ottoman expeditions and the central government in Istanbul failed to bring the Druze Mountain under strict administrative and fiscal control. Abu Husayn argues that after the Turks conquered Cyprus in 1570 and blocked the naval smuggling route to Lebanon, they could temporarily restore order and the Druzes surrendered most of their weapons. During the seventeenth century, Tuscany sponsored Druzes and other ethnic groups in Syria against the Ottomans by sending weapons shipments. The papacy gave specific permission for Christian governments to supply arms to regions such as Syria to encourage rebels to rise against the Ottomans, and Christian Maronites of Lebanon facilitated these connections.

Irish revolts against British rule in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries demonstrated a major argument of the thesis that geography has always modified the arming of NSAs including access to foreign aid. As Ireland was an island with few resources, Irish rebels were compelled to search repeatedly for foreign military support. Previously the Irish fought with close-combat weapons together with bows and javelins while the English were equipped with firearms. Scholars stressed the role of English sea power that could easily reinforce their troops on Irish soil from nearby England and block Ireland from receiving external support. The Irish attempted to neutralize their weaknesses with partial

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Hugh O’Neill, earl of Tyrone, the leader of the first revolt (known as The Nine Years’ War, 1594-1603), hired English and Spanish captains in the 1580s specifically to train his ten thousand native troops in the use of muskets and claviers. He purchased firearms and ammunition on a large scale in England and Scotland, as well as from fugitive soldiers and corrupt officials in Ireland. O’Neill’s soldiers became a formidable force inflicting the worst defeat suffered by an English army in Ireland (Battle of the Yellow Ford, 1598) and controlling much of the country. Overconfident, the Irish met the English in open battle and were crushed in 1601. Spain sent an expeditionary force of 3,500 men to Kinsale port, but the Royal Navy prevented further Spanish reinforcements from reaching Tyrone or the Spanish army in Kinsale, forcing the Spanish commander to surrender in early 1602 and return home. O’Neill surrendered in 1603 and the English established rule over the whole of Ireland for more than three hundred years.  

During the Jacobite War (1689-1691) France sent eight major convoys to Ireland to support James II’s ambitious plan to recover his throne in Britain and Ireland. The French navy shipped arms (rifles, swords, and gunpowder), soldiers, and money to their Jacobite allies, improving the quality of the Irish army significantly. Britain failed to stop these convoys and Catholic Ireland seemingly possessed the best chance of using foreign aid to help achieve autonomy and religious freedom. Yet French support was inadequate; effective firepower was limited to less than half the Irish infantry, and the French made no attempt to harass the provision of supplies to the English forces from Britain, thus enabling the latter to send an expedition across the Irish Sea that forced James and the French to depart for France in 1691. Irish rebels were never able to convince their continental contacts to mount a really committed attempt to alter the dynamics of English control over Ireland.

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287Gam, Guerrillas, 8-9.  
Early Colonialism and NSAs’ Armament

International trade is a prominent factor that explains the arming of NSAs in different time periods. The decades between 1500 and 1750 witnessed a tremendous expansion of commercial and cultural exchanges around the world. New long-distance sea routes linked Europe with sub-Saharan Africa and the existing maritime networks of the Indian Ocean and East Asia. Spanish and Portuguese voyages ended the isolation of the Americas and created new webs of exchange in the Atlantic and Pacific. Overland expansion of Muslim, Russian, and Chinese empires also increased global interaction. Such expansion implied new power relations between European powers and native peoples. The people of the Old World were coming to dominate the people of the New. Increasing use of firearms from the middle of the fifteenth century facilitated the rise of European colonialism as most of the natives did not possess firearms or refused to employ them. The Europeans saw the new military technology as an opportunity for expansion and enjoyed remarkable military superiority over the conquered peoples. The Spanish and Portuguese established vast territorial empires in South and Central America, followed by the Dutch who struck first at the Portuguese overseas empire, and British and French colonization of North America. Almost immediately, the conquerors created new types of NSAs: Amerindians resisted tribute payment, revolted against forced labor obligations, and objected to loss of land rights and religious conversion. Blacks brought from Africa resisted slavery. Initially they carried bows, spears and clubs made of hard wood in the jungle, but colonial authorities were always able to reestablish control.

In a few cases NSAs were able to defend themselves, beating much stronger European troops by using guerrilla tactics, but eventually they were defeated. Native NSAs’ victories were confined to the backwoods and could not endanger European empires’ rule over the New World as a whole. These events demonstrated, though on a very limited scale, how rebellious NSAs could use the environment and other factors to neutralize their technological inferiority. They hinted at the dialectic character of colonialism: colonialism also facilitated

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proliferation of firearms among natives’ NSAs by different mechanisms. The remarkable worldwide expansion of the global economy that began in the wake of the voyages of discovery facilitated the distribution of weapons. The trade boom of the early-Modern World derived from the soaring demand for Southeast Asian spices; and the arms trade was part of this commerce. Arms trade with native peoples was part of mercantile economic doctrine. In their vigorous contest for control of the lucrative fur trade on the Pacific coast of North America, European powers supplied plenty of weapons to their Amerindian allies from the first half of seventeenth century. European traders, who ignored a state order not to sell weapons to the natives, purchased rifles from factories such as those in Amsterdam and Liege, shipped them to North America and moved inland with canoes laden with guns to the rich fur fields that yielded their bounty. French, English, Spanish and Dutch distributed weapons to Indians with little regard for the day when these weapons would be turned upon the independent United States, though they could not check the influx of settlers who drove them westward (Russell estimated that the French armed Amerindians with 200,000 muskets over more than a hundred years). Arms trade with the Indians was an integral part of European expansion and mercantile economy. Therefore, when New France ceased to exist (1760), the flow of French guns to the Indians of America came to an end.

European expansion in the New World relied on native forces. Thousands of blacks participated in the English conquest of the settlements of America, consequently being exposed to modern weapons. European countries established production facilities for arms in the colonies (Spain, for example, built ships and produced cannons in the Philippines) or exported vast quantities of weapons to the colonies that could be captured by rebels. In some colonies local craftsmen had become very skillful in the production of firearms.

Maroons were enslaved Africans and their descendants in the Americas who fled from bondage and fought a long series of wars to maintain their freedom in the very earliest days of European settlement and slavery. The maroons established hundreds of runaway communities throughout the New World. Although small in number (they ranged from a few people to more than a thousand) and in their operations, Maroon communities were among

the first Americans to renew resistance to colonial domination after the initial conquest of the Americas, striving for independence and defining the experience of freedom. Maroonage was a common phenomenon in all parts of the western hemisphere where slavery was practised wherever large expanses of inaccessible and uninhabited terrain permitted, as in the rough and rugged mountains of Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, or the equatorial forest and marshlands of Suriname, or the marshlands of Oklahoma, Virginia, or Texas in the North America colonies. Colonialist governments barred slaves from using or carrying weapons (though it was unenforceable) while acquisition of arms was vital for the Maroons’ struggle.295 Actually, armed slaves were the rule rather than the exception because masters readily armed their trusted slaves to protect their interests whereas colonial government could not control the diffusion of weapons among slaves (and the civilian population in general). Jamaica’s Maroons acquired iron weapons and guns by theft and raiding white settlements. Goucher and Agorsah’s archeological research of Maroon and Maroon-related sites across the island of Jamaica revealed that Maroons even refashioned and repaired the guns obtained. Maroon communities had a rich iron-smithing tradition and maroon blacksmiths manufactured cutlasses and lead shot. Also every man, woman, and child reportedly carried an iron hoe. The authors state that despite the fact that enslaved Africans arrived in shackles, the historical archaeology of Maroons has demonstrated that iron technology was at the heart of their resistance, empowerment and survival.296 Therefore, Genovese claims that Jamaica’s maroons illustrated a powerful community, powerful enough to force European powers such as the British in Jamaica in 1738 into formal peace treaties designed to pacify the interior while recognizing the freedom and autonomy of the rebels.297

The Palmares of Pernambuco were black slaves who escaped the sugar plantations along the fertile coast of northeast Brazil and established an African kingdom in the interior, the largest of its kind, numbering 6,000-10,000 people. They maintained their independence throughout most of the seventeenth century defeating Dutch and then Portuguese mounted expeditions using guerrilla tactics, partly because of their armament. They traded gold and


silver for firearms with the urban European colonialists (*moradores*), and manufactured weapons (gunpowder) since they had the technology and their environment was rich in metals and nitrate. Genovese argues that sometimes these trade relations prevailed even during wartime between whites and Maroon colonies. Later, coffee-plantation slaves plotting a revolt in the interior of Rio de Janeiro managed to acquire a great quantity of gunpowder in barrels with the aid of peddlers who made the purchases.\(^{298}\)

In 1609 the Spanish recruited black, mulatto and Indian archers to fight against Yanga’s maroons in Mexico, while the Portuguese army that defeated the Palmares in 1695 contained many Indians. Colonial empires militarized Indian tribes, Maroons and African slaves, mainly in times of crisis and employed them as freed militia-men or volunteers in auxiliary units of national armies that bravely defended colonies against internal and external threats. That was another mechanism for arms diffusion in the colonies. Spanish authorities in Florida armed slaves who escaped the newly settled English colony of Carolina and in 1728 sent the “new Christians” back northward on guerrilla raids against the fledgling plantations of the English. African slaves in Havana formed an artillery company that served in the royal army. Against this background were the economic interests and limited personal resources of the European colonialists. European officials demonstrated a racial pragmatism in the face of necessity, but their ad-hoc partners could soon turn their weapons against them, demonstrating a persistent principle in the history of conflicts between states and NSAs.\(^{299}\)

**NSAs’ Arming in the Wake of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Period**

The French Revolution and Napoleon’s conquests introduced in Europe and the Americas a new type of NSA, *national-NSA*. Romantic nationalism had spread everywhere; peoples who lived in relatively contiguous states encompassing relatively homogeneous ethnic groups developed a national identity; they had become members of a nation, they felt a sense of belonging. The rise of national ideas intensified militant national-NSAs who were committed to liberating their fatherland from foreign rule, often associated with demands for political,


economic and social reforms. Colonial populations throughout the Americas became more aware of separate national identities and were more aggressive in asserting local interests against the will of distant monarchs. By the 1790s, the wealthiest and most influential sectors of Spain’s colonial society had come to view the Spanish Empire as an impediment to prosperity and growth, while American settlers resented the English Crown’s ambitious campaign to establish greater control over the colonies, increasing tax burdens and forced military mobilization for imperial wars. The growing wealth and contacts with the rest of the world made colonial societies the center of smuggling, including arms.\(^{300}\) The New World’s rebels had more opportunities to obtain weapons from long distant allies due to developments in maritime transportation. Outcomes of national-NSAs struggles against repressive monarchical regimes both in the Old and New World, were influenced largely by the ability of rebels to mobilize Great Powers’ military support, otherwise they were easily defeated. National-NSA arming efforts featured growing involvement of ethnic diasporas that sent money and arms to rebel groups. Early eighteenth century NSAs enjoyed a new type of external support. Along with mercenaries, NSAs’ force buildup was facilitated by volunteers who joined the rebels. Thus, the great powers could support rebel groups indirectly by approving trade with the latter and sending volunteers.\(^{301}\)

Half a century before the Napoleonic Wars, books began to appear on the subject of “small wars” or guerrilla operations, such as Denis Davidov, “On Guerrilla Warfare” and George Valentini, “What Kind of Training.” Ellis notes that it is remarkable that during the years when the theory of tactics and of grand operations was pushed to extremes, irregular warfare for the first time became a common concern of military thinkers. Following the anti-Napoleonic struggle from 1796 to 1814 in Italy, Spain, Germany, and Russia military thinkers in Europe addressed the subject of guerrilla warfare and small wars as a means of national liberation from foreign occupation.\(^{302}\) They regarded NSA military activity as an inherent minor part of a conventional war, consisting of light, mobile and semi-independent troops (often cavalry) who fought in advanced posts. The guerrillas were subordinated to the regular armies, tasked with commando and intelligence types of missions such as attacks on the enemy’s rear, night raids on enemy posts, interception of the enemy supply lines, recruitment of spies, and kidnapping enemy personnel. They were always operating on the

\(^{300}\) Bulliet, *Earth*, 495-497.

\(^{301}\) Dennis P. Hupchick, *The Balkans from Constantinople to Communism* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 189-201; Bulliet, *Earth*, 495-497

\(^{302}\) Ellis, *Barrel*, 57.
flank of the grand armies, assisting the latter by distressing the enemy; their object was not any great operation to crush the forces of the enemy in the field.  

Military theoreticians of the early nineteenth century associated guerrilla warfare and small wars with the theme of people’s war. Henri Jomini, for instance, regarded the latter as a spontaneous uprising of a nation against a foreign occupant. They addressed the right of the people to rise up against an enemy to sustain their independence, but they were very suspicious of the spontaneous and uncontrolled actions that were involved. Also, they mainly analyzed the operational aspects of people’s wars, strategic goals of the guerrilla, relations between partisans and the local population, and partisans’ required traits. In this discourse neither the logistic needs of the guerrillas nor their armament played a significant role. Jomini addressed a significant element in maritime arms smuggling which is still relevant today: “the control of the sea is of much importance in the results of a national invasion. If the people possess a long stretch of coast, and are masters of the sea or in alliance with a power which controls it, their power of resistance is quintupled, not only on account of the facility of feeding the insurrection and of alarming the enemy on all the points he may occupy, but still more by the difficulties which will be thrown in the way of his procuring supplies by sea.” NSAs that enjoy access to the sea could run a steady flow of military supply, necessary for maintaining a longstanding struggle against a stronger invader.

The Prussian general Carl von Clausewitz – probably one of the greatest military thinkers in the last two hundred years – wrote the most influential and valuable On War. He discussed in a short chapter the idea of people’s war which is a means of fighting against an enemy by arming the people. Like his contemporaries, he regarded partisans as part of regular forces, helping them to defend the country against an invader. The arming of the people by the state-army is a legitimate part of war and all forces should be coordinated by a single strategy. Accordingly, people’s war is useful for limited purposes and under specific conditions – as a last resort after a defeat or as a natural auxiliary before a decisive battle. Nor should it involve conventional operations otherwise the enemy will crush it and the defeat

could cause severe moral consequences.\textsuperscript{307} Clausewitz explained that opponents of people’s war see it as a “revolutionary means, a state of anarchy… which is as dangerous as a foreign enemy.” \textsuperscript{308} Thus, military historians and scholars hardly wrote on NSAs and their military skills until the eighteenth century. They were very interested in force execution and readiness while hardly discussing the design of the force.

On the ground, the arming of rebellious NSAs featured instability. Serbs revolted in 1804 in reaction to the arbitrary and anarchistic rule of the local Ottoman governor of Belgrade and his Janissary garrison. Their military commander, Petrovic Karadjordje, was deeply connected to Habsburg border Serbs. Serbian rebels, largely dependent upon captured weapons and unreliable foreign help were able to maintain control of the Serbian countryside and in 1806 they seized Belgrade employing forty cannons that they plundered from the Turks and procured in Austria through a local merchant. Although the Habsburg government did not support Serbian actions, Habsburg territory was a safe haven for the rebels who smuggled volunteers and weapons across the Danube.\textsuperscript{309} In 1810 Russia waged war against Turkey and provided weapons, ammunition and military advice to Serbian rebels. With Russian assistance victory seemed at hand for the Serbs, but events in Europe dashed Serbian hopes. Faced with the imminence of a French invasion in 1812, Czar Alexander Inow wished to sign a definitive peace treaty with the Ottomans to free his troops to meet the new attack. Russian forces withdrew from Serbia and the Serbians were left to fend for themselves. In 1813 the uprising was stifled temporarily when the Turks re-entered Belgrade and Karadjordje fled the empire for safety among the Habsburg border Serb community.\textsuperscript{310}

Greek revolt against the Ottomans erupted in 1821 and gained strong support from European public opinion. From an early stage the revolt was characterized by dramatic international involvement and support by the Greek diaspora (mainly merchants). Private volunteers—some of them with military capabilities—came from all parts of Europe, lightly armed, and the Great Powers, mainly Russia, claimed to be the protector of the Orthodox population of the empire. Jelavich argues that outside intervention was to be more influential in determining the final outcome than were the actions of the Greek leaders themselves. By

\textsuperscript{307}Carl V. Clausewitz, \textit{On War}(London: David Campbell, 2000), 578-583.
1822 the rebels controlled many islands that became logistic centers. Commercial Greeks secured a steady trickle of supplies; supportive Greek communites in West and Central Europe sent volunteers, guns, cannons, gunpowder, uniforms, food and money by ship from Marseilles. The poet Lord Byron departed Genoa in 1823 for Greece, aboard a ship heavily equipped with weapons and other goods, and American aid organizations also sent weapons. Later, American and French shipyards constructed a few armed ships for the revolutionary Greek government that raised big loans in London to finance the purchase. External support was critical since the Greeks’ moderate trade in arms and production of gunpowder was insufficient for traditional local guerrilla warfare rather than for establishing a regular army that could defeat the Ottomans. Siege artillery was almost entirely lacking. The pieces brought to Greece by certain foreigners were far too few and of insufficient caliber for breaching massive Turkish fortresses. Moreover, the Greek revolution lacked a strong leader, was disunited and socially divided. The revolt was threatened with collapse by the much stronger Egyptian-Turkish armies until the intervention of the Great Powers (Russia, Britain and France) that won the naval Battle of Navarino in 1827. Greece gained independence in 1832.

Wars of Independence in North and South America featured NSAs with a new profile. Britain and Spain failed to suppress more sophisticated well-funded NSAs than they were used to contest elsewhere. These NSAs employed complicated smuggling networks, well connected in Europe and exploited the growing trans-Atlantic trade for gun-running. They were not poor native bands carrying spears and some rifles but professional military organizations that previously served in colonial armies. It was much harder for the European powers to block the Atlantic coasts. American NSAs closely analyzed the geo-strategy of America and exploited the disadvantages of their powerful foes.

The thesis focuses on the arming of American rebels because the American Revolution was a pioneer in using new arming methods that later became dominant worldwide. The American Revolutionary movement was built top-down including its arming apparatus. Congress, its committees and formal officials led the smuggling activity even

before the war against the British erupted, featuring semi-institutionalized patterns such as labor division among the activists who were involved in arming activity, working under regulations, and accountability of the activists who were involved in the arms smuggling. Congress issued a specific requisition for the rebels’ army, namely gunpowder, weapons, and general military equipment. The Committee of Safety followed by the Secret Committee for Trade (members shared a mercantile background), acted on the orders of the Congress to build American force by obtaining weapons and ammunition. The American Revolution demonstrated how rebel organizations and formal institutions associated with entrepreneurs to facilitate smuggling of large numbers of weapons. American privateers played a vital role in gun-running for the patriots, emphasizing more than ever before, the strong connection between armament of rebels and economic activity. Their role affirmed Karras’ image of smugglers as “free traders”, people who were committed to exchange without any restrictions whatsoever.314

The Patriots lacked the resources to manufacture the materials necessary to wage war, especially gunpowder. In 1774 the British banned the export of gunpowder, arms or ammunition from Britain to the colonies. The Patriots seized gunpowder in daring raids on British garrisons but their stocks were exhausted within the first nine months of the conflict. With no navy and no formal foreign alliance, weapons were obtained through the enterprise of private merchants. Robert Morris, one of the founding fathers of the United States, was the principal actor in supplying powder to the American war effort (1775-1778). Morris’ firm secretly purchased weapons abroad through an international network of trade-partners, captains, and through other merchants under contract to the Secret Committee. American ships were often loaded with tobacco, flour and other goods to trade for the weapons. This was risky business, a combination of espionage and arms smuggling under the nose of British consuls in foreign ports and warships cruising the high seas. Personal contacts were the primary and often the sole consideration.315 Morris and his partners employed any form of subterfuge they could devise to ensure a cargo would get through: false papers for ships, false sailing orders, false cargo registers, and transfer of cargo between two ships on the open sea. American merchants roamed Europe and the West Indies to find entrepreneurs willing and able to assemble return cargoes of contraband gunpowder and arms. Many ships were

314Rappleye, Robert Morris, 36, 47, 68.
315Rappleye, Robert Morris, 36-49.
captured (some crewmen were British spies), but many more got through as the British could not completely block the American coast.316

The Secret Committee employed sophisticated techniques to acquire weapons, such as using a network of agents empowered to handle funds and cargoes, and to manage contacts with foreign suppliers. Some of these agents were based in America; others were sent to foreign ports. All reported to Morris. An Italian citizen, for instance, handled transshipment of munitions from Europe through neutral ports in the Caribbean, and mixed private and public cargoes on the same vessel as a mask. Rappleye stresses that Morris’ relationships with his partners and agents were dual, public-private, thus had potential for conflict of interest. Morris and his trade partners worked simultaneously for the American nation and for their own interest. Therefore, after the war ended Morris prevailed in a series of interrogations by Congress, and a final one in 1790 stated that “there will be no accusation against Morris, but no exoneration either.” 317

The rebels’ arms smuggling followed many years of illicit trade between merchants in American colonies and the French Caribbean. O’Shaughnessy claimed that money knew no patriotism in the smuggling business of this region since British naval officers had sold weapons at St. Eustatia, which were sometimes resold to the patriots in North America; some British customs officials ignored trade laws or accepted bribes, and British merchants in Jamaica were also involved in smuggling gunpowder to North America for profit (Congress encouraged merchants to estimate a generous price for gunpowder and arms). The Secret Committee also enlisted American, Irish and French privateers who seized weapons from British supply ships on the high seas. American agents in Paris employed these bands while the British accused the vessels’ captains of taking bribes from the Americans to surrender their ships.318

The Patriots also used the Dutch free port of St. Eustatia, located in the West Indies near the islands of other European powers. It was a grand market for both civilian and military goods. The trade included the sale of guns, powder, rifles and ammunition, often purchased by Dutch firms from France and Belgium. After France’s entry into the war St.

317Rappleye, Morris, 55-56, 81, 173-197, 480-481, 521.
318O’Shaughnessy, Empire Divided, 62-64, 216-219, 227.
Eustatia became a major source of supplies for the North Americans and the French. The British believed that the French and Americans were only able to sustain the war because of the supplies they had received from St. Eustatia. Therefore, the British forces occupied the island in 1781 and confiscated plenty of weapons though it was only a tactical victory. In addition, a business partner of Morris enjoyed close ties with the French authorities in Martinique, and made the port the premier venue for selling off captured ships and cargoes. America’s procurement network proved to be flexible, refundable and sustainable.\(^\text{319}\)

The Patriots gained military support from France that was critical to balance the British military superiority, and without French support the War of Independence might never have been won. In February 1778, France signed two treaties with the United States – a commercial agreement, and a military alliance pledged to American independence. From 1776 France provided arms (muskets, cannons) and ammunition to the Patriots through a joint intelligence operation. French and American agents established a commercial trading firm as a cover for the secret French aid. They used French merchants to procure ships; they mobilized commission privateers, recruited French seamen, and purchased French weapons that were declared “surplus” for that purpose. The French navy convoyed vessels engaged in Franco-American commerce. France sent naval reinforcements and an army to America. Benjamin Franklin, one of the founding fathers of the American Revolution and a colleague of Morris in the Secret Committee, was a commissioner to the court of France (1776-1785). Well connected to local nobility, Franklin played a significant role in bringing France to support the new republic of the United States.\(^\text{320}\)

Spain supplied arms and gunpowder to the rebels in Virginia through its colony in New Orleans and the Spanish ports of Havana. A New Orleans American agent under the cover of local businessmen liaised between the Spanish and the Patriots. The consignments were shipped into the Mississippi under the Spanish flag, and thwarted British plans to capture Fort Pitt. Spanish military support helped the George Rogers Clark expedition to capture Kaskaskia and Vincennes.\(^\text{321}\)

The arming activity of the rebels in South America demonstrated a different type of external support. The rebels were assisted by foreigners whose governments turned a blind

\(^{319}\)Rappleye, Morris, 76, 102-103; O’Shaughnessy, Empire Divided, 183-200, 214-217.
\(^{321}\)Rappleye, Morris, 83-84, 101.
eye; it was a semi-governmental support that can be found today too. General Simon Bolivar, the Liberator, conducted a successful war against Spanish rule in South America from 1811 to 1826 because he secured a flow of weapons from overseas. The republican army (consisting of American-born Spaniards, Indians and slaves) seized Spanish weapons, as in 1816 when they captured fourteen Spanish war vessels with 73 cannons, 3,300 muskets and other military equipment. Yet, Bolivar could conduct a lengthy war and established a professional army modeled on military institutions in Europe, mainly because he managed to gain military support from friendly states. In 1815 he went into exile in Jamaica and Haiti after being defeated in New Granada. He associated with President Petion of independent Haiti who provided him with weapons (6,000 rifles) and ammunition, naval transport and a sizeable sum of money. Bolivar argued that Petion’s support gave him the means to continue the fight. In late 1816 he returned to Venezuela and re-organized his army.

Bolivar acquired plenty of armaments to campaign again into Venezuela, overcoming the powerful Spanish expedition. He sought the support of the British government and used British public opinion and his own contacts for the acquisition of weapons. Bolivar knew Europe as he had traveled widely during the Napoleonic Wars. In 1817 he appointed an agent in London who interacted with the Foreign Office. The British government policy regarding the war in South America was one of neutrality, but actually British authorities supported Bolivar: British loans financed Bolivar’s war which in turn allowed him to employ available British troops and officers returning home from Waterloo, and to purchase ships and weapons. In less than two and a half years some 5,500 volunteers would leave Britain and Ireland for South America, along with quantities of war-surplus arms, clothing, and other supplies which Britain was only too happy to sell off. In 1819 a second British Legion arrived, containing 2,172 veterans, an artillery brigade equipped with howitzers, and large supplies of spare weapons. Lynch argues that between 1817 and 1822 the rebels shipped from Britain 50,000 rifles and muskets, hundreds of tons of lead and powder, artillery, lances, cutlasses, swords, sabres and pistols. Bolivar claimed that the British expedition upgraded the operational capabilities of his troops, and he was rarely without a British or Irish advisor. Bolivar’s right-hand man was a rich Dutch merchant and

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admiral who was employed outfitting ships at the logistic and operational service of the patriots. The flow of weapons enabled the rebels to move operations to the offensive in the heartland of Venezuela in mid-1817. Spain could not block the long coasts of South America, nor could it force the British government to maintain its policy of neutrality. Spain failed to intercept both the force buildup and force maintenance of Bolivar’s army: Hooker and Poulter quote a contemporary foreign observer who was astonished how Bolivar got so much money and everything necessary to equip a large army from this “depleted country”. Alongside San Martin who liberated Argentina, Chile and Peru, Bolivar achieved the destruction of the Spanish American empire by 1826. For a few years he was the dictator of the newly established Gran Colombia that contained Venezuela, New Granada (Colombia), Ecuador, and Panama.\(^\text{324}\)

The Rise of the Nation-State and its Implication for NSAs’ Arming

Sectarian NSAs and their weaponry

The rise of the nation-state since the late-eighteenth century and the territorial expansions of contemporary countries created sectarian-NSAs, chiefly ethnic and religious groups who belonged to sovereign states but sustained autonomous identities. The concept of people who share the same territory, culture, language, and are ruled by the same government, enabled different social categories to share a national identity. But in some countries, mainly those established as multi-nationals, nation-building failed to create a collective identity resulting in considerable tension between citizenship and nationalism. The majority group discriminated against the minorities; sectarian identities and cleavages destabilized the nation-states creating constant sources of political conflict and violence. Political division and civil wars within new nation-states sometimes provided an opportunity for long-pacified native peoples to rebel. For example, after independence, new national governments in the Western Hemisphere were generally weaker than the colonial governments they replaced. In debates over tariffs, tax and monetary policies, and in many nations, slavery and the slave trade, as well as the role of the Catholic Church, some social groups were willing to lead secessionist

movements or to provoke civil war rather than accept laws that threatened their interests. Often, new states used overwhelming military force to crush sectarian resistance.  

Against the background of the modern state, not only did sectarian NSAs confront larger national armies armed with modern weapons; they faced significant obstacles to acquire weapons. Modern states enforced a monopoly over military force; they imposed border controls, secured maritime sovereignty, and regulated arms trade. Governments initiated new laws to disarm minority groups. Thus, sectarian NSAs often possessed lesser resources and logistic capabilities, which compelled them to be self-reliant and engage in cross-border arms trade. Border areas played an important role in sectarian-NSAs’ smuggling activity. These groups resided in remote and boundary regions where government authority was weaker, sometimes non-existent. International borders, sometimes artificially created rather than representing the demographic picture, could be easily crossed, and rebels could contact and intrigue with arms traders and fellow ethnic groups. 

In 1893, in the town of Canudos in the northeastern interior state of Bahia in Brazil, local people, armed with mainly machetes, axes and lances, revolted against the discriminating policies of the republic’s government. They captured firearms including cannons from the defeated state’s expeditions (gunpowder they had bought in the neighborhood or manufactured themselves). They employed guerrilla tactics against an enemy with superior weapons and technology. Yet, in 1899 the rebels were defeated and massacred by a powerful federal expedition.

In 1840 the Ladino people of the Yucatan Peninsula in southeast Mexico (creoles and mestizos) began fighting the central government for their independence. To succeed, they armed the Mayans, who formed the bottom layer of Mexican society, and organized them into militias. Prior to this time the Indians were forbidden to use firearms. In 1847 the Mayans rose up against the social-economic abuse imposed on them by the Spanish-Mexicans. Often they proved no match for the well-armed government army in open battle, but they waged effective guerrilla war (ambushes and raids) using the vast virgin forest as a main element of defence. They continued to fight for many years mainly because they secured supplies of

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weapons and ammunition across the border in Belize (British Honduras). Reed noted that the first move of the Mayans was to send one of their commanders south with all the money they could raise, to buy arms from the English in Belize.\textsuperscript{328} Mostly, they traded goods they harvested (tobacco, cattle, wood, animal skins sugar cane, and honey) or stole for lead, gunpowder and rifles with merchants in Belize, Englishmen, Blacks, and refugee Ladino of Yucatan. Mayan rebels decreased their operations during the planting season unless they could pay in cash, and increased their activity when gunpowder became more plentiful. Rugeley provides accounts about traders from Belize, visiting the Mayan capital bringing gunpowder which they sold to the chiefs. The Yucatan government requested that British ban the sale of war supplies to the Mayans who smuggled the goods via rivers in the jungle. The British regarded the Indians as legitimate trade partners arguing that Britain was neutral.\textsuperscript{329}

The Yucatan army attempted to deprive the Mayans of access to Belize by building outposts and garrisons deep in the jungle, employing patrol canoes upstream, clearing trees, and constructing barricades, with limited success. To reach their suppliers, the rebels used different routes, some of them dotted with islands and swampy inlets that gave concealment, though it was a risky business. In 1893 Mexico signed a peace treaty with Britain that dealt with the “pacification” of the Maya along the border with Belize. Britain agreed to prohibit the supply of arms and ammunition to the Maya and to prevent the Maya in Belize from raiding Mexican territory. The treaty facilitated the counterinsurgency campaign of Yucatan’s army against the Maya. The rebels had been gradually encircled by sea, isolated from English supplies, and put under pressure from the west. By 1901 the revolt was largely suppressed, demonstrating a major argument of the thesis that securing international borders is a precondition of counter smuggling.\textsuperscript{330}

When the power difference between the stronger state and the sectarian NSA was great, arming efforts by the NSA could make no difference, merely postponing the final outcome of the conflict. For instance, Indian uprisings against their resettlement by the U.S. government greatly depended on securing military support of foreign countries, directly or through arms trade. During the American Revolution and until the mid-nineteenth century the British and to a lesser extent, the Spanish encouraged Indian tribes to fight the Americans to

\textsuperscript{330}Nigel O.Bolland, \textit{Colonialism and Resistance in Belize: Essays in Historical Sociology} (Belize: Cubola Productions, 2003), 110; Reed, 124, 131, 240-242.
keep their lands. They encouraged the Indians to form military confederations, and supplied arms and ammunition through trade posts, for example to the Cherokees who lived in Kentucky and Tennessee, and the Miami tribe from Ohio. At the outbreak of the Revolution, British agents and traders, operating among the Indians, encountered little or no difficulty in delivering guns to Indian towns. They also used Canada as a supply base of arms to encourage Indian resistance. With the end of the Anglo-American War (1812-1815), the British abandoned their interest in an Indian state in accordance with the treaty they had signed with the United States, and in few years ceased supplying arms to the Indians. In this context, the Creek War (1813-1814) commenced after a group of Alabama militiamen attacked an Indian convoy that returned from a secret trip to Florida where they acquired weapons from a British trading firm and the Spanish governor. A British fleet off the coast sent arms and ammunition to Pensacola and other Spanish ports in Florida. When the British and Spanish left Florida the Creeks had neither weapons nor allies. That implied an end for the Indians in the southern trans-Appalachian frontier. Eventually, Amerindians were forced to lay down their weapons, leave their lands and relocate to reservations in the West. Following the end of the conflicts, the American government prohibited trade connections between Indians and any other foreign power. Yet, the U.S. policy was to arm the Indians (for hunting and self-defence) through private contractors and manufacturers. The distribution of weapons among the Indians since the seventeenth century demonstrated how arming of NSAs had diverse meanings as a result of different historical contexts, starting with the fur trade, then enlisting Natives’ support during the European wars, and eventually U.S. strategy regarding the Indians.

In China, the people of the border province of Yunnan, mostly Hui (Muslim) were traditionally discriminated against and faced poverty and harassment by the Qing court that increasingly distrusted them. In 1856 Qing officials promoted a full-scale massacre conducted by Han militia armed with government weapons, aiming to cleanse Yunnan of the Hui. More than 10,000 people were slaughtered (the Kunming Massacre). Muslim Yunnanese frustration at the state authority’s reluctance to defend them against Han violence resulted in the eruption of a fully-fledged rebellion against Qing rule (the Panthay Rebellion).

of August 1856). The rebels acquired arms and ammunition from Burma, a nation that was under increasing British control (since 1824) through Burmese Muslim traders. Trade networks, often illicit, bound Yunnan to Burma, exploiting the ill-defined border. Atwill argues that England sold arms to the Burmese who in turn sold them to the rebels. Indian traders who followed the British conquest of Burma might have been involved in this arms trade. The leader of the revolt, Du Wenxiu, realized that Britain and France might be powerful allies against the Qing, and sent his adopted son to Queen Victoria to obtain aid from England but he was turned down. The Chinese forces, set free by the ending of the Taiping rebellion and armed with modern French weapons, subdued the revolt with great ferocity in 1873.

Collapse of central government in China enabled sectarian NSAs to acquire weapons as they do today in failed countries. For example, through the last decades of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth, scarcely a year passed without violent protest or armed rebellion. The imperial government gradually lost control of large areas that were in the hands of rebel groups. Against this background, rebels in China could easily take up arms and Gray observes that the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864) was the greatest of many outbreaks. Taiping was a Chinese religious-based domestic uprising with ethnic – Han versus Manchu – overtones. The Taiping Rebellion demonstrated how rebels exploited internal weakness to gain weapons. External forces influenced the outcomes of this conflict between the state and NSA, including the arming of both sides. The majority of the Taiping were armed with no more than short and long spears and a knife or sometimes a sword – all locally produced. Some substituted a polearm, and a few had bows. Firearms were at first uncommon among the rebels, and plundering of the imperial army was a significant source of armament. The Taiping seized thousands of boats of different sizes and used them for transportation along rivers and for storing goods including ammunition. Experienced miners who joined the

Taiping used gunpowder to explode tunnels and bring down walls of well-fortified cities, such as Nanjing in 1853.\textsuperscript{337}

The Taiping established trade connections with Shanghai that included a black market supply of goods such as weapons and ammunition (swords, muskets, rifles, revolvers, carbines, artillery pieces, and gunpowder). Heath argues that the arms were generally of poor quality, either old and worn or badly made, though scholars attributed Taiping successes to their acquisition of sizeable quantities of foreign arms. Spence describes large scale activity of European and American gun-runners and arms dealers in Shanghai who smuggled arms by boat into Taiping territory.\textsuperscript{338} Tayliacozzo notes that many guns found their way from Singapore to Taiping-ravaged China. British and French naval forces stationed in Shanghai intercepted some of these merchant boats in the latter phase of the war, finding gunpowder marked as salted butter, percussion caps marked as screws or even as religious tracts, and rifles as umbrellas. The Taiping revolt was suppressed in 1864 by modernized imperial armies that exploited the strategic operational errors of the Taiping leadership (stretching its forces too far, internal divisions, and a leadership which took no part in current affairs). The Manchus were also able to defeat the Taiping by mobilizing western powers that until then had employed a policy of neutrality.\textsuperscript{339}

Border control has been a key challenge in the efforts of sectarian NSAs to acquire weapons. The ability of a state to consolidate its borders, to monitor trafficking of goods and travelers into its territory could be critical for the outcomes of NSAs’ revolt as of the present time. Karras explains that in the modern world states expanded their territories and consolidated their control over their people who lived in those territories. Geographic separation between several parts of a single state made physical inspection and verification difficult, serving the interests of rebel movements.\textsuperscript{340} Detecting smuggling was notoriously difficult since there were never enough police or customs officials to check all activities and every transaction at all times. Most illegal exchanges, therefore, went unchecked and


unobserved, which is precisely the way smugglers liked it.\textsuperscript{341} For example, the people of Rio Grande Du Sol, the southernmost province in Brazil, revolted against the newly formed “empire” of Brazil in 1835. Initially they sought greater autonomy but evolved into a separatist movement proclaiming the independence of the Piratini Republic. For ten years the rebels (\textit{farrapos}) controlled the countryside of the province. Their military force was cavalry dominated (armed with lances). They had access to remounts from neighboring provinces in Uruguay and Rio de la Plata (Argentina) that were in an almost perpetual state of political chaos. The acquisition of arms was relatively easy because the ruler of Uruguay supported the rebels, therefore when the former was badly defeated the rebels lost an important source of resources. The rebels had only the few cannons which they had captured from the imperial army and while possessing mainly cavalry they preferred to fight on the open plain. Further, the imperial army and navy were able to control most of the coastal region whereas the rebels were unable to secure contact with the world through a seaport, a fatal implication for the maintenance of their forces. Their small naval force operated only in the rivers and lakes of the province. In early 1845 the rebels laid down their arms after being defeated by the royalist army, now also containing cavalry.\textsuperscript{342}

Often, maritime borders were harder to secure. Despite years of sailing relentlessly back and forth between Cuba and Florida, the U.S. navy failed to intercept any ship carrying weapons from Cuba to the Seminole, a powerful Indian tribe that rose up in 1819 against the U.S. government’s effort to seize their lands in the former Spanish colony of Florida. The Second Seminole War (1835-1842) was the longest and the most expensive war of all the conflicts with Native Americans, because the Seminoles acquired ammunition and powder for their muskets from Cuban fishermen along the lower west coast of Florida. The U.S. government was compelled to compromise with the Seminoles who remain America’s only unconquered native people.\textsuperscript{343}

Cross-border smuggling has been associated with the \textit{smuggling town}; that is, a border settlement that attracted traders, smugglers, rebels and adventurers, all of whom were involved in arms trade that fuelled the nearby conflict zone. Harris and Sadler provide a detailed account of El Paso, the largest and most important American city in Texas on the

\textsuperscript{341}Karras, \textit{Smuggling, Contraband and Corruption in World History}, 104.
\textsuperscript{342}Scheina, \textit{Latin America}, 151-155.
\textsuperscript{343}James Kaserman and Sarah Kaserman, \textit{Florida Pirates. From the Southern Gulf Coast to the Keys and Beyond} (Charleston: The History Press, 2011), 82; Stan Zimmerman, \textit{A History of Smuggling in Florida} (Charleston: The History Press, 2006), 35-36.
Mexican border that became an arms smuggling center for rebel groups in Mexico at the time of revolution (1906-1920).\textsuperscript{344} Smuggling was a time-honored occupation along the border, and many of the locals did not consider smuggling a criminal activity. With the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution people ceased smuggling Chinese laborers into the United States and began smuggling guns into Mexico because of the large profit. Mexican rebels employed a wide logistical network across the United States, consisting of Mexican and American agents, brokers, and commercial representatives in New York, and El Paso was the hub. When the United States imposed an arms embargo on Mexico, FBI officers desperately fought against arms smuggling using intelligence methods, occasionally being assisted by Mexican authorities. They managed to intercept many shipments but many more made their way into Mexico, and convicted gun-runners usually got a light penalty. Mexican rebels purchased rifles, ammunition, machine guns and cannons from American firms (for example, a New York-based company that purchased government surplus, mainly U.S. Army supplies), and arms factories; they liaised between the company officials and Texas smugglers who collected the goods and smuggled them into Mexico using any available transportation (automobiles, wagons and even railway trains).\textsuperscript{345}

In El Paso, proprietors of hardware stores, pawn shops and secondhand stores acquired weapons from across the country, and traded them with Mexican rebels. Proving flexible and creative, the rebels and their associates used different techniques to smuggle the weapons, exploiting partial inspection by American customs authorities and the military. They shipped by train large iron pipes filled with ammunition; declared ammunition as medicine, and hid weapons under shipments of flour.\textsuperscript{346} They bribed train crews who secreted ammunition under seats in the train and once in Mexico returned the goods to the smugglers. Using false names, Mexican operatives in the United States sent to themselves ammunition packages via the postal service that were declared as lime and nails. Women crossed the border daily, taking with them rounds of ammunition, and exploiting the shortage of female inspectors on the Mexican border. The rate of smuggling increased on the eve of rebels’ campaigns. Some of the smugglers worked solely with one of the Mexican rebel factions,


\textsuperscript{345}Harris and Sadler, \textit{The Secret War in El Paso}, 31-33, 45-46.

\textsuperscript{346}Harris and Sadler, \textit{The Secret War in El Paso}, 45-46.
while others worked simultaneously with rival factions. The submission of the Mexican-American border to smuggling activity has persisted to this day.\textsuperscript{347}

**Revolutionary NSAs and their arming**

Following the French Revolution, popular support for national self-determination and democratic reforms grew throughout Europe and America. A revolution is a “major change in the political and socioeconomic structure of an individual state, brought about the spontaneous efforts of its \textit{citizens}, though efforts may be aided from outside and may in turn act to bring about similar change in other countries.” The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries’ theory of revolution argued that revolutions occur when the use of force results in a significant political change while “coup” means seizure of state power or the forcible overthrow of a ruler without far-reaching social or economic transformation of the country concerned.\textsuperscript{348} Against this background emerged a new type of writing about guerrilla warfare as a military tool to overthrow current regimes rather than fight against a foreign invader. The shift in the essence of guerrilla warfare had dramatic consequences on the arming of the insurgents. No longer could the latter count on the state-army – now its rival – as its arms supplier but had to look for alternative sources. The first revolutionary writers conceived insurgency as a \textit{popular movement} rather than a militia, therefore they hardly wrote about arming.\textsuperscript{349}

Radical Italian scholars were the first in Europe to discuss guerrilla warfare as a political tool to achieve national independence and social justice. Carlo Bianco (1795-1843) was among the first to articulate a process of force buildup of a revolutionary movement that fights against foreign or domestic oppressors. In his \textit{Handbook for Revolutionary Bands} (1833) he argued that at the beginning of events smaller groups of volunteers will carry only light weapons because of their limited resources, but that will enable their mobility. At a later stage when the guerrilla groups become a mass-movement, and all the people enlist the national army to expel the foreign invaders, they will need more weapons and ammunition, most of which they will capture from the enemy. Bianco acknowledged that insurgents’

\textsuperscript{347}Harris and Sadler, \textit{The Secret War in El Paso}, 89-92, 162-164, 241, 288.  
\textsuperscript{349}Laqueur, \textit{Guerrilla}, 151-152.
weaponry will be poor and that some of them will fight with axes, spears, pikes and rocks. August Blanqui (1805-1881) another Italian revolutionary theoretician argued that because the revolution will start in an urban environment the rebels will hold rifles while cannons will be useless. He distinguished between the early stage of the revolution when people will acquire their light weapons, chiefly by looting local or from a foreign enemy, and a later stage in which former military men will form a people’s army which had need of larger armaments.

Frederik Engels and Karl Marx – the great political philosophers, and founders of scientific socialism – advocated for the working class’ popular uprising. They rejected militarism in general and did not support guerrilla warfare as a means to conduct a socialist revolution, therefore they created a gap between insurgency and military studies. Engels mainly dealt with the impact of technology on military affairs, and discussed the armament of an insurgency. He stated that “insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other, and subject to certain rules of proceeding, which when neglected will produce the ruin of the party neglecting them. … Insurrection is a calculus with very indefinite magnitudes the value of which may change every day.”

For Marx and Engels the tactics of the barricade, very popular in the urban areas of 1848, had lost its effectiveness partly due to the new weapon systems employed by modern armies (more accurate rifles and cannons). They also noted the weaknesses in the weaponry of the rebels, and argued that popular war could not succeed in Europe due to the advantages of state-armies that became bigger, stronger, mobilized, and reluctance of the masses to engage in revolutionary activity after the events of 1848. Popular war and guerrilla warfare were more suitable for peripheral and underdeveloped countries in Africa and Asia, while the European working class should seize power by the inner contradictions of capitalism, mobilization of the security apparatuses for the revolution and employment of free and confidential elections.

In reality the seizure of political power almost inevitably involves direct physical control of the capital area as such, or at least of the members of the government. Therefore, revolutionaries needed weapons as part of their contingency planning, but often lacked the resources to acquire weapons. For instance, students in Odessa collected donations for guns and ammunition on the eve of the 1905 armed uprising in the city. Further, revolutionary movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that seized power faced the problem of its consolidation, the eradication of serious opposition, both internal and external. For example, the advance of the Germans eastward (late-1917) and the emergent threat of civil war (which erupted in May 1918), convinced the newly established Communist regime in Russia that if it was to survive it had to form a powerful national standing army that would mobilize former tsarist officers rather than relying on a civilian militia, in spite of strong objections from the Left Wing Communists in the party.

Revolutionary NSAs could not challenge states with national armies equipped with modern weapons, unless being supported by external intervention. Despite their heroism on the barricades of Paris, Vienna, Rome, and Berlin, the revolutionaries of 1848 failed to gain either their nationalist or their republican objectives because the monarchs retained the support of professional military forces that had little sympathy for the urban worker. Students and workers in the Austrian Empire took to the streets to force political reforms but were oppressed by loyal Austrian troops and Russian military assistance that reestablished the central authority. Internal destabilization of regimes and demoralization of the army could compensate for the rebels’ weakness in weaponry. For instance, the Second French Revolution of July 1830 was carried out by disorganized crowds. A small crowd gathered in some districts of Paris to protest against King Charles X’s decision to suspend the Chambers and the constitution. The uprising developed entirely spontaneously into numerous violent demonstrations. Partial and scattered riots turned into armed confrontations between the government and especially workers and artisans of Paris who built barricades on nearly every street. Once the gendarmerie shot indiscriminately at demonstrators, the crowds became threatening, replying with stones and muskets they ransacked at night from gun shops. Some

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historians claim that the owners voluntarily distributed weapons to the rebels. In this context, Brogun argues that there were many arsenals and gun shops in Paris, and there was no need to loot as rebels did in 1789. Women of Paris sat on their doorsteps molding bullets for the rebels; bands of men moved from door to door borrowing weapons. Rebels armed themselves with rusty sabres, swords, spits, pikes and pitchforks. Their foes, the Royal Guards and the Army, were more powerful but demoralized, which led to a steady flow of defections. Units of the normally reliable Royal Guards refused to fight the populace, and troops from the provinces refused to supply the troops or enter the capital. The Three Glorious Days resulted in the overthrow of the Bourbon monarchy and the establishment of the Orleanist regime rather than a republic.

Neutrality of the national army and mobilization of some military units in favor of revolution secured its success: this is a persistent feature of the history of rebellion. The first phase of the Mexican war of independence (1810-1821) ended in 1816 when the royal army of the colonial empire suppressed a massed army of one hundred thousand rebels, consisting of oppressed peasants and Indians, barely controllable without military experience. They were armed only with the peasant’s machete, the miner’s pick, and bow and arrow, and occasionally guns they captured from their enemies. The power balance between the rebels and royalists had changed when the Creole elites switched sides. Finding Spain of 1821 too liberal they opted now for independence to preserve their privileged position in Mexican society. Large sections of the royal army deserted, arming themselves with the best weapons available, and joined the rebels who were commanded by Colonel Agustin Iturbide, a royal army officer. In September 1821 Spain had no choice but to sign the Treaty of Cordoba that recognized Mexico’s independence.

State-military assets were a favorable source of weapons for NSAs who rose against the collapsing regime. An example that became a historical symbol is the seizure of the Parisian Bastille on July 14, 1789. When the people of Paris heard that the King Louis XVI was massing troops in Versailles to arrest the National Assembly’s members, crowds of

common people began to seize arms and mobilize. A crowd searching for military supplies attacked the Bastille, a medieval fortress used as a prison. The futile defence of the Bastille cost 98 lives before its garrison surrendered. 361

The Russian Revolution demonstrated important aspects of the arming of a revolutionary movement, that is, the mobilization skills of a political party and the employment of international networks to smuggle weapons into Russia. The turn of the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of modern political organizations. According to Max Weber a “party is an organization oriented toward the planned acquisition of social power.” Parties are organized to represent people of certain class and status and with certain interests. The means to obtain power can include violence, votes, bribery, and donation. According to Lipest and Rohkan every political party seeks to mobilize the populace against other forces. Thus, revolutionary political parties were involved in subversion against central governments, including acquisition of arms. They could use their organization, mobilization skills and international character to facilitate the smuggling of weapons against repressive regimes. 362

From the early twentieth century, networks of socialist activists from different parts of the Russian Empire, from the Caucasus through to the Baltic States, and abroad, were engaged in smuggling weapons into Russia. They purchased small arms from factories and arms dealers in Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, France, England and the United States. To make the purchase they might use intermediaries from other parties. The activists came mainly from the Socialist Revolutionary Party (SRP), the Social-Democrat Party (Bolshevik), the Finnish Action Resistance Party, and the Polish Socialist Party. Initially Japan, waging war against Russia from 1904 to 1905, organized and finalized the network through its brilliant military attaché in Stockholm who traveled across Europe to coordinate the operation. He stored purchased arms and ammunition in the cellar of a London bookstore. With Japanese money revolutionaries bought three small ships in England, registering one of them in the name of a wealthy American widow, and crewed the ships with young revolutionaries from the Baltic. Radical British activists helped to load the ships with the weapons, and on July 1905 the vessels sailed to the Baltic Sea. This operation failed because the major steamship

ran aground and was scuttled by its crew off the coast of Finland. Most of the cargo was lost, but activists transported a small part of it to Moscow and used the rifles during the December uprising there. The other two ships did not arrive in Russia. On November 1905, another steamship delivered 8,500 rifles to the Caucasus. Scholars argued that between the spring of 1904 and the end of 1905, the revolutionaries smuggled more than 15,000 rifles, approximately 24,000 revolvers, three tons of explosives, and 2.5 million rounds of ammunition into Russia.

While still in Switzerland Lenin – based on lessons from the uprising in Moscow (1905) – called for the creation of a proletariat guerrilla force that would acquire modern weapons (automatic rifles and hand grenades), and its members would learn to make bombs. He urged the rebels to obtain supplies of explosives, fuses and rifles. He explained that to achieve socialism there ought to be a violent revolution engaged by armed workers and peasants. Thus, the Bolshevik Party became more involved in arms smuggling under the supervision of Lenin from his sanctuary in Switzerland using the party’s organizational skills and large cadre of activists. Rappaport describes the intensive activity of Maxim Litvinov, a Jewish Bolshevik who became a successful gun-runner, managing to fool the Russian secret police (Okhrana) for some time. From his base in Paris he posed as a respectable army officer from Ecuador. Under this cover he traveled through European countries, inspecting and buying up arms. Records of contemporary radical Scottish leftists revealed that steamers came to British ports from Antwerp or Hamburg with boxes of Mausers and Brownings and ammunition. The activists repacked the cargo and sent it to Russia mainly through Finland. On a smaller scale, the Bolsheviks used land routes across Finnish and Latvian borders into Russia. The Okhrana invested a lot of effort in capturing Litvinov but he found shelter in England (he served later as Stalin’s foreign minister from 1933 to 1939). Yet, due to good intelligence and cooperation with local security services, the Okhrana managed to intercept much of the contraband of the Bolsheviks. Lenin was ready to cooperate with common criminals, who had less interest in socialist ideals, but who could nevertheless be very useful

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partners in operations involving weapons smuggling and arms sales. In these temporary alliances there were ample grounds for conflict and mutual grievances.\textsuperscript{367}

In 1917, the Bolsheviks planned to mobilize Russian soldiers into their ranks with their assets including their weapons. Later, summarizing the revolution, Trotsky stated that “the first task of every insurrection is to bring the troops over to its side.”\textsuperscript{368} The communists exploited demoralization and disintegration among the Russian army’s units to capture thousands of rifles, machineguns and some cannons. The Bolsheviks employed the Red Guard – a worker militia with no real fighting capability – as their military arm and Trotsky was involved in the militia’s arming. But he was counting on pro-Soviet soldiers, mainly sailors, to support his insurgent plans. Zeimke claims that the seizure of the Russian government building (The Winter Palace, 25\textsuperscript{th} October) was a military coup planned by Trotsky and conducted by mainly regular forces rather than a revolutionary political act.\textsuperscript{369}

The Russian revolution illustrates a revolutionary NSA that abandoned part of its ideology to cope with the urgent challenges of reality. Originally the Bolsheviks rejected militarism and promised a government that would bring immediate peace. Lenin stated (September 1917) that disarmament is the \textit{ideal of socialism}, wars are social evil and the proletarian’s revolution would wipe the standing army off the face of the earth and replace it with a workers’ militia.\textsuperscript{370} However, the Bolsheviks confronted a general European war (World War One, 1914-1918) which their theory had held to be impossible and Lenin made a \textit{radical revision} of Marxist thought on war and advocated for a civil war. Ziemke argues that Lenin did not anticipate that the Bolsheviks would have to create an armed force while actively engaged against domestic insurgents and still nominally at war with foreign enemies. The militarization of the Bolshevik regime was an \textit{indispensable element} for the survival of the Soviet state. The employment of a regular army with professional officers that acquired its weapons mainly from local factories helped the new Bolshevik regime to win the Russian civil war (1924). This episode illustrates what happens when an NSA becomes a state.\textsuperscript{371}


\textsuperscript{370}Lenin, \textit{Collected Works}, 23, 95.

The Rise of Modern Terrorism and the Discovery of Explosives

The appearance of specific weapon systems and military technologies could have revolutionary effects on NSAs’ operational ability and arming methods. In 1863 Alfred Nobel discovered dynamite, a far more destructive explosive than all previous explosives (like gun powder) and in 1875 he invented the more powerful gelignite explosive. At the same time, anarchist and revolutionary groups in Europe, comprising mainly students and intellectuals, advocated the use of violence to achieve democracy, national liberation and social equality. Nobel’s dynamite was a key tool of their campaign which Laqueur calls “systematic terrorism.” The first terror groups ever to use dynamite were the Russian anarchists, Narodnaya Volya (People’s Will), and the Irish Fenians. The former fought the Russian tsar’s autocratic rule from 1878 to 1881. They planned to provoke the government and shock the masses into action, using explosive bombs in addition to pistols and rifles. Narodnaya Volya established dynamite workshops in the late seventies, and in 1879 they conducted the first terror attack with a bomb, attempting to assassinate Alexander II. They preferred to kill him with a bomb rather than shooting, to make a greater impression. In 1881, after numerous attempts, Narodnaya Volya operatives succeeded in killing Tsar Alexander II by throwing two bombs at his carriage in St. Petersburg. Killing the tsar also killed the group because the authorities cracked down on the terrorists. Yet, other revolutionary groups in Russia engaged in explosive bombs including that of Lenin’s older brother in the late eighties as well as more organized groups like the “technical bureau” of Lenin’s own Bolshevik party at the turn of the century.372

Only two years after Nobel’s invention, Clan ma Gael, a U.S. based Irish liberation movement began to experiment with the new explosive. They also smuggled dynamite bombs from the United States to Liverpool. In 1867 the movement began the “dynamite war” against England. Between 1867 and 1887 Clan ma Gael planted at least sixty bombs in England’s major cities, killing at least one hundred people. In 1885 they shocked Britain when they bombed the Houses of Parliament and the Tower of London. The Irish terror campaign encouraged Britain’s liberal Prime Minister, William Gladstone, to introduce home rule bills

for Ireland. London in the second half of the nineteenth century attracted anarchist groups from all over Europe, and they were full of praise for dynamite as a transformative revolutionary tool. They regarded dynamite as firepower to match the armies of the state and to counter governments’ repressions. In America after 1870, radical worker groups, mainly mine workers, frequently used dynamite to attack employers’ property.

The employment of dynamite bombs followed by other explosives provided many advantages for terrorists and guerrillas. It was a new stage for insurgency because the explosives were smokeless and therefore secured low signature activity. The stabilizing of nitroglycerin and the invention of gelignite meant that it was possible to build bombs which could be manufactured, transported, and placed with relative ease and security to cause massive explosions. Already in 1875, the British government issued a law to monitor the selling of explosives but that could not stop the proliferation of commercial explosives.

If the new explosives were highly effective, they were also extremely dangerous, and many revolutionaries were killed while producing or transporting dynamite. Insurgents needed substantial quantity of explosives to produce powerful bombs which could result in a security risk. Miniaturization of bombs was another challenge for the first bomb makers, and from the late nineteenth century they produced hand-grenades, Molotov cocktails and letter bombs. The next chapter will reveal the increasing expertise of NSAs in manufacturing and acquiring explosives and explosive devices during the twentieth century.

This chapter underlines a number of developments about rebellious NSAs and their arming from early modernity up to the early twentieth century. Colonialism, the rise of the nation state and social-economic conflicts encouraged the appearance of new forms of NSAs, national, sectarian, revolutionary and social class oriented. Many of the rebel groups used traditional arms and were dependent on successful raids on governments’ assets. The new NSAs faced the stronger militaries of states armed with firearms. At the same time, modern rebel groups could use the spread of intentional commerce and patronage of foreign states to acquire weapons and challenge powerful governments. The nineteenth century witnessed the roots of modern terror using explosives.

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373 Oppenheimer, IRA, 177-182.
375 Oppenheimer, IRA, 177-178; Beverly, Wall Street, 45.
376 Laqueur, Guerrilla, 92-94.
Thus, due to the emergence of gunpowder and cannons, mostly under state control, early modern world NSAs clearly demonstrated the arguments Smith and Van Creveld made about weak NSAs, possessing simple arms, and fighting much stronger armies. A number of complicated arming systems of NSAs that operated from the late eighteenth century, especially the arming of the American Patriots, reflected early SOS. They were Trans-Atlantic, relatively heterogeneous, containing both states and NSAs, more independent than past smuggling networks and more cooperative. But they were rare and due to limited communication means their level of integration was low. The next chapter focuses on rebellious NSAs in Africa and Asia that challenged colonial powers during the nineteenth century and until World War Two.

Chapter Four: Armament – A Key Factor in NSAs’ Struggle against Colonialism from the Nineteenth Century until World War Two
Historical and Theoretical Introduction

The following chapter reviews NSAs’ efforts to acquire weaponry from the nineteenth century to the mid twentieth century. The chapter analyses major historical events that had significant influence on the buildup of rebel groups’ force in the colonization of Africa and Asia. The chapter demonstrates how European powers used military and technological superiority to control native people in colonies which were mostly weak in weaponry. Some armed NSAs, well organized and skilled warriors, seriously challenged colonial forces. They used the growing international arms trade in their struggle against colonialism.

During the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century European powers seized territories in Africa and Central Asia, and both Europe and the United States, motivated by political, economic and cultural reasons, took territories in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Additionally, Russia conquered the indigenous peoples of Central Asia, and Japan started to expand its empire in East Asia. Approximately twenty six million square kilometers and 150 million people fell under the rule of Europe and the United States in this period. The Industrial Revolution gave Western nations great military advantages over the rest of the world. The development of new and much deadlier firearms in the 1860s and 1870s shifted the balance of power on land between Westerners and other peoples. The use of the breechloader rather than the musket, the smokeless powder followed by TNT explosives, repeating rifles, and the new ultra-rapid fire machine gun, improved the firepower of Western armies, making colonial conquests and control easier than ever before. From the 1830s, Europe and America built up powerful armies whose troops numbered in the hundreds of thousands instead of tens of thousands. They were better armed and supplied due to the mass production of arms and ammunition (that is, standardization of products with interchangeable components), with better forms of organization and mobilization. The war machine and its accelerated manufacture of weapons enabled the Europeans to project their power and secure resources along with markets on other continent, to enforce their colonial authority. The spread of railroads and electric telegraph throughout the world accelerated Western forces’ mobility and deployment, facilitating the control of colonies including those in remote locations. Steamships enabled Western powers to ship military cargoes over very long distances, and the telegraph and telephone enabled better control over military forces. Fighter

jets appeared in the First World War and were used in ground-support missions against insurgents.  

Native peoples were usually armed only with old rifles, spears, bows and arrows. For example, firearms did not become generally available in inland Africa until the last decade of the nineteenth century. Van Crevel argues that time after time the advanced weapons wielded by small groups of white men enabled them to blast much larger bands of native African and Asian people to pieces. Repeatedly, too, it was shown that the only way to stop the Europeans was by adopting their weapons and, along with those, numerous other aspects of their industry and culture. Yet, Chew argues that the power balance between colonial powers and native people was more complicated than some historians stated. The possession of sophisticated new firearms did not always guarantee success against indigenous weaponry and tactics. In South Africa, the Northwest Frontier of India and Southeast Asia, local armies and rebels lost the war, but not before they first offered ferocious resistance, challenging the prevailing assumption about the superiority of Western arms in the modern world. Assisted by supplies of traditional weapons, geography, warfare tradition and better tactics, their knowledge of the terrain, and high morale could balance NSAs inferiority in technology, weaponry and organization.

European powers fought formal rulers and NSAs in societies that colonialism had already militarized from the seventeenth century by providing large quantities of arms and military training to indigenous rulers, their trade-partners (small arms could be presented as gifts); also, by encouraging a global trade of old and modern arms with the colonies. To illustrate this point, British customs records from the turn of the nineteenth century revealed the export of substantial quantities of firearms to markets in Africa. European charter firms (chiefly, the East India Company) established weapon factories in the colonies. From the 1870s the British government sold obsolete or surplus munitions at colonial outposts and in municipal centers in Britain. These weapons were used for arming native tribes and could be employed against British troops. Great power rivalry was another mechanism of arms diffusion in the colonies. The late nineteenth century featured intensive competition that accelerated arms transfers from the Western hemisphere’s centers to the colonies, arming


381 Chew, *Arming the Periphery*, 37. For example, the war between Britain and the Zulus (1879); the three wars between Britain and the Sultanate of Mysore and the Maratha Confederation (1750-1818), and the Sikhs (1800-1849). All native armies were able to mount a formidable challenge to the British.
indigenous peoples with the most modern, rather than the most obsolete, of weapons. These arms transfers destabilized regions in Africa and Asia, fueling inter-tribal and cross-cultural conflicts. Eventually colonialism contributed to the buildup of NSAs’ forces that rose against colonial authority. Against this background, British military experts who analyzed guerrilla conflict emphasized the principles of mobility, dispersion of forces, surprise, prolonging the war, mobilization of the people and exploitation of the topography while arming had a minor role in this project. For example, Major Dening discussed the connection between armament of guerrillas and their operational capabilities. He argued that the new trend of the urban guerrilla (as the British witnessed in Ireland) was associated with the invention of bombs, automatic pistols and high explosive mines, effective weapons which were hard to dismantle and relatively easy to acquire. Dening like other contemporary military thinkers argued that guerrillas might hasten to conduct conventional war against a state after procurement of new weapon systems, and consequently lose the war.

Colonel Charles Callwell’s treatise *Small Wars* was adopted by the British army as an official handbook in 1896. Callwell analyzed the special character of small wars; he explained the principles and practice of small wars in regard to strategy and tactics, and used many examples from the British army and other colonialist armies. He argued that the conduct of small wars is in certain respects an art in itself, diverging widely from the conditions of regular warfare. Many of the author’s ideas and thoughts are useful for the study of contemporary NSAs. Callwell discussed the significance of arming among NSAs arguing that while regular armies are better equipped, “it must be remembered that the arms of the enemy (NSA) have also improved.” Callwell explained that “savages” who used to fight with bows and arrows were now using rifles, and he discussed this dramatic change to smuggling activity: “the constant smuggling of arms into their territories, which the various powers concerned seem wholly unable to suppress.” Accordingly, some NSAs, such as the Boers in 1899, the Indian Mutiny in 1854-1855 and the Egyptian army in 1882, had the form and organization of regular troops. They had been organized into battalions, squadrons and batteries and their weapons were fairly efficient. Callwell encouraged British intelligence staff to study the organization of their NSAs opponents and highlighted the fact that many

382 Chew, *Arming the Periphery*, 21-37, 94, 211-221.
failures of regular troops stemmed from underestimating the strength and fighting qualities of NSAs. Callwell predicted the *growing importance* of wars between states and NSAs arguing that “small wars of the future may involve very difficult operations.”

Miller Maguire (1849-1920), another British officer, was one of the first military thinkers to highlight the connection between diffusion of technological developments and the arming of NSAs. He argued that “civilized powers” were losing their historical advantage over “savage” people in military technology because of the growth of *trade routes* and facility of communication. “The possession of the very newest and most perfect weapons is simply a *matter of money*, and the firms which turn them out will sell as freely to a savage as to the most enlightened of the world’s rulers.” He drew a connection between the “savages” and their better operational capabilities, warning that because of the *proliferation of modern weapons* all over the globe future British expeditions to the colonies would cope with highly skilled rivals armed with modern weapons rather than swords and spears.

**Major Trends in the Arming of Anti-Colonial NSAs**

The following section demonstrates how geography and cultural aspects can facilitate NSAs’ struggle against colonialism. The efficient combination of geographic conditions and self-production of arms stimulated the Afghans’ struggle against the superior British army during the First (1838-1843) and Second (1878-1880) Anglo-Afghan Wars. Britain wanted Afghanistan to be a buffer zone between India and Russia, but in both wars Britain easily seized Afghanistan only to set the stage for a later retreat in ruins. The Pashtun tribes of Afghanistan – although deeply divided – inflicted defeats on the powerful imperial army, because they were well-armed and did not face logistic constraints as contemporary NSAs usually did. The Afghanistan economy of the nineteenth century was based on bazaar trade. Bazaars with guild-like structures maintained a vigorous trading system, with commercial families having contacts as far afield as London, Moscow and Hong Kong. Bazaars in Kabul, Kandahar and Herat contained artisans who lived in particular sections and produced goods, including hand-made weapons evaluated as works of art. They made jezail, a heavy caliber musket, often mounted on horses, with greater range and better aim than the old British “brown bess.” If Afghan snipers were allowed to maintain distant firing positions unmolested they could inflict devastating casualties on a tightly formed infantry formation. They fired

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386 Callwell, Small Wars, 24, 43-47.
into British troops marching through valleys and narrow mountain passes from invisible positions atop cliffs. In 1842 defeated British troops retreating from Kabul to Jalalabad (“Death March”) were forced to hand over most of their guns; other British columns abandoned their weapons during battles. Mainly in the First Anglo-Afghan War, the British left a small force in Afghanistan with limited ammunition, and the Indian soldiers did not adapt to cold Afghan weather.

Until the late-nineteenth century, Afghanistan’s borders were not internationally accepted, and that enabled nomads to move easily from area to area and establish trading partnerships with bazaar merchants. Smuggling and corruption run together were an accepted and legitimate part of the economic system, just as they are today. In 1879, Afghan troops defeated the British column near Qandahar employing new cannons made in Iran. For close combat tribal warriors used the Persian sword, much superior to the European one. Iron cannons and other weapons were produced at Dara Adam Khel, an artisan gun-manufacturing village in the tribal area of Pakistan near Afghanistan. Girardet explains that the British considered it better for the Pathans to make their own weapons. Not only did this dissuade them from stealing from the British frontier troops, but the quality of weaponry produced would be inferior. Yet, local craftsmen in basic workshops have been producing perfectly crafted replicas of weapons since the nineteenth century. The plentiful supply of cheap firearms from Darra has long helped the tribes in Pakistan and Afghanistan to maintain their reputation as a wild frontier. Further, Pashtun frontier tribes that raided Indian and British troops acquired modern rifles that had been exported from Europe to Muscat, and re-exported to Bushier and Bandar Abbess. Afghan smugglers collected the goods and transported them up to the North West Frontier. The British could not block arms trafficking into Afghanistan because the Persian government was incapable of putting a stop to the smuggling of arms into its territory, and the Royal Navy did not have the resources to seal the whole Gulf, trying to

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stop small smuggling boats, some of which would make illegal coastline drops, rather than calling at ports.392

Aside from Asia, Africa was colonized too, and from the late nineteenth century Africans responded to their colonization and exploitation with military resistance and armed insurrection (for example, the rebellion of the Soninke people of Upper Senegal against the French in 1885-1887; the rebellion of the Asante against the British in Ghana in 1900; Nandi’s rebellion against the British in Kenya in 1890s, and the Mazi Mazi uprising in German East Africa, 1905-1907); all resulted in defeat.393 Apart from disunity, unwillingness to rethink strategies and tactics that had proved ineffective against European methods of warfare, and the ability of the Europeans to recruit large armies of African troops, weakness in weaponry was a major factor.394 In 1890, the European imperialists, through the Brussels Convention, reached an agreement that no further modern arms should be sold to Africans; some governments attempted to collect arms and to disarm the colonial population. Therefore, African rebels had only outmoded weapons such as the muzzle-loader Danish guns, spears, bows and arrows in the face of European cannon and the Maxim gun.395

Some colonies had a long tradition of arms trade and possession of arms, facilitating the buildup of the force of the rebel groups. For example, in Anglo and Dutch South East Asia, men went about their daily business heavily armed, usually with three or more arms on their person at all times, and more if they were travelling abroad. Women too were often skilled in the use of firearms. The huge profits to be made from the sale of firearms in the region enabled these commodities to diffuse into local societies on a large commercial scale and to the widest possible geography by the mid-nineteenth century. When colonial governments were trying to maintain a much stricter stance on such items, firearms were to

be found hidden away nearly everywhere. Where weapons were harder to find, native NSAs were compelled to capture colonial armies’ weapons in battle and by robbery. Mao stated that guerrillas should fight initially with any available weapon, producing fabricated arms, and gradually capturing from the enemy better weapons and a new supply of ammunition in the battlefield. Maori, the native people of New Zealand, were a race of warriors, who traditionally waged war with war clubs and spears based on hand-to-hand combat. In the early nineteenth century European missionaries and traders introduced them to the musket, thereafter Maori rapidly became very discerning in the weapons trade, acquired an expert knowledge of firearms, and subsequently updated their tactics. Maori were a well-armed NSA at the outset of a war against the state.

The Druze started their revolt against French administration in Jabal Druze (the Great Syrian Revolt, 1925-1927) armed with German and old Ottoman rifles left over from the First World War, and some of the fighters carried nothing but swords. At the battle of Maazraa (August 1925) a mounted rebel force ambushed and defeated the French 3,000-man column that was marching across the open plain toward Suwayda. The Druze captured 2,000 rifles with ammunition, several machine guns and cannons; the latter were operated by former artillery men from the army of the Great Arab Revolt against the Ottomans. The additional weapons facilitated the expansion of the uprising into a national revolt throughout Syria. Palestinian rebels initiated their Arab Revolt (1936-1939) against British rule and the Jewish Yishuv, armed with mainly clubs, knives, swords, and daggers; some possessed rifles and pistols left over from the Ottoman withdrawal. The rebels also captured rifles from British arsenals and acquired rifles from corrupt British military men. One of the motives of battle in the front ranks of the guerrillas was to capture the best weapons, uniforms, footwear or equipment. For NSAs with chronic ammunition problems, the outcomes of battles had a great effect on their supplies, and could encourage or depress their activity and force buildup.

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, geographic factors could facilitate or constrain NSAs’ ability to secure third-party help and arms trade. Daniels makes the

distinction between places in South America where the Spaniards succeeded in isolating the Indians from weapons and allies, defeated them, and forced them to surrender (such as in California and the Llanos of present day Colombia). In places where Indians could turn to foreigners for support, the Spanish made substantial concessions, paid tribute and recognized the Indians’ autonomy (as in southeastern North America and the Miskito coast in present day Nicaragua). The New Zealand Wars (1843-1872) were a series of campaigns between new European settlers and the British army against Maori people, the first settlers of New Zealand. Maori conducted a lengthy struggle, inflicting heavy casualties on the imperial army not only because they were a race of warriors but also because the New Zealand government failed to block the islands from the flow of firearms. American and other nations’ whaling and trading vessels were the major arms suppliersto Maori. Initially coming to New Zealand to load oil and other whale products, whalers and other merchants traded axes, muskets, plentiful supplies of gunpowder, guns, tobacco and other civilian goods for seal skins, pigs, potatoes, fish and other Maori products. Women were often pressed into service as “ship-girls” as a means of obtaining muskets and ammunition. From the 1840s the New Zealand government conducted a legal campaign against the arms trade of the Maori, and faced great difficulties in suppressing naval smuggling of the Maori. The government imposed a penalty on people who either sold or gave arms or ammunition to Maori, made vessels liable to seizure, and imposed a maritime blockade on the East Coast with limited effect.

Australia became one of the main arsenals from which Maori obtained guns and gunpowder from the late 1820s. Australian firms and merchants engaged with Maori in intensive and reciprocal arms trade across the Tasman Sea trading gunpowder and muskets for flax and preserved Maori heads. In the 1860s, Australian colonies gradually prohibited the export of warlike commodities to New Zealand with moderate results. For example, they charged a Melbourne firm with exporting five tons of blasting gunpowder to a fake railway contractor in Canterbury, New Zealand. The Australian firm answered that these materials were only intended for the mining industry. Maori acquisition of firearms was vital for the

404 Weise, Blood Brothers, 20-22, 117-118.
readiness of their forces against the British, but their supplies were constrained. Initially, Maori weapons were a match for the British weapons, but the technology gap in small arms and in artillery increased greatly in the years between the first and last campaigns in New Zealand against the Maori. In 1872, hostilities came to an end.  

NSAs could repair weapons or cast spare parts for them, but only a few could manufacture the weapons themselves. Manufacturing required a base area, possession of raw materials and technological knowledge acquired from external sources. The Barue people who revolted against Portuguese rule in Mozambique in 1917 developed munitions plants which produced powder, rifles and even components for their artillery. The Barue posed a serious challenge to Portuguese control of Mozambique from the 1880s onwards because they could repair and copy European weapons. Earlier, Avar Imam Shamil from Daghestan led the major anti-Russian revolt in the Caucasus (1834-1859), aiming to expel the Russians through the unification of all the Muslims in the Caucasus. He commanded an army of twenty thousand warriors at most, consisting of tribes from the north-eastern Caucasus and managed to wage a longstanding war against the much stronger Russian army using effective guerrilla warfare and the mountainous environment. The Caucasus topography introduced logistical problems for transporting supplies and the Ottomans turned Shamil down several times when he asked for military support against Russia. Gammer argues that the mountaineers of Daghestan traditionally produced gunpowder. Shamil established three factories for the production of gunpowder, one of them using water power. The rebels managed to produce some gun-shells and bombs, but these were of very poor quality, mainly due to lack of lead in the mountains. Most of the shells used were those captured from the Russians. In 1842 Shamil started to build his artillery, at first using captured Russian pieces. Later he started to cast his own cannon which were, however, of poor quality. The rebels had a few dozen

407 Moshe Gammer, Muslim Resistance to the Tsar. Shamil and the Conquest of Chechnia and Dagestan (London: Frank Cass, 1994), 257-259; Laqueur, Guerrilla, 62-63; Vandervort, Wars of Imperial, 132-133, 146. When the sultan was at peace with the tsar he did not want to do anything which might irritate the Russians and even in wartime Shamil failed to gain Turkish military support due to problems of coordination and mutual mistrust.
cannons which were effective in capturing the Russian fortress and repulsing Russian attempts to capture the heights. They produced and used rockets as well.  

The buildup and maintenance of the Caucasus army was assisted by a team of local engineers who visited Egypt possibly for technological instruction. These engineers organized and commanded the rebels’ artillery; they established and managed Shamil’s gunpowder mills, built and managed the gun foundry and supervised the fortification works. Gammer claims that these engineers made an enormous contribution to the rebels’ war effort, to their ability to continue the struggle for a long time and to the consolidation of Shamil’s power and authority. Deserters from the Russian army also played a major role in the maintenance and operation of Shamil’s artillery. Caucasus rebels were finally crushed by a powerful Russian army of 250,000 soldiers, by exhaustion, and because of inter-tribal rivalries (some of the tribes allied with the Russians). Shamil surrendered in 1859 and was exiled to Central Russia.

State-Sponsor and Diaspora’s Role in the Arming of NSAs

External support became an important source of NSAs’ weapons during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Still, only a few NSAs acquired direct and large scale assistance that empowered their campaigns against a colonial power like France’s vital role in the American Revolution. The scale of external support was influenced by different intervening factors such as geographic location, diaspora political pressure on the benefactor state and the counter-reaction of the other colonial power. Mostly, third parties supported NSAs’ struggle against a colonial power indirectly by providing sanctuary and turning a blind eye to smuggling activity, for example, U.S. support for Cuba’s War of Independence (1895-1902) against Spain. With none of the raw materials necessary to manufacture rifles, cartridges, and other supplies, the Cuban rebels had to rely on what they could capture from the Spanish, and more fundamentally, on what expeditionary forces brought into Cuba from abroad. Jose Marti, the leader of Cuba’s war of independence, was an exiled Cuban nationalist who found refuge in New York in 1880 where an active Cuban colony operated. From America Marti pursued a war that would bring about an independent, sovereign Cuba that would also feature

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social justice. In 1892 he founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party (CRP); he traveled to American cities to address workers and raise money to buy weapons for the war of independence. With the help of Cuban immigrants, many of whom worked in the cigar factories of Key West and Tampa, Florida, he organized the Second War of Independence (many workers agreed to contribute one-tenth of their earnings to the cause of Cuban freedom from Spain).411

Between 1895 and 1898 Cuban immigrants, especially those based in the United States, sent dozens of vessels (from ships to yachts), loaded with volunteers, arms, and ammunition, from ports from Florida to Virginia. Officially, the American government opposed the Cuban revolution; in fact it did little to intercept supplies coming from the United States. The Cubans smuggled largely from the south of the United States where the power of the U.S. federal government was partial.412The Spanish blocked the Cuban coast, capturing some of the rebels’ ships and intercepted hidden cargoes along the coast. Many rebel shipssucceeded in breaking through the blockade since guarding Cuba’s two thousand miles of coastline was a huge challenge, to the dysfunctional Spanish navy. The Spanish also avoided firing at American ships, even those smuggling arms for the rebels and disguised under the flags of other nations. The rebels transshipped at an appointed location in the Gulf of Cuba to ships that came from Cuba or they unloaded the cargo at a secure point along the beach. Local rebels patrolled the smuggling location and secured the area. At nightfall the expedition group delivered the cargo to local insurgents who put the cargo on pack mules and headed inland. In 1896 the New York Times reported on one of the largest shipments that brought 750,000 cartridges, 1,200 rifles, 100 machetes, and 400 revolvers. In the same year another ship unloaded 500 shells and 2,600 rifles.413 These arms shipments helped the Army of the Liberation to sustain what Tone calls “brilliant guerrilla campaign.”414

Some NSAs were totally dependent on getting foreign aid while others were self-reliant as a result of strategic and operational conditions. The Chinese Red Army wars against

413King, Coast Guard, 109-110; Hernandez, Spanish-American, 30-35; Tone, War and Genocide, 82.
414Tone, War and Genocide, 82-87, 181-182.
the Japanese (The Anti-Japanese War, 1937-1945) and the Nationalists (China’s Civil War, 1927-1949) demonstrated NSAs with almost complete self-reliance in weaponry. In the eight years of the War of Resistance against Japan, the Chinese communists’ army, a mere 40,000 in 1934, grew to over a million men by 1945. The population of Communist-controlled areas increased from 1.5 million to over 100 million, and the original territory of 92,000 square kilometers expanded to 950,000 square kilometers in nineteen resistance bases. Against this background, the Eight Route Army (ERA, the name of the Red Army since 1937) often lacked arms and ammunition; Chiang Kai-shek’s forces provided hardly any military supplies when the Communists and Nationalists cooperated under the United Front, and from 1939 they sent nothing. Nor did much Russian aid reach any Chinese armies other than Chiang’s own (Stalin sent Chiang large Soviet supply convoys worth 250 million dollars in 1937 U.S. dollars). The ERA lived off the enemy and by its wits. From 1931 to 1932, for example, the Communists seized thousands of guns and other light arms from Nationalist forces, and by 1934 they had more than 60 small-sized military supply factories that produced military provisions and that grew to 121 enterprises by 1937. Yet, lack of weaponry was a major reason why the ERA refrained after 1940 from the waging regular warfare against the much stronger Japanese army and employed guerrilla warfare instead. Some commentators argued that between late-1941 and late-1944 Mao spent most of his energy in political and organizational activity in north China; the ERA engaged in limited guerrilla operations, and its contribution to the war against Japan was minor. In 1945 Moscow transferred captured equipment from the surrendered Japanese army in Manchuria to the Chinese communists, including airplanes, tanks, and field artillery. Stalin also provided the ERA with Soviet and Czechoslovak-made weapons. Soviet economic advisors helped restore the railroad system and heavy industry, creating a solid base for the future Chinese Red Army’s advance to the south, and helping the Communist party to expand its military forces in the civil war against the Kuomintang.

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415 Calvert, Terrorism, 13.
The Arab Revolt against the Turks (1916-1918) was an example of an NSA heavily dependent on foreign aid. Traditionally, smuggling of arms took place along the Red Sea coast to supply Arab tribes of Central Arabia and the Hejaz. Encouraged by the British command in Egypt who had sent some weapons across the Red Sea, the Grand Sherif Hussein, Emir of Mecca, called on all Arabs in Hejaz to rise up against the Turks in June 1916. The rebels enjoyed some success at first, overwhelming small Turkish garrisons, but they were untrained and under-equipped, without cannon or machine guns, and with only ten thousand rifles, many of them antiques, for a potential force of fifty thousand. There was no unified command or central strategy, even for such mundane matters as feeding or paying the troops. It was a case of every tribe for itself. After three months, the revolt was falling apart. British army involvement, especially by T.E. Lawrence, made a great difference: the British planned the rebels’ new operational approach; they provided plenty of weapons (British service rifles, light machine guns, explosives) and military advisors to the Arab tribesmen. The Royal Navy backed the rebels’ advance along the Red Sea coast with supplies and artillery fire, and armored cars manned by Englishmen were used in the desert. Lawrence and his Arab irregulars gave valuable help to General Allenby campaign in Palestine by capturing Aqaba in 1917. The Arabs formed the right flank of Allenby’s army as the British moved north toward Damascus. They participated in the capture of the city in September 1918 that ended the war in the Middle East. But the rebels were dependent on British arms and finances.

Failure of NSAs to mobilize external support or to secure long-term aid from a third party could terminate revolt against colonial powers. For example, the Arab Revolt (1936-1939) which was a serious challenge to British rule in Palestine. The Higher Arab Committee, the Palestinian rebels’ leadership body, demanded the suspension of Jewish immigration, the prohibition of land sales to Jews and the appointment of a fully independent national state. The British managed to suppress the uprising partly because rebel leaders and their supporters in the Arab World failed to secure the flow of arms and ammunition to Palestine. From his exile in Lebanon, after being dismissed by the British in 1937, Hajj Amin

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al-Hussaini, the president of the Supreme Muslim Council and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem unsuccessfully attempted to acquire weapons for the rebels through different channels. Several times Arab leaders, including Hussaini, asked Nazi Germany for arms, ammunition and money. Germany refrained from granting the rebels assistance in any form as this would have a negative impact on Anglo-German relations, and did not go further than expressing sympathy for Arab self-determination in Palestine. It was committed to a policy of non-involvement in the Palestinian conflict. Fascist Italy wanted to increase Italy’s influence and prestige at the expense of Britain’s in the Middle East, in line with the Fascist Regime’s imperial aspirations. Italy supported the rebels financially. In 1937 the British security service foiled an Italian plot to procure weapons in Europe apparently for Saudi Arabia, and then smuggling the weapons to Palestine. By the end of 1938 Hajj Amin al-Hussaini asked Mussolini for one million rifle cartridges, the transportation of which would be handled by Mufti people who would load the munitions on a ship in one of the Italian islands in the Aegean. But the Fascist regime decided to suspend all aid of any kind to the Palestinians which would enable them to complete military preparations that would have ensured Palestine’s success in the future general war. Also, Arab dealers smuggled weapons from Syria, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia and Iraq whose governments turn a blind eye, using traditional smuggling routes and clan connections but this was not sufficient. The rebels lacked artillery and did not have machine guns. Apart from the lack of a single overarching politico-military authority, factionalism, equipment shortages were major weakness of the rebel bands.

In contrast, some NSAs overcome lack of sponsor-states by using their organizational skills and mobilizing diaspora communities. From the early twentieth century, NSAs in relatively developed societies that resisted colonialism and foreign occupation featured formal structures, labor division and roles. They had special operatives dealing with arming and logistics. A consistent argument of the thesis is that well-organized NSAs with skillful leadership, a centralized command and control system could function better despite a shortage of ammunition and could initiate complicated logistic operations to acquire

weapons, using modern communication and transportation. Technology has facilitated smuggling of arms by NSAs. The telegraph facilitated smuggling activity overseas, connecting command with overseas cells. The submarine telegraph cables enabled control over ships. The growing activity of NSAs away from their country was associated with another important twentieth century development – the diaspora had become more involved in the military buildup of NSAs and was recruited to facilitate arms smuggling. The IRA under the command of Michael Collins as Director of Intelligence was probably a pioneer in that sphere. The struggle for Irish independence (1919-1921), though incomplete, was a leading legacy for other national liberation movements who faced a shortage of weaponry.

During the Irish War of Independence and even before, the primary problem of the Irish Volunteers and later the IRA was to obtain arms. Their efforts at armament were crippled by the fact that Ireland is an island located close to Britain, isolated without a local industry in a society which monitored weapons closely. On the other hand, the island had numerous isolated points of access, small harbors, empty beaches, port cities, and outside of Britain were the Crown’s enemies who were often willing suppliers to the restive. In 1914 the Volunteer movement established a committee to organize the acquisition of arms. It was privately formed in London, and succeeded in buying 1,500 Mauser rifles and 45,000 rounds of ammunition in Germany and in landing them in Howth, Ireland. Germany’s strategy was that uprising in Ireland would impair Britain’s offensive power on the Continent. The Easter Rising (April 1916) became part of a wider German offensive against Britain in the First World War. German officials made clear to Republican representatives the message – “no revolution no rifles”. In April 1916 Germany sent 20,000 old rifles, 10 machine guns, and 40,000,000 rounds of ammunition to the republicans in Ireland on a ship pretending to be a Norwegian fishing boat. The British navy captured the ship and the British police arrested Roger Casement, a Republican senior activist who initiated cooperation with Germany, and was set ashore in south-west Ireland, from a German submarine. After the Easter Rising, the Germans were willing to increase military support to the Irish nationalists (60,000 rifles, 12,000,000 rounds of ammunition), but the Irish canceled the operation since the Germans

423 McKenna, Guerrilla Warfare , 271.
refused to send soldiers as well. German diplomats in the United States assisted Irish rebels in smuggling weapons to Ireland.\textsuperscript{425}

During the 1920s Irish nationalists extended their arms smuggling to Germany using German sympathy for the Irish cause, the political instability of the Weimar Republic and the large amount of military material left over from the First World War. Michael Collins dispatched a number of secret emissaries to Germany in 1920 and 1921 to secure military supplies. They cooperated with diverse German movements, and were assisted by Indian nationalists who lived in Germany. At first they smuggled arms to Ireland in small batches taken by individual couriers traveling in regular shipping. By the summer of 1921, because of the severe shortage of munitions in Ireland the IRA team in Germany was instructed to organize large-scale shipments. For example, in November 1921 they procured a ship in Hamburg, crewed it with members of a German right-wing anti-Semitic paramilitary group, and loaded it with 200 rifles and 10,000 rounds of ammunition. Also, a British intelligence report claimed that the Irish were working with the German Communist Party to arrange for fishing boats to transport arms to Ireland. In 1922 IRA procurement operatives in Germany set up a commercial shipping line and purchased a vessel to operate between Hamburg and Ireland. It carried general goods but also arms and ammunition. British intelligence closely monitored IRA activity in Germany, and intercepted some of the arms shipments to Ireland.\textsuperscript{426}

The IRA employed a section covering docks in Liverpool and other English ports that was responsible for smuggling weapons and explosives directly to Ireland and transferring munitions from ships arriving from the United States and the continent onto boats crossing the Irish Sea. Irish dockers working for the IRA in Liverpool and other English ports received and re-ship the cargo. The IRA recruited sympathetic crew members on the ships or passengers willing to carry the weapons in their luggage. The IRA used the British post service to send packets with military equipment such as ingredients of explosives labeled as bicycle parts, to fake recipients in Ireland.\textsuperscript{427}

\textsuperscript{426} Paul McMahon, British Spies and Irish Rebels: British Intelligence and Ireland, 1917-1945 (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), 115, 125-133.
\textsuperscript{427} Tom Mahon and James J. Gillogly, Decoding the IRA (Crok: Mercier Press, 2008), 170-172, 188-189, 197.
The Irish diaspora to America was vital for the Irish national struggle against Britain. Many of the nineteenth century attempts at freeing Ireland from British rule were U.S.-inspired and U.S.-aided from those Irish people who had emigrated, in their millions, from their famine and poverty ridden homeland. The United States was a safe haven for IRA operatives who exploited the uncertainty in the U.S. government after World War One over whether Irish revolutionary activists broke American law, and over popular support for Irish independence. Irish republicans had arms agents in the United States who acquired weapons under the cover of a political envoy. While having authority to sign an arms deal, IRA operatives in the United States were often instructed by IRA headquarters in Dublin by telegraph. They were assisted by Irish-American organizations smuggling funds, arms, ammunition and operatives to Ireland. For example, on June 1922 a Royal Navy destroyer, based on intelligence from the British Consul in New York, stopped an American steamer off the coast of Kerry, and discovered 240,000 rounds of ammunition packed in forty barrels marked “Natural Laid.” A group of Irish-Americans and a republican senior member who operated in New York, facilitated the introduction of the new powerful Thompson sub-machine gun among IRA operatives in Ireland. In late-1920, an Irish-American IRA supporter known as an arms dealer mediated in the purchase of sub-machine guns from the Auto-Ordnance Corporation for the IRA. He was assisted by a senior Irish official in the company, and another Irish-American multi-millionaire funded the deal. Under U.S. law American citizens could procure such a weapon. Two former U.S. Army officers instructed IRA operatives in Ireland in the use of the Thompson, a perfect weapon for the urban guerrilla. In June 1921 the group planned to smuggle an additional 495 sub-machine guns from New York to Ireland on a ship that carried coal to Dublin. An Irish humanitarian organization chartered the ship, and an Irish-American support organization funded the deal. The guns were sewn into sacks, labeled as legs of lamb. A few days before departure U.S. customs officers searched the vessel and discovered the cargo, possibly with British help. In the 1920s, IRA agents in New York also attempted to acquire chemical weapons for use in Ireland against the British. Overall, in the face of successful British campaign to intercept IRA smuggling activity, the major recourse open to the Irish rebels to obtain arms was to seize them from the British by raiding British army barracks up and down the country. To

illustrate, the main IRA weapon during the Irish Civil War was the Lee-Enfield rifle, which was stolen or even bought from the British army or police. 429

Highly organized NSAs executed combined operations from overseas that included smuggling of arms and operatives. From the 1930s, Jewish resistance groups smuggled weapons from Europe to Palestine, directly or through Egypt, with the help of the Jewish diaspora in many countries. The National Military Organization (IZL, the Irgun) planned to establish clandestine cells in Europe in 1938. The plan was to train a cadre of Jewish fighters who would immigrate to Eretz Israel illegally bringing arms with them, to become a kind of commando corps. The Irgun reached an agreement with the Polish government that provided weapons and ammunition to its representatives, hoping that the establishment of a new Jewish state would lead to mass emigration of Jews, thus solving the Jewish problem in Poland. Some of the weapons were concealed in the false bottoms of crates in which the furniture of prospective emigrants was transported, or in the drums of electrical machines.430 With the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 most of the arms that had been kept in special ammunition depots in Poland were returned to the Polish army. After the end of the war the Irgun renewed its smuggling efforts from Europe, mainly from France where it established headquarters in 1946. Irgun’s activists allocated weapons left by the German and other armies, such as rifles, machine guns and TNT. Explosives left by the Germans in Nancy were removed and brought to southern France; powder was removed from war-surplus shells. Over the history of revolts former warzones have been a valuable source of weapons for rebels. 431

NSAs that neither mobilized third-party military intervention, nor acquired weapons through trade or indigenous industry, were defeated by powerful empires. In 1896 Pilipino revolted against Spanish rule, led by the Katipunan secret society that was dedicated to independence for the Philippines. In June 1898 Emilio Aguinaldo, the main Filipino nationalist leader declared Philippines’ independence and proclaimed himself president of the new Republic. But the United States that bought the Philippines from Spain refused to

recognize Philippine independence or withdraw. Consequently, the Philippine-American War (1899-1902) broke out, as Aguinaldo was not willing to replace one colonial rule with another. Since late 1899, the army of Liberation waged a war of attrition using guerrilla tactics, and at times was able to inflict serious damage. Yet, the Americans conducted a successful counterinsurgency campaign against the Army of Liberation that focused on blocking the Pilipino from weapons. This encompassed American naval intelligence, the enforcement of a naval blockade, and Aguinaldo’s inability to generate international aid. The American fleet effectively prevented the trade and movement of most contraband between the islands and with the world at large. Japan and Germany sympathized with the Filipino struggle but did not send military supplies. The insurgents were forced to rely heavily on the weapons and ammunition they captured from the Spanish army in 1898, and whatever Filipino deserters from the Spanish army brought with them, including the modern German-made Mauser rifles that challenged American technology. America exchanged captured guerrillas for weapons, and paid insurgents to turn in their weapons. As a result, throughout the war the republic was desperately short of basic military equipment, including rifles and ammunition. Lacking the facilities to manufacture smokeless powder or high-quality cartridges, their arsenals could only produce, with great time and labor, homemade black powder and casings, which were consequently inferior in accuracy and rate of fire. Often, rebels used simple weapons such as bolos, spears, and poison-dipped arrows and poison-filled squirt bottles. Lack of weapons and the defective ammunition of the Filipino insurgents were major reasons for their defeat.

NSAs’ Use of the Global Arms Trade for Resistance against Colonialism

The following section demonstrates how rebellious NSAs used the rapid expansion of the arms trade in their struggle against colonialism. Many features of the global arms trade of the twentieth first century emerged in the nineteenth century; by then the arms trade had become global and therefore a major channel for NSAs to build up their forces. Rebel organizations had long been involved in the arms trade and acquired arms from other continents. The trade in arms was transformed in terms of its intensity, velocity, impact, institutionalization, and

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patterns of stratification, modes of transfer and the kinds of weapons traded. This transformation was driven by the industrial revolution and the transportation revolution. Steam ships and the railroad had a profound impact upon the geography of world trade in the nineteenth century. Railroads could, for the first time, move heavy loads cheaply over long distances, and steamships could go upstream almost as easily as downstream, and could sail the ocean at any time of year. The use of the express service and telegraph facilitated trade. New technologies in metallurgy and steam power were applied to weapons and warfare, with devastating consequences. From the 1850s the progressive commercialization of war and military service, along with arms manufacture and supply, resulted in the construction of military-industrial complexes (such as in Birmingham, London and Liege), capable of producing anything from small arms and ammunition to heavy armaments, explosives, pontoon-bridges, and warships.434

The internationalization of arms transfers served Western governments, imperial expansion, and colonial armies but gradually anti-colonial rebels too. It was easier for NSAs to acquire weapons through global trade because of the huge areas of activity, complicated structure of trade systems, limited political interference, and the drive of large European private corporations to export large quantities of weapons to accessible markets in South America, Africa, the Near East and Asia. The development in global communication and transportation facilitated acquisition of arms by NSAs with moderate logistical skills. Chew argues that the global arms trade meant that the arming of NSAs could radically change in both qualitative and quantitative terms. The global arms trade was an instrument to secure colonial rule, but eventually it provided native NSAs with better weapons to resist colonialism, though resistance and its outcomes evolved mainly in the twentieth century.435

NSAs were involved in regional arms trade as before, for instance, in the late-nineteenth century, Greek sponge fishers smuggled weapons from the east Mediterranean to points on the long coastline of North Africa. The smuggled munitions were transshipped at sea to smaller boats that then put in along the unprotected coast. The smuggled goods were transported to the hinterland and sold to the rebel tribes of North Africa. Yet, from the early nineteenth century, global trade featured complicated large scale networks of the arms trade, mainly in small arms, being inter-continental, transatlantic, employing maritime trade of port-

434 Chew, Arming the Periphery, 21-25; Held, Global, 108-109.

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cities with traditional trade caravans that operated further inland. These networks featured heterogeneous structures and roles: European governments, arms factories, trade houses, native armies, indigenous rulers, rebel groups, foreign and local merchants, smugglers, trade agents and bankers. All were engaged in arms trade with the colonies via modern technology, based on political and economic interests. For example, Chew and other scholars have analyzed trade networks that connected Europe, North America, East Africa, South Asia, and South East Asia, supplying weapons to NSAs that resisted colonialism in Dutch and Britain’s East Asia, and South Asia. That the development and use of new types of firearms in Europe rapidly threw on the markets in Africa and Asia a great quantity of obsolete weapons, chiefly black powder and breechloader rifles from the arsenals of Europe, demonstrated the interconnected profile of modern arms trade, which facilitated NSAs’ arming efforts.436

Haitian rebels of the early nineteenth century traded tropical crops (coffee, sugar) with American and English merchants in exchange for guns, gunpowder, and military sea vessels. In the 1890s, Somali rebels traded camels for rifles, and Congo Arab warlords sold forest ivory in exchange for guns. Often caravan merchants and maritime traders transported arms with other goods. Smuggling to gain profit, they might cease gunrunning and trade with other more profitable commodities. These exchange patterns were not novel, but modern trade systems were much bigger and global. They evolved into big business with wider informal labor division and roles set. Senior arms traders had large arsenals of weapons stored in depots, and also had financial backing. That is, logistical and financial aspects became major issues in modern arms trade.437 For example, the western and eastern Indian Ocean economy was based on triangular trade in guns, slaves, ivory or drugs; the last two were sent to European and American markets. Native NSAs were an important component of this system because rebels acquired guns that were needed to secure trade in local goods, in addition to raiding for slaves who supported the regional economy. In the Indian Ocean arena, Indian and European senior merchants used profits from the opium trade to reinvest in the business of gunrunning and slaves. Thus, from its outset the global arms trade was connected to illicit trade and criminal activity.438

Global arms trade networks consisted of hubs such as Singapore in South East Asia from the mid-nineteenth century. British governmental and private weapons companies

436 Harman, Bwana Storkesi, 159, 179; Chew, Arming the Periphery, 168-172.
437 Chew, Arming the Periphery, 40, 198-209.
exported secondhand and new rifles, ammunition, and machine-made powder to Singapore. Local and foreign merchants re-exported the cargo directly to rebel groups in the Philippines, Sumatra, Java and China, or through North Borneo, Siam, Portuguese Timor, New Guinea and French Indochina. From Bengal Singapore received supplies of Indian opium, very popular in the region, that facilitated the arms trade. Rebel smugglers visited Singapore and North Borneo to acquire weapons. Chew notes that Singapore was the leading arms transshipment center of the eastern Indian Ocean. Singapore, as well as Mombasa, Zanzibar, Muscat and Djibouti demonstrated entrepots, free trade facilities that established gateways for small arms traffic.\textsuperscript{439} Since its establishment in 1896, Djibouti port, for example, was the most active center of the arms trade between the Arabian Peninsula and East Africa. Arab and European traders shipped arms and ammunition that were coming from Europe to the Arabian coast; from Aden they transported the goods to North Somali ports. After off-loading the cargo, smugglers would proceed to Djibouti, where the trade in arms was practically unchecked. Local dealers sold part of the arms and ammunition to rebel groups in Somaliland or the vessels carried the weapons further south, and merchants sold it in South East Africa. Some of the weapons were French made, and Arab dhows sailed under the French flag and could not be searched at sea. They carried clearance papers made out to Yemen when it was definitely known that their destination was the Somali and East African coast. In spite of the vigilance of the British and Italian patrol ships, only a small fraction of the dhows were captured.\textsuperscript{440}

Similarly, Abd el Krim was a national Moroccan leader who drove the Spanish army out of Morocco, and came close to doing that to the French. El Krim turned bands of clans and tribes into a well-organized army equipped with modern weapons which were vital for his military success. Riffian-Berbers exploited the international free zone of Tangier to smuggle arms (machine guns, rifles, cannons) and ammunition they purchased from European business men through the city. Tangier remained open during the war, and the Spanish were never able to seal off the city and the coast entirely. Rif’s women smuggled weapons from Tangier to safe houses because nobody could touch women.\textsuperscript{441}

\textsuperscript{439} Beachey, “Arms Trade,” 465-466.
\textsuperscript{440} Beachey, “Arms Trade,” 465-466.
Modern trade facilitated the previous involvement of trading diasporas in supplying weapons to rebel groups. Abd el Kader al Din was the leader of the first Algerian war of independence against the French (1832-1847). His father Sheikh Muhi al Din, a nobleman (marabout) of the Beni Hachem tribe that occupied the Plain of Ghriss (southeast of Oran), appointed him to lead the Jihad against the French invaders in 1832 and he was declared sultan. The arming of the Algerian tribes was a significant segment of Abd el Qader’s plan to establish a regular army for the new Islamic nation out of his irregular force. Against this background, Jewish traders from Oran acquired for Abd el Qader rifles, cannons and gunpowder. Jewish traders established a commercial network that encompassed major Mediterranean ports (such as Gibraltar, Livorno, Tunis, Alexandria and Marseilles), the tribal interior in Algeria (they exported the meat and grain of local Arab farmers), the British consulate in Gibraltar and even British officials in the foreign ministry in London. This network dated back to the sixteenth century when the Spanish expelled the non-Christian population and the Jews settled in the Ottoman Empire and in Italy. The Jewish traders served as middlemen between the Arabs and the French colonialists’ administration and exploited both sides’ dependence on them to secure their commercial and religious interests. Kiser argues that Jewish merchants served as diplomats and intelligence agents on behalf of Abd el Kader because they knew the French well, with whom they conducted business; they visited Europe often, spoke foreign languages and thus were more cosmopolitan than the Arabs. One of them, Mordecai Amar, was a close advisor to the Algerian leader; he traded the tribes’ wheat for European weapons through commercial connections in Britain and Spain. Another Jewish merchant, Judas Ben Duran, purchased raw materials (iron, steel, sulphur) in Europe to develop the indigenous Algerians’ military industry. European technological experts (some of them military deserters, others professionals under contract from France) assisted the rebels in establishing modest production facilities such as a cannon shells factory in Tagdempt and a rifle factory in Tlemsem. He saw this activity as laying the foundations for an Algerian state. With these resources Abd el Kader posed a real challenge to the French colonial plan in

1967), 163; Tagliacozzo, Secret Trades, 275; Beachey, “Arms Trade,” 462; Harman, Bwana Stоркеси, 190-207; Chew, Arming the Periphery 39.
Algeria, forcing the French to acknowledge his authority over much of Algeria and managing to postpone the total occupation of Algeria.  

Thus, as in the Middle Age, NSAs of the modern world played an important role as arms traders. The Straits Chinese were a group of merchants and smugglers who dominated the arms trade of the South China Sea in the second half of the nineteenth century. They lived in separate communities through South East Asia and mediated between European merchants and indigenous peoples. They purchased European weapons in Singapore and North Borneo and sold them to Muslim rebels in southern Philippines (Sulu islands and Mindanao) who revolted against Spanish rule, in exchange for slaves, gutta-percha, and wax. Once the Spanish began the calculated destruction of rebel shipping, Chinese merchants freighted their goods from Singapore on European-owned vessels through family and business associates. They also used transshipping trade in the outer islands of the Philippines Archipelago. The Spanish attempted to constrain the Strait Chinese by harsh measures (registration, restrictions over migration and expulsion) but could not compete with Chinese mobility, community solidarity, and their business cooperation with the British government in Malaya.

The global character and larger size of the modern arms trade explains the diverse figures and institutions that engaged in the nineteenth century arms trade. Formal representatives of European charter companies, agency houses and shipping firms linked arms transfers from manufacturing centers in Europe to markets in the East. European and American adventurers and entrepreneurs visited colonies, mainly in wartime, to gain a good deal of their stock (for example, in the Caribbean, Netherland East India and China), and also local merchants, and bankers who financed the growing scale of the arms trade. In the colonies, the distinction between legal and illicit trade was not clear, and people engaged in formal and informal occupations simultaneously. For example, European trade companies employed European merchants who emigrated to the colonies and facilitated illegal trade in arms and other commodities that could be classified as contraband with native NSAs (some of them established private firms, many lived in ports). Thus, Chew argues that around the trade system of the India Ocean arena, there was little difference between the chartered

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company and colonial regime and drug cartels and pirates. Arms dealers and merchants used creative and sophisticated techniques to smuggle weapons; many of them were connected to maritime trade. They avoided reporting the content of a vessel’s cargo or provided false declarations. They concealed and camouflaged weapons among civilian goods, and sailed under a comfortable flag in conflict areas (for example, American shippers used a Spanish brig to smuggle arms to rebels in the Philippines under the Spanish flag). Ethnic groups’ connections at ports helped in unloading illicit cargos.

Colonial powers acknowledged the potential security threat imposed by the global arms trade. They conducted different measures to limit the risks, but mostly with limited success. Arms smugglers operated in European centers, for example in 1854 British authorities seized a large quantity of gunpowder that was about to be shipped to Greece for use by the Greek insurgents. A batch of Birmingham guns was smuggled into South Africa for use in a raid in 1895 that precipitated the Boer War. Some of the guns left Birmingham secreted in packing cases designed to resemble grand pianos. European governments initiated legislation limiting the sale and use of firearms but it was harder to supervise the flow of weapons once they were transported to the colonies. Private weapons companies were apparently less committed to export regulations, and a strong free trade lobby undermined these legislations. Colonial powers attempted to monitor the flow of weapons into their territories by marking borders, patrolling the coasts, increasing police supervision at ports, forbidding import of modern weapons, regulating the possession of arms in the colonies, and confiscating weapons arsenals. The maritime profile of the global arms trade made it harder to intercept arms shipments, especially within archipelagos (Netherland East India, Philippines, and the Caribbean Islands), unless colonial powers conducted brutal measures (demolition of towns, expulsion of people).

In Southeast Asia, the borders between British and Dutch rule existed more in the minds of European diplomats than anyone living in the depths of the forest. Tagliacozzo argues that legislation and technologies of enforcement might have changed over the second half of the nineteenth century, but neither the British rule in Southeast Asia nor the Dutch were ever able to completely stop the trade in arms spilling across the border. What did

\[446\] Chew, *Arming the Periphery*, 195, 202-209.
\[447\] Chew, *Arming the Periphery*, 204-208.
happen was that this trade was pushed further and further underground, as the state strove to cut off tendrils of supply that constantly adapted and changed. Arms smuggling was a big business in Southeast Asia. The geographical profile of the archipelago, composed of thousands of islands, helped, and colonial officials turned a blind eye or lacked manpower on the ground to check smuggling activity. Cross-sections of ethnic and national actors in Southeast Asia dealt with arms; locals and foreigners were all heavily involved in these transactions as traders, smugglers and shippers (for example, arms ships under British colors with Chinese skippers and Acehnese or Malay crews). Even many Dutchmen themselves were active in these trades, proving that profit was a stronger incentive than nationalism, at least for some. Consequently, Aceh rebels in northern Sumatra maintained a lengthy resistance against the Dutch.450

European states played a double game regarding the illicit arms trade. They supported smugglers and shippers when they benefitted politically and financially from the trade. France encouraged the arms trade through the port of Muscat because the arms were smuggled to the North West Frontier of India to be used against the British.451 In 1890, Germans used an Irish arms trader, well connected in East Africa, to supply old gunpowder produced in Hamburg, for a local leader from the Lake Victoriaregion who revolted against the British. The dealer stored his supplies in German territory in Tanganyika. Harman notes that European troops in the colonies sold army surplus to local arms dealers who traded with African chiefs. European merchants operated in Africa, using anti-slavery societies and missions as a cover for arms trade with local peoples.452

The rise of the global arms trade encouraged great powers to cooperate in their struggle against gunrunning. Initially, arms control efforts targeted the disarmament of NSAs. For example, the United States and Russia agreed in 1824 not to sell weapons to the native people of the northwest coast of America in order to ensure that they would be relatively safe from destructive attack by the Amerindians. In 1897, Spain, Britain and Germany signed a protocol to suppress gunrunning and slave raiding around the Philippine Archipelago. The technological development of weaponry that led to the vast destruction of the 1914-1918 war, created for the first time a global framework for arms control by an international organization. The League of Nations conducted conventions for the control of trade in arms

451 Chew, Arming the Periphery, 126.
and ammunition. The states involved were motivated in part by the desire to prevent the escalation of limited wars, in part by the hope that such an action might facilitate the more comfortable control of colonies. In this framework, the convention of 1919 prohibited the export of firearms and ammunition to most parts of Africa and the Middle East. Croft argues that the success of such rare efforts was very limited. Thus, Held states that well before the Great War the arms merchants, encouraged by their respective governments, had created a global arms trade system which operated largely on a commercial logic and was effectively beyond the control of governments. Rebellious NSAs used this change to acquire weapons.\(^{453}\)

**Summary**

The chapter explored how the European powers exploited their military and technological superiority to annex Asia, Africa and Oceania, easily suppressing local resistance. During the nineteenth century, self-production of weapons became an ineffective method for rebellious NSAs to build up their force, and the imbalance of power between states and NSAs reached a peak confirming the views of Smith and Van Creveld of NSAs weak in weaponry. The historical review reveals that even in the era that Smith calls “interstate industrial war” colonial powers were busy fighting many rebellious NSAs in the colonies. In a number of cases native people with skillful commanders, a warfare tradition, access to arms trade networks and tactical use of geographical environment, inflicted heavy losses over much stronger colonial armies. Rebellious NSAs began to exploit modern communication and transportation to facilitate smuggling of weapons over long distances.

In that pre-global world, NSAs used guerrilla and terror tactics to fight mighty colonial armies, occasionally gaining victories. Still, as articulated by Smith and Van Creveld, they did not enjoy the advantages of today’s armed groups, primarily the great impact of the media on conflicts and states’ fear of casualties instead of using their forces at any cost to achieve their aims. Colonial armies brutally suppressed indigenous revolts, but at that time it was not viewed as “crimes in an unjust cause.”\(^{454}\) The next chapter discusses how post World War Two’s developments of the international system improved the military strength of rebellious NSAs.

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The rise of the global arms trade encouraged the emergence of more complex smuggling systems of NSAs. With modern communication and transportation evolving, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed important features of SOS. Geographic dispersion of components of smuggling systems become larger and NSAs could better communicate with each other. A bigger role set and more differential division of labor amongst smugglers and arms merchants made the arms trade more heterogeneous and components of this trade more independent and less controlled by governments.
Chapter Five: The Arming of NSAs during the Cold War and

De-colonialism (1945-1990)

The chapter analyses how the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union that encompassed part of the Third World, influenced the arming of NSAs that fought for independence or regime change. Providing examples from Southeast Asia, Africa and America, the chapter demonstrates how different NSAs were armed and employed by the Soviet Union and the United States to fight their foes, namely proxy wars. At the same time, NSAs (like independent regimes) made the most of the East-West contest, including gaining advanced weapon systems from their sponsors. In the evolving new world system, rival neighboring countries employed NSAs against each other, providing the insurgents with large quantities of weapons. The chapter explores how classical guerrilla scholars addressed the arming of rebel groups.

Historical and Theoretical Background

NSAs’ efforts to gain weapons in the postwar era should be viewed through the lens of the de-colonialism process. It was usually a two-way story: the rebel group turned to the super-power for support in its private struggle promising to help the super-power against a regime supported by the rival super-power and the super-power exploited the rebel group because it could weaken the rival super-power's hold on a particular region. Each side exploited the other for its own gain even if, in some cases, they were ideologically incompatible (for example supporting religious extremists or military juntas irrespective of their ideological affiliation) with the supporting super-power.

The United States and Soviet Russia emerged as the two superpowers at the end of World War Two, and from viewing each other as an ally against Germany they shifted to seeing each other as a global enemy. Yergin explains that these two countries stood opposed to each other as nation-states, as ideologies, and as economic, and political systems. After 1945 the two superpowers were able to approximate a state of general mobilization without general war being the consequence. Alongside the creation of the Iron Curtain, the arms race, and the space race, to do their fighting, the U.S.-Soviet confrontation competed in 'collecting' rival third party allies, states as well as NSAs, providing them with weapons and other essential logistic support. Europe was the major battleground for the superpowers, but the Americans and the Soviets supported rebel groups across the world, directly or through
Western leaders regarded the Soviet Union as the nerve center of world-class revolution. A new doctrine of “national security” led the Americans to believe that the Soviet Union presented an immediate military threat to the United States everywhere in the world. From the point of view of the Soviet strategies, it was better to confront the imperialist powers, led by the United States, by backing national or incipient socialist movements in Africa and Asia, than by direct confrontation, which carried the awful risk of nuclear war. Some of the proxies served as operational and logistic centers, arming insurgents across the world. Cuba especially played a remarkable role in that respect. Cuban leaders advocated a global “internationalist” mission in supporting revolutionary movements (including weapons supply); they regarded their military intervention overseas as an effective means of combating the United States and its allies. In 1975, experiencing a shortage of American weapons, the Soviet Union asked Communist Vietnam to provide captured American weapons for “foreign Communist parties and representatives of national liberation movements.” A few years later, during the Reagan administration, the United States used Saudi Arabia, Morocco, South Africa, Israel and other allies to send money, to train and supply weapons to insurgent groups in Afghanistan, Angola, Nicaragua, Sudan and Somalia.

The Cold War overlapped with the struggle of movements for independence in Africa, Asia and revolutionary movements in Americas, following World War Two. By 1975, most of the colonies of Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, the United States, and finally Portugal, were transformed into independent states (seventy new members in the United Nations). Exhausted by World War Two, European imperialist powers granted independence to their colonies with relatively little violence. In colonies with significant white settler minorities, Africans mainly had to resort to armed struggle to gain independence, since the settler population strongly resisted majority black rule and struggled to retain their privileged position. Some independent countries did not meet the challenge of ruling new nations and establishing a viable economy. They faced great demographic and economic problems and witnessed ineffective and corrupted regimes, and internal disunity due to ethnic and religious divisions. Thus, both superpowers could punish nations that rejected their overtures by

455 Upshur et al., World History, 888-899, 912-934.
supporting their enemies. Cold War antagonists provided arms and political support for the nationalist forces even when the nationalist goals were different from those of the superpowers. The Soviet bloc supplied arms and training, and much rhetorical support, to anti-imperialist guerrilla movements from the 1960s. The United States supported conservative, pro-Western regimes, and provided covert assistance to conservative opponents seeking to overthrow socialist or communist governments, mainly in its backyard, Latin America.\footnote{Dominguez, Make a World, 114; Anne Gilks and Gerald Segal, China and the Arms Trade (Beckenham, U.K.: Goom Helm, 1985), 33; Odd, A. Westad, The Global Cold War. Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).} Anti-colonial NSAs that failed to mobilize external support were usually repressed. The British army suppressed the Mau Mau insurgency of the Kikuyu tribe in Kenya (1952-1956) and the Malayan Communist Party’s guerrilla war in Malaya (1948-1960) mainly because both NSAs lacked support from an external benefactor. They had no foreign supporters to send them weapons, money or military advisors.\footnote{Robert B. Edgerton, Mau Mau. An African Crucible (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 59, 81-83, 128-131; Mumford, 45-46, 61-69.}

The superpowers were involved in the buildup of NSAs’ force. Often the aid was comprehensive including arms shipments, training in the use of weapons, guerrilla warfare and other military subjects, military advisors and technicians. The foreign aid covered a range of arms from small arms to major weapons and serviced all three branches of the armed forces; often it was free. Superpowers supplied NSAs with their own produced weapons and sometimes provided captured weapons of their foes which characterized a global arms trade (China and Cuba supplied American weapons to their allies while the United States and its proxies re-exported Soviet weapons). The superpowers also set limits on how far such fighting could go in order to keep conflicts from triggering a devastating nuclear world war. They confined themselves to sending weapons and occasionally sending combat units to war-zones (American forces were sent to Vietnam and Latin America, Soviet forces intervened in Afghanistan and Egypt and covertly in North Vietnam). The following section demonstrates that often regional factors like historical inter-state alienations affected and even overshadowed the connection between the Cold War and arming of NSAs. In this context, the superpowers’ military support for NSAs often involved other players, including friendly states, smugglers and merchants. It was not a pure superpower-NSA combination.\footnote{Gilks and Segal, China, 33; Salehyan, Rebels without Borders, 25.}
The Cold War encompassed several theatres of war that influenced each other regarding the superpowers’ ability to support NSAs. That is, the United States and China could increase their military support for rebel groups in Africa and Latin America once the war in Vietnam ended. The superpowers’ remarkable logistic capabilities provided greater opportunities for NSAs to improve their armament and to conduct longstanding struggles. Big transport aircraft and huge ships redefined external support for rebel groups. Older transport aircraft could be refueled in long distance flights and often for security and political reasons, the superpowers could not send military aid directly to the theatre of war. NSAs and their patrons relied on third countries that provided shelter to national liberation movements, and logistic and operational services. These countries hosted political leadership and military commands of rebel groups and guerrilla training camps run by foreign advisors. They also served as transit stations for arms shipments. Training has often preceded the supply of weapons. In some cases the guerrillas returned with arms, in others arms arrived later. More sophisticated weapon systems compelled rebels to deal with maintenance problems, otherwise their modern weapons were useless. Some insurgencies were unable to absorb more than a small quantity of basic arms.462

Many of the national liberation movements that fought western colonialism after World War Two were inspired by Mao Tse-Tung’s theory on guerrilla warfare. While Marxism-Leninism regarded arming of revolutionaries as critical, Mao argued that people are more important than weapons. Therefore arming of an insurgency has a minor role in planning a revolution in comparison to “subjective” aspects, chiefly morale. Mao provided historical evidence for the argument that countries with weak armies could defeat empires with powerful armies because people in the former had a stronger morale and were committed to the policy of their party. This theme had direct implications for the role of armament in Mao’s military theory.463 Mao focused on the principle of a long-term war to defeat the enemy and to gain time to organize the volunteers into a new regular army. The mobilization and indoctrination of the people to support the revolution and join the war also required a long campaign. Apparently, these goals, like the need to operate in vast space and time, implied a requirement for a steady flow of large military supplies, but that was unrealistic for the Communists in China. In his book, On Guerrilla Warfare (1937) Mao stated that China was a weak country of vast size with poor technology and communication. Therefore local

462Gilks and Segal, China, 39.
guerrilla groups should be self-reliant in acquiring their arms which could be old and improvised.\textsuperscript{464}

Following Mao, revolutionary commanders across the world advocated for prolonged war and the employment of guerrilla warfare tactics such as ambushes and harassment as compensation for their weakness in arms. They believed that by annihilating small bodies of the enemy troops, thus demoralizing the others, they would force the enemy to withdraw from the occupied land or to give up power. This was their method to turn “weaknesses” into “strengths.”\textsuperscript{465} For example, Troung Chinh, former Secretary-General of the Vietnamese Communist Party and the senior theoretician of the Vietnamese revolution stated: “because we are short of arms, guerrilla warfare will in general be the most widespread method of fighting employed by our people in the long-term resistance. With the gradual development of the war, our army will gain more experience and we shall have more modern arms, so that mobile warfare will be applied more extensively.”\textsuperscript{466} Chinh asked the people not to overestimate modern arms claiming that: “material conditions are quite necessary to victory – even a temporary victory – in any military action, whether in war, or in an armed uprising,” but “all the strong points of Vietnam are fundamental; and those of the French are auxiliary.”\textsuperscript{467}

Ernesto (Che) Guevara, the most important theoretician of the Cuban revolution, emphasized the purchase of explosives as vital for guerrilla operations. He argued that in a future war with the United States army the Cubans would need to equip themselves with anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapon systems and that was a manifestation of an asymmetric military doctrine. Guevara acknowledged that the Cuban people – being unskilled in military affairs - would have to engage in a people’s war against an American invasion.\textsuperscript{468}

\section*{The Cold War and the Arming of NSAs in Southeast Asia}

The Vietminh war of independence against the French (1946-1954) was an early example of the Cold War’s impact upon NSAs’ weaponry. It demonstrated an arming procedure of rebel groups similar to past and more modern NSAs. Initially, the communist rebels seized

\textsuperscript{464}Mao, Guerilla, 44-46, 71-72, 97; Tovy, Guerilla, 56, 88-89.
\textsuperscript{467}Porter, 66, 72.
weapons that the surrendered Japanese army left behind (May 1945), mainly rifles and machine-guns, and a few mortars; Giap claimed that they also bought armaments from General Chiang Kai-shek’s army that was deployed in North Vietnam in 1945-1946. They seized French weapons by ambushing French supply convoys, but generally they lacked weapons to the extent that they were searching for Japanese and French weapons sunk in rivers, and they fought with spears. Therefore, in 1947 the Vietminh failed to conquer Hanoi, and returned to guerrilla warfare.\textsuperscript{469} The victory of the Communist Party in China (1949) opened a new phase for the Vietminh struggle. The encirclement of the Vietminh had been broken on the northern border and the former started to receive material aid from their neighbors. China was a significant sanctuary for the Vietminh as they conducted training, operational planning and logistics work in Yunnan and Guanxi in southern China. The capture of Hainan Island in April-May 1950 facilitated the supply of weapons. Their volume increased, and the French reported a significant improvement in the Vietminh’s weaponry. The arms and military advice that the Chinese had started to supply to the Vietminh – heavy mortars and cannons – contributed to the buildup of their force from a militia that conducted guerrilla warfare into a regular army which was capable of occupying territory and launching a positional war. By June 1951 China’s aid had enabled the Vietminh to arm three divisions. Chinese aid did not enable the Vietminh arsenal to equal the French, but it did radically alter the military situation. For the first time the Vietminh began to inflict heavy losses on French troops.\textsuperscript{470}

In November 1951 a new rail link was opened, which facilitated supply. Daily supplies arrived by train across the border from Nanning, carrying heavy mortars, 105mm field guns, 75mm and 57mm recoilless guns. The Vietminh transferred through China weapons they received from the Soviet Union such as 37mm anti-aircraft guns. Gilk and Segal argue that the Chinese supplied heavier weapons, even though they were desperately trying to modernize their own forces. The Vietminh had received sufficient light and heavy weapons to outfit heavy artillery units for what was to be a war-ending offensive. The former also set up an indigenous military production infrastructure which produced small arms, bazookas, recoilless guns and light repaired weapon systems. The head of the department was a Vietnamese scientist residing in France who probably used his connections to acquire


\textsuperscript{470}Gilks and Segal, \textit{Revolutionary Guard}, 33-34.
military technologies for the new army. Therefore, the Vietminh were able to initiate (January 1954) a large scale operation to besiege the French fortified entrenched camp in the valley of Dien Bien Phu (northwest of Vietnam). They surprised the French by shelling the camp with heavy artillery from the surrounding mountains, and after fifty five days of extensive fighting the besieged French surrendered. Giap argued that “our light artillery played a great part in the Dien Bien Phu battle. A few months before the battle the Chinese built a special road linking Mengtze in Yunnan with Dien Bien Phu, and after the victory Giap said that 1,000 Soviet lorries had carried supplies over from China. The French defeat in Dien Bien Phu paved the way for French withdrawal from Indochina and in 1954 the Republic of North Vietnam was established.\footnote{Giap, \textit{Dien Bien Phu}, 217-222, 287, 303. 217-222; Gilks and Segal, \textit{China}, 34-35.}

As an independent state, North Vietnam supported communist insurgent groups in neighboring countries, such as Cambodia. The Cambodian Communists, the Khmer Rouge were weak in weaponry and depended on the captured arms of government units. From the 1960s until the end of 1972 Pol Pot's troops were armed, trained, and often led by the Vietnamese who carried out most of the fighting against the Cambodian Republican army. The Khmer Rouge lacked the weapons and ammunition to sustain an offensive on Phnom Penh. Following the Paris Agreement and the end of American involvement in Vietnam (1973), China stepped up support to the Khmer Rouge that flowed down the Ho Chi Minh Trail from China. The North Vietnamese provided logistical support to move the Chinese material and supplemented it with some of its own equipment. China sent the Khmer Rouge floating mines; the Communists planted them in the Mekong and the Cambodian government were compelled to close the river to traffic after several supply ships were sunk. By the end of 1974, Phnom Penh was completely isolated because all roads to the capital were cut too. China supplied the Khmer Rouge artillery that enabled them to fire heavy bombardments on the capital. Also, they captured several cannons from the collapsing Republican army. American cargo planes could no longer airlift rice and ammunition to the Phnom Penh airfield which came under artillery attack. Heavily armed Cambodian Communist troops entered Phnom Penh on April 1975.\footnote{David P. Chandler, \textit{Brother Number One. A Political Biography of Pol Pot} (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), 48, 80-94, 102-103; Wilfred P. Deac, \textit{Road to the Killing Fields. The Cambodian War of 1970-1975} (Texas University Press, 1997), 79, 165, 211.}

After the end of the Second Indochina War (1975), the Cold War in Asia had become a rivalry between two communist powers, China and the Soviet Union, with the United States
firmly joining China’s side. China’s military support of the Khmer Rouge in spite of the latter’s massacre of its own people (1975-1979), rescued the organization after Vietnam invaded Cambodia and overthrew the Communist Cambodian regime in 1979 but now the Chinese were assisted by other states that were also afraid of Vietnam’s expansion in Indochina. Pro-American Thailand played an important role as a military sanctuary for the forces opposing the Vietnamese-installed regime in Phnom Penh, providing territory in which the Khmer Rouge and other factions could find shelter, construct bases, and facilitate the flow of finance and arms to the guerrilla groups.473 The Thai-Cambodian border was the scene of arms smuggling and black market trade for many years, but now China used Thai territory for Khmer Rouge resupply in exchange for decreasing support for communist insurgents operating in Thailand. Thai officials saw China as a crucial factor in a strategy to contain the influence of Vietnam and the Soviet Union in Southeast Asia. As if they were still fighting the Vietnam War, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United States sent some weapons to the non-communist Cambodian resistance who allied with the Khmer Rouge and refused to consider arresting Pol Pot or any other Khmer Rouge on charges of genocide all in the name of fighting against Vietnamese occupation, even though the Vietnamese had withdrawn from Cambodia by 1989. Weapon shipments for the rebels were unloaded in Sattahip Port. The Thais constructed weapon storehouses on both sides of the Cambodian border for the weapons the Khmer Rouge and other resistance groups received. Thai military provided logistical support for the transfer of arms supplies for the guerrillas, and took a portion of the arms delivered. Usually China paid for the Thais’ logistical services.474

In 1993 local media reported that a large clandestine storage area had been found in a farm in southeast Thailand and contained around 1,500 tons of arms and ammunition, mostly Chinese-made. The farm was guarded by Khmer Rouge members who lived there with their families and was connected to the Thai army. The Khmer Rouge and the Thai army became trading counterparts in the 1980s. The rebels traded in timber and gems from border areas they seized, gaining enormous sources of revenue to wage war. Whether from China alone or with additional funds and supplies from the United States, the Khmer Rouge were

rehabilitated as a strong fighting force (forty thousand troops in strength) that challenged the Cambodian government, a few years after their defeat by the Vietnamese army. Later, against the background of massive international efforts to pacify Cambodia and gain national reconciliation, a weakened Khmer Rouge had no interest in the stabilization of Cambodia and resisted disarmament and demobilization because of their economic interests in arms trade and exploitation of Cambodian mines in the north. Isolated and without external support they sustained guerrilla warfare until the late 1990s.475

The Cold War and the Arming of NSAs in Africa

Most African countries’ wars of independence occurred when rivalry between the East and the West was at its most intense, and that created new opportunities for acquisition of weapons. The Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN) that resisted French control in Algeria (1954-1962) exploited local resources of arms and funds to the maximum. The FLN located some caches the United States left behind in North Africa after World War Two. It set up underground factories to make bombs out of odds and ends, but mostly it relied on material from the French army obtained by theft, robbery or the battlefield, and from deserters from the French forces.476 Later, a few shipments arrived from Egypt, paid for by the Arab League as an act of solidarity with an Arab people struggling for independence. The External Delegation, operating from Cairo, took the lead in developing sources of supply among countries friendly to the FLN in the Arab World and the Eastern Block. By 1955, the former had erected a workable system of bases and routes for providing the FLN forces in Algeria with arms, ammunition, and other supplies. In 1958, responsibility for most logistical support for the FLN was passed to the new Minister of Armament and General Supply of the ALN government-in-exile. The equipment and supplies obtained were shipped to ports in Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco and subsequently moved forward to FLN depots in Tunisia and Morocco under the supervision of FLNs’ representatives. The Tunisian army carried arms and supplies to the western part of the country where they were handed over to the FLN.477

Communist countries played an important role in arming the FLN. In 1959, China supplied the FLN with captured U.S. weapons from Korea (mortars, heavy machine guns, anti-aircraft guns), and granted the FLN ten million dollars to purchase weapons. In December 1961, a Cuban ship left Havana with 1,500 rifles, more than thirty machines guns, four U.S.-made mortars, and a large quantity of mortar rounds, also of U.S. manufacture. The weapons were unloaded at Casablanca and transported in January 1962 to the FLN camp near the Algerian border. Communist Czechoslovakia and East Germany supplied weapons to the FLN on behalf of the Eastern Bloc (fearing that France would ask for U.S. involvement in Algeria, the Soviet Union deliberately remained in the background). The former provided mainly the Mauser guns taken from the retreating German army, followed by imitation Mausers the Czechs manufactured themselves. The FLN used Arab states as an end-user for purchase of weapons and other military supplies in western countries. Some weapons reached Algeria directly, but usually gunrunners loaded arms on East German or Yugoslav ships, and then sent them via independent Morocco or Tunisia. The FLN employed Algerian immigrants in France to run cash in suitcases to Swiss banks which then paid the gunrunners. Some of the latter were career smugglers involved in illicit trade of cigarettes and gold through the Mediterranean or ex-SS officers who acquired rifles in West Germany.

The FLN acquired significant quantities of arms and ammunition but faced great difficulties in smuggling the shipments into Algeria. The French almost completely isolated the insurgents from outsider aid, and also cut them off from much of the civilian population by resettling nearly two million people. Learning from their defeat in Indochina, the French waged effective counter-insurgency warfare inside Algeria and abroad to eliminate the flow of weapons into Algeria. By constructing effective barriers along the borders with Tunisia and Algeria (the Maurice Line) and resettling the inhabitants of the border region, the French managed to block the bulk of arms supplies and prevented large-scale infiltration. While FLN insurgents inside (15,000 guerrillas) were starved of arms and ammunition a well-armed inactive force (around 25,000 insurgents) sat just across the frontier. Based on good intelligence the French navy stopped and searched ships of any nation suspected of running munitions to the FLN as far as the Atlantic Ocean and the English Channel. For example, in April 1959 the French seized a Czech vessel in the Mediterranean bound for Morocco, loaded

with 581 tons of arms including 12,000 rifles and 2,000 machineguns. French intelligence services waged an effective assassination campaign against arms dealers who served the FLN, and French government threats encouraged some states to cease sending weapons to the guerrillas. By late 1959 the FLN were short of weapons, losing up to five hundred men per day. The defeat of FLN guerrilla warfare in the hinterland encouraged the FLN to initiate urban terror tactics that needed limited weaponry (they operated a bomb factory in Algiers that the French discovered in February 1959) but this too was largely contained by the French. Still, the insurgents were determined to continue the struggle at all costs and by any means, while the European community and the French army were involved in intrigues against the French leader, General Charles de Gaulle who was anxious to bring the war to an end, viewing the Algerian situation as too expensive financially and politically. Algeria received its independence in July 1964. At the end of the war, only one-third of the FLN active operatives inside Algeria had weapons. Thus, the FLN victory was not on the battlefield but on the political field.

More than the FLN case, Communist countries were deeply involved in liberation movements’ struggle against colonialism in southern Africa. During the 1970s and 1980s southern Africa faced wars which clearly demonstrated the link between the Cold War, interstate relationships, and arming of NSAs. Two phases of rebellious NSAs were involved: in the 1960s and 1970s the Soviet Union, China and other communist countries supported liberation movements that resisted colonialism. Becoming a center of African liberation movements, Tanzania was vital for the delivery of these arms shipments. From the late 1970s the United States and mainly South Africa supported insurgent groups battling the new pro-Soviet regimes. Cuba supported many anticolonial movements but its commitment to support the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) from the Portuguese was spectacular. From the early 1960s the Soviets and Cubans sent weapons (including mortars) to the MPLA and trained the rebels in the Marxist Congo-Brazzaville and Tanzania. Cuban military men and the MPLA smuggled the first shipments from Brazzaville crossing hostile Zaire with false documents and with help from underground Angolans, into Angola.

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Competing with the Soviets in Africa, the Chinese armed and trained a rival group, the Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola (FNLA) and extended some assistance to the pro-American UNITA. By 1974 and mainly after Angola was granted its independence a year later, the MPLA and UNITA were fighting each other. Angola became a battlefield for the rival superpowers with dramatic implications over local NSAs’ arming. Angolan central government (the former MPLA) brought in Cuban troops, while the American and South Africans supported the rebel UNITA army. South Africa supported the UNITA as part of its total Onslaught Strategy; that is saving apartheid by escalating its incursions into neighboring states. 483

Unlike UNITA and FNLA, the MPLA could receive weapons only by sea or air. Therefore, Congo-Brazzaville was logistically vital for the Eastern Bloc’s flow of weapons. In April 1975 a Yugoslav ship loaded with arms arrived in Luanda. Under Portuguese direction, the ship had to leave and proceeded to Congo-Brazzaville’s coast where it unloaded armored cars, recoilless guns and machine guns. The cargo was reshipped on smaller ships that infiltrated into a minor port south of Luanda. In late-1975, the Soviet Union used long-distance transport aircraft that transferred Cuban troops and large quantities of Soviet weapons to the MPLA government via Brazzaville, after Cuba had started to face difficulties finding a refueling stop due to American intervention.484 In October 1975, with U.S. blessing, South Africa invaded Angola and provided weapons to UNITA, as part of a CIA covert operation to overthrow the Marxist MPLA government. Pretoria sought to destabilize Angola because the latter supported the African National Congress (ANC) and Namibian Marxist guerrillas, the South West African People's (SWAPO). Fearing a new Vietnam, in early 1976 Congress refused to fund American involvement in Angola while the Chinese ceased their aid to the FNLA in order not to be associated with the South African invasion. Yet in 1979, under U.S. request and because of its intense desire to combat Soviet hegemonism, China delivered weapons to UNITA through South African-held Namibia. With a significant Cuban intervention (a total of nearly half a million Cubans were sent to fight in Angola), the MPLA


484 George, Cuban, 139, 155, 165, 167, 171 185-197, 256, 272; Dominguez, Make a World, 114, 130, 141-145; Gleijeses, Conflicting Missions, 328-361, 367-369
consolidated its control over Angola and gained international recognition. South Africa was compelled to withdraw temporarily from Angola.\textsuperscript{485} The intensification of the Cold War during the Reagan administration had great implications for the arming of NSAs in Angola, mainly in President Reagan’s second term. From 1984 to 1988 Angola witnessed a devastating war between Cuba, supported by the Soviet Union, and South Africa supported by the United States. NSAs, mainly UNITA, played a minor role. Encouraged by a green light from the Reagan administration, South Africa expanded its military involvement in Angola, incorporating UNITA in its military strategy, while UNITA cooperated with South Africa to further its aspiration to control Angola. UNITA became a powerful military organization equipped with captured Soviet weapons it received from South Africa. In 1986 the United States supplied UNITA with sophisticated weapon systems, Stinger surface-to-air missiles and Taw anti-tank missiles. UNITA was one of the first NSAs that used surface-to-air missiles against transport aircraft.\textsuperscript{486}

The civil war in Angola was prolonged after all foreign forces left the country in 1991. A major reason was that UNITA acquired additional weapons through private sources, using Zaire as a transit area and conduit for weapons transfers. A Human Rights Watch Report from 1996 argued that UNITA rented African private cargo companies to deliver weapons and other goods from Zaire, South Africa and Brazzaville, into UNITA zones, using false flight plans. UNITA also smuggled weapons from Zaire across the Angolan border by land. UNITA funded its illegal arms imports with Angola’s diamond wealth. Only in 2002, after forty one years’ conflict, UNITA and the Angolan government signed a peace treaty.\textsuperscript{487}

The armed struggle against apartheid in South Africa (1961-1990) revealed that arming of an NSA could play a limited role in a war against a state. Airlifts do not necessarily prescribe rebels’ victory. That the South African Armed Forces engaged with the African National Congress (ANC) mainly on South Africa's neighbors’ soil rather than in South Africa itself, demonstrated that both sides acknowledged the importance of logistics. The ANC wanted to secure a flow of weapons and activists from across South Africa’s borders, and Pretoria’s strategy was to use “buffer states” to protect it from military infiltration. In 1961 the ANC established a military arm, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) that initially had very limited weaponry, and gradually acquired Soviet weapons. In the 1960s ANC cadres were

\textsuperscript{485}China, 45-46, 90, 145, 159-161.
\textsuperscript{486}Wright, \textit{Destruction}, 85, 93, 103, 110.
\textsuperscript{487}Human Rights Watch, “Angola Between War and Peace Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses Since the Lusaka Protocol,” 9, 1 (February 1996).
trained in Tanzania, and after the establishment of a Marxist government in Angola in 1975, the latter served as a major sanctuary for MK; it gained its weapons via Angola. The MK ran several military camps in Angola where hundreds of ANC operatives passed basic military training; some visited Russia, China, Cuba and other communist countries for special training. Zambia hosted the military headquarters of the MK. The ANC smuggled weapons from Mozambique and Zambia via Botswana where it had some secret storage facilities, into South Africa.488

From the 1970s the ANC recruited white communist activists in Britain who volunteered to be gun runners. For example, a couple who pretended to be on a honeymoon, exploring northern Botswana and southern Zambia, drove a Land Rover loaded with arms. The MK improved its military skills and became a paramilitary organization, armed with small arms, mortars and rocket launchers, initiating guerrilla operations across the borders. Yet, during the war MK faced hardship in infiltrating guerrillas and arms into South Africa that largely managed to secure its borders. In the 1980s, the ANC was committed to military activity outside South Africa while failing to mobilize the mass at home for a “people’s war”.489 Nor did the MK establish a clandestine support network in South Africa. Therefore, MK activists were engaged in a bloody civil war in Angola or stayed frustrated and resented in military camps in Angola; some of them even mutinied in 1984, while at home thousands of students and workers initiated township uprisings. Local militias (amabutho) spread spontaneously in the big cities of South Africa, employing creative military tactics, using whatever weapons were available to them (stolen small arms, homemade bombs, and machetes). Modern arms of the ANC were deployed thousands of kilometers away from the frontline and were never sent into South Africa. Cherry argues that most people who died in the liberation struggle from 1960 to 1994 were victims of traditional weapons (machete, stones, and knobbed sticks). MK activists were spectators and cheerleaders of a revolution that continued inside their country. In 1990 the MK suspended its armed struggle under the terms of the peace process between the South African government and the ANC. Later,

489 Cherry, Spear of the Nation, 36, 53-75, 85-96. In 1978 General Giap advised a visiting delegation from the ANC to emphasize political activity rather than conducting military operations only. He argued that the organization and mobilization of the masses was the prerequisite for the development not simply of military operations but a fully-fledged people’s war.
Mandela admitted that the armed struggle gained modest achievement but argued that they never believed they could gain military victory against the regime. 490

**The Cold War and the Arming of NSAs in the Americas**

From the late 1950s onward, Latin America was often a surrogate battleground for the Cold War superpowers. South America’s societies, far from fulfilling the promises of their independence, remained deeply split between wealthy landowners and desperately poor peasants. Latin America was therefore fertile ground for the spread of Marxism and for other doctrines that called for social change and for opposition to the United States, though indigenous guerrillas were weak in weaponry. Since they landed in Las Coloradas beach in December 1956, Castro and his communist comrades acquired most of their light weapons in raids on the army’s posts and camps in the Oriente province; they preferred to enlist armed people. Gradually, the rebels improved their operational skills and attacked valuable military targets where they captured heavier weapons such as mortars, bazookas and anti-aircraft guns. 491 They also managed to manufacture improvised light weapons. In August 1958 the military junta in Venezuela led by Wolfgang Larrazabal sent a plane-load of arms for the revolutionaries, but for security reasons they had to set fire to the plane. Laqueur argues that the Cuban Revolution featured very limited military activity, and the great weakness of the Fulgencio Batista’s regime, including his demoralized army, explains how Castro seized power (1957) with very poor weaponry and without any external aid. 492

Under Castro’s overall direction, Che Guevara orchestrated Cuban assistance to insurgents in Latin America. Most of these efforts failed in the face of strong counter-revolutionary measures, factionalism among the guerrillas, lack of support among the peasantry, and shortage of weapons. Cuba was cautioned about dispatching weapons to guerrillas in Latin America in order not to give the United States a pretext for intervention. The Soviets were largely critical of Castro’s subversive campaigns in Latin America, fearing it would damage relations with the United States, crippling Moscow’s efforts to expand its commercial and diplomatic ties with Latin American governments, and because most Latin

American Communist parties resented Cuban military involvement. Subsequently, rebel groups in Latin America acquired their arms from regional sources rather than from overseas. Also, rebels operated in remote and rugged regions in the Andes and the Amazon rainforest, which were, therefore, less accessible to supplies. Che Guevara himself led a Communist insurgency (1966-1967) in the mountainous region in Bolivia where he was killed by the local army. The small group of rebels acquired their limited weaponry (rifles, mortars and bazookas), by conducting ambushes on sections of the Bolivian army. From the 1980s, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the Peruvian Shining Path and other South American leftist NSAs have greatly improved their armament due to their heavy involvement in kidnapping and the drug trade. They were able to raise money and build an arsenal of weapons by protecting coca farmers from the authorities. They could be better armed than government forces. 493

The United States used a variety of policies to uproot Marxism in Latin America, and the Reagan administration (from 1980) pursued a wide range of anti-Marxist policies both overtly and covertly. The Reagan administration believed the Sandinistas were allied with Castro and the Soviet Union and were supporting Marxist guerrilla activities in nearby El Salvador. Therefore, the United States sponsored the Nicaragua Democratic Resistance (the Contras), an anti-Sandinista guerrilla movement composed of former National Guardsmen, right-wing figures and defectors from the Sandinista regime.494

The American support of the Contras introduced a unique pattern of NSA arming, an international network composed of government agencies and private citizens, American and non-Americans that worked together for supplying weapons to the Contras in order to overthrow the Sandinista. NSAs have been involved in criminal activity for many years as part of their arms trade. In “the Iran-Contra scandal,” as it is called, U.S. senior security officials collaborated with people who were involved in the drug business, in sending weapons to the Contras without notifying the Congress and in contravention of a


Congressional decision (1984) to bar all military aid to the Contras. The report of the Senate Select Committee on Secret Military Assistance to Iran and the Nicaraguan Opposition and other sources revealed that from 1985 to 1986 the Reagan administration employed a complex network consisting of air cargo companies, international arms merchants, ex-U.S. military officers, businessmen with connections to the region involved, Florida-based right-wing Cuban exiles, and Israeli military advisors. This network contained operatives, transport aircraft, airfields, stocked warehouses, ships, secure communication devices, and secret Swiss bank accounts.\textsuperscript{495} The network purchased weapons (small arms, explosives, mortars, SA-7 SAMs) in Europe (Poland, Portugal), the Far East, the United States and South America, using front companies and false end-user certificates with funds the Administration obtained from third countries, private sources and illegal arms sales to Iran. Israel too supplied Soviet weapons that were captured from the PLO. Weapons shipments were transported by sea and air to Honduras and Costa Rica, then reshipped by the network’s transport planes to forward bases of the Contras in both countries or air-dropped in the north and south of Nicaragua (in total, around 120 resupply flights). The resupply operation was shut down after being exposed in October 1986.\textsuperscript{496}

Panama leader, General Manuel Noriega, a drug-trafficcker and dictator, was an important hub in this network. A few years after he smuggled weapons for the Sandinista and Marxist rebels in El Salvador, Noriega responded to an American request and air-shipped weapons for the Contras from Panama to Costa Rica. The same planes used to ship the arms were then used to fly cocaine from Colombia to the United States. Panama was becoming a major asset in the U.S. covert war against the Sandinistas already during operation Black Eagle (1982-1985), but also a money laundering center, and a transit country for narcotics en route from South America to the United States.\textsuperscript{497} The Report by the Senate Subcommittee on Narcotics, Terrorism and International Operations (1988) concluded that “U.S. officials involved in assisting the Contras knew that drug smuggling was exploiting the clandestine infrastructure established to support the war in Nicaragua…. some officials may have turned

\textsuperscript{495}Senate, \textit{Report by the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations of the Committee on Foreign Relations}, 100\textsuperscript{th} Cong., 2d sess., S. Doc. 100-165, 1989, pt. 36, 40, 84-85; Senate, \textit{Report of the Congressional Committees Investigating the Iran-Contra Affair with Supplemental Minority and Additional Views}, 100\textsuperscript{th} Cong., 1\textsuperscript{st} sess., S. Doc. 100-216, 1987, pt. 3-5, 15, 79-81


a blind eye to these activities.” This episode demonstrates that states might be using private organizations to support NSAs at the risk of being exploited by criminal networks. In the world of NSAs arming, the borders between formal and informal, legal and illegal are ambiguous. Weapons export by states and private enterprise gunrunning can overlap; they are not necessarily distinct entities.498

**Additional Factors that Influenced the Arming of NSAs in the Cold War Era**

**Rebellious NSAs become state-sponsors of NSAs**

The Sandinista government’s support for the Marxist guerrillas in El Salvador, the Angolan government’s support for the ANC and Mozambique’s support for the liberation movements in Namibia, all demonstrated a second generation of state support of NSAs. Liberation movements that acquired military support from a superpower or a proxy, after gaining independence or seizing power, provided aid for insurgents in neighboring countries. Often the independent states supplied weapons they received from the superpower. South Yemen’s support for revolutionary insurgencies in North Yemen, Saudi Arabia and especially Oman is another example.499 In 1967 Britain granted independence to South Yemen, after four years of guerrilla campaign against British troops and the local Federal Government. Mumford argues that whereas in Malaya and Kenya the paucity of external funding and weapons significantly hindered the longevity of the insurgency, in South Yemen the constant stream of Egyptian arms ensured that a military victory for the British could not be guaranteed with the assurance it had in previous conflicts. The more radical guerrilla group, the National Liberation Front (NLF) smuggled arms for the newly formed Yemen Republic into the initial insurgent front in the Radfan Mountains, followed by an urban guerrilla campaign in Aden, which emboldened the group making more brazen and public attacks that the British and the weak royalist forces failed to contain.500

The Popular Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) was controlled by a Marxist-Leninist party committed to altering the system of government in neighboring states, and lighting the way for all struggles and progressive people in the Arab World. Oman was the

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498 Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations, 36, 40, 84-85, 91, 136.
500 Mumford, *The Counter-Insurgency Myth. 77-94.*
major target. From the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Dhofar region had been part of the Sultanate of Oman while local tribes resented the rule from Muscat. The fact that Dhofar had a common frontier with South Yemen provided a line of logistical support more than a source of political or military impulsion. Until 1982 the PDRY’s support for the People’s Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf (PFLO) was overt, sustained, and comprehensive. South Yemen supplied weapons to the rebels as well as serving as a transit area for supplies coming from China, Russia and Libya. The PFLO sought to “free” the entire Arabian Gulf; it had base and training camps in South Yemen territory, but Aden never committed its own forces in a major cross-frontier intervention in Oman. By the middle of 1970 Omani forces had lost control of almost all Dhofar, but with heavy western military support and a modern ruler, the Sultan Qabus, the Omani army began to take the offensive against the guerrillas.\textsuperscript{501} In late-1973 several thousand Iranian troops were deployed by the Shah in support of the Sultan Qubus, alongside units of the Jordanian Air Force and British officers. They constructed a set of three defensive lines running from the desert to the sea, to inhibit guerrilla arms from reaching the Dhofar interior from South Yemen. China ceased to support the rebels because of its trade interests in Saudi Arabia. In late-1975 the PFLO ceased to be a significant military force inside Dhofar, and in March 1976 a de facto cease-fire came into operation on the Oman-PDRY frontier.\textsuperscript{502}

NSAs’ acquisition of strategic weapon systems

During the Cold War rebel groups acquired weapon systems that changed the military balance and the theatre of operation against their state-foe. In particular, the position of anti-air systems upgraded the military strength of rebel groups because the military superiority of many states was based largely on employing of aircraft and helicopters with which the rebels could not compete. For example, in 1960 the SoPartido Africano da Independencia da Guine e Cabo Verde (PAIGC) launched a war of liberation against the Portuguese rule in Ginea-Bissau. Starting the struggle with captured light weapons, the PAIGC used the friendly Guinea and Senegal territories to transfer modern arms from Cuba and China. The PAIGC besieged and intensively shelled Portuguese fortified camps with 120mm mortars and

cannons thus forcing the latter to abandon important locations and neutralized the Portuguese anti-guerrilla strategy of using an extensive system of fortified positions scattered throughout the country. In 1973 the Soviet Union supplied the PAIGC SA-7 surface-to-air missiles. Until then Portuguese air supremacy made any attempt to bring about the withdrawal or surrender of the colonial army far too costly for the PAIGC. The employment of the missiles by the rebels had a devastating impact on the demoralized Portuguese military forces. They refused to continue the war and in 1974 Portugal granted Ginea-Bissau independence.503

In 1980 Libya supplied the Frente Popular para la Liberacion de Saguia el Hamra y Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) who had been fighting for Western Sahara's independence from Moroccan control, Soviet-produced SA-6 missile systems. That had a paralyzing effect on the Moroccan Air Force which had been giving the Moroccans an advantage the POLISARIO could not hope to match. The appearance of the SA-6 in the Sahara was a dramatic improvement for the forces of the POLISARIO and had a devastating impact on Morocco’s ability to continue achieving success on the battlefield. Morocco turned to the United States for immediate assistance, and with the American help the Moroccan air force slowly improved its air tactics and countermeasure performance.504

Conflicts between neighboring countries serve NSAs’ arming

Many of the above case studies confirm that in the international relationship state support for a rebellious NSA in a neighboring country became an important segment of a state’s power. Governments supplied weapons to rebel groups in a neighboring country in order to shape the latter’s behavior. Salehyan argues that rebels recognize that state power is constrained by international borders and will shift some, or even most, activities abroad in order to evade repression. The establishment of extraterritorial bases allows rebels to recruit and train fighters, gather supplies during the mobilization phase, and flee to safe ground during the


combat phase. NSAs have exploited global-regional disputes for their own interests but in the same manner could be abandoned at some stage by their state-mentor. For example, Iran and Iraq provided great support for opposition groups in both countries against the background of a lengthy ethnic-religious conflict that reached its highest peak in the devastating Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). The Kurdish minority in northern Iraq struggled for autonomy from various Iraqi repressive regimes for decades. The Kurds faced the principal difficulty of obtaining outside allies. Iran, who was the most important regional ally of the United States, was interested in a prolonged Kurdish-Iraqi war to reduce the capacity of the pro-Soviet Iraqi regime to embark on an offensive against Iran. From the 1960s, Mullah Mustafa Barazani’s Kurdish Democratic Party received weapons and training from Iran, the United States, and Israel. From 1965, Israeli airplanes carried arms shipments to Teheran for the Kurds, including small firearms, cannons and Soviet weapons taken from Egypt by the Israelis in the 1973 war. The Kurdish army, the Peshmerga, turned into a powerful force that repulsed many Iraqi army attacks in the mountains of Kurdistan, and posed a great security challenge for the Iraqi government. But in 1975 the Shah preferred striking a deal with Baghdad, which gave him territorial concessions and an Iraqi curb on Iranian exiles – such as the ayatollah Khomeini – in return for abandoning the KDP. With the Iranian border closed to them, the Iraqi Kurds faced disaster. Saddam Hussein took advantage of the situation to hit the Kurds in a major offensive. Mustafa Barazani fled the country to find refuge in Teheran. Iran renewed its military support for the Kurds during the Iran-Iraq war. The Kurdish guerrillas fought alongside the Iranian army on the northern front and paid a heavy price for this (Iraqi chemical attack against the town of Halabga in 1988).

The Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan (KDPI) was established in 1945 and struggled for autonomy against repressive Iranian regimes. The Iranian Kurds waged guerrilla warfare in western Iran using Iraqi Kurdistan as a sanctuary. When Saddam Hussein invaded Iran (September 1980), the KDPI supported the Iraqi army on the northern front. The Iraqi army established a supply route to the Peshmerga of the KDPI near the city of Qasr-e Shirin, and with Iraqi weapons and ammunition the KDPI forced the Iranian Revolutionary Guard’s (IRGC) units to retreat from many cities in Iranian Kurdistan, and established a “liberated Kurdish zone.” Yet, Iranian forces succeeded in regrouping and launched a series of counter-

505 Salehyan, Rebels, 37.
507 Westad, Global, 292.
offensive attacks against the KDPI. KDPI hopes of creating a Kurdish autonomy all but vanished, and the KDPI was reduced to a marginal Iraqi instrument in the Iran-Iraq War and afterwards. By the early 1990s, in the face of a defeated Iraq and stronger Iran, the KDPI had suffered brutal reverses: defeat on the battlefield, internal division and assassinations of its leaders by the Iranians. The People’s Mujahedin Organization (MEK) was established in the 1960s and developed into the largest and most active armed Iranian dissident group. After being rejected by the new Islamic regime of Ayatollah Khomeini, the MEK launched a terror campaign in Iran followed by a worldwide campaign against the Iranian government that stressed propaganda and occasional use of terrorist violence. In 1987, most MEK leaders and its activists had relocated in Iraq under Saddam Hussein’s sponsorship. MEK’s military arm, the National Liberation Army (NLA) numbered a few thousand fighters, based in military camps near the Iranian border on the central front. Armed with Iraqi weapons (including tanks) they conducted cross-border attacks against Iranian troops that amounted to little more than harassment. MEK became a victim of the overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq. In 2003, the U.S. military disarmed the MEK and transported its troops away from its military base camps. This action ended the effectiveness of the MEK as a military weapon directed against the Iranian government.

The Arming of International Terrorism

The internationalization of terrorism that occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s meant that terror attacks involved more than one country. Terrorists from one country attacked targets of a second country in the territory of a third one. Terror activity could also be multinational when terrorists from different nationalities cooperated in an operation. Weapon smuggling manifested these new trends. European and Palestinian terrorist groups hijacked flights, took hostages and assassinated politicians and businessmen using improvised bombs or small arms they smuggled from the Middle East or from Communist countries. Unlike local-based NSAs who waged wars to “liberate” territories, NSAs specializing in terror

510 Vivian H. Gembara and Deborah A. Gembara, Drowning in the Desert: A Jag’s Search for Justice in Iraq (Zenith Imprint, 2008), 148-149.
needed only personal weapons, pistols and guns.\footnote{Hoffman, \textit{Inside Terrorism}, 35-41; Tamar Hermann, \textit{Social Movements and Political Protest}, vol. 3, part 2: Terror (Tel Aviv: The Open University Press, 1997), 62-66 (Hebrew).} The PLO was the first truly “international” terrorist organization, accounting for more international terrorist incidents than any other movement. The PLO associated with dozens of different terrorist groups worldwide, mostly Marxist-Leninist and anarchist groups who employed violence to realize social-political revolutions and resisted “western imperialism.” Palestinian groups trained foreign terrorists in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon, Jordan and South Yemen, and supplied weapons. International terrorism was deeply associated with the Cold War and the emergence of the state-sponsored terrorism. The Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact countries aided terror organizations in the name of solidarity with people waging wars of national liberation although the true motives were the Soviet bloc’s strategies of Cold War interest in menacing the United States and its NATO allies. The former sent weapons to countries such as Libya, Syria, South Yemen, and Cuba: the weapons were re-transported to terrorists in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Latin America. Although the Soviet Union provided arms directly to some terrorist NSAs such as the PLO, the more common procedure was for this assistance to be provided indirectly. Weapons and training would be supplied by the Soviet Union and the other Warsaw Pact countries, especially East Germany and Bulgaria, to Third World regimes and then secretly re-directed to terrorists.\footnote{Hoffman, \textit{Inside Terrorism}, 35-4; Mark Kramer, “The Decline in Soviet Arms Transfers to the Third World, 1986-1991,” in \textit{The End of the Cold War and the Third World}, eds. Artemy Kalinovsky and Sergey Radchenko (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 55; Mark Ensalaco, \textit{Middle Eastern Terrorism: From Black September to September 11} (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 265; Stefan Aust, \textit{Baader-Meinhof: The Inside Story of the RAF} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 269-270, 295, 353-354, 435; Markus Wolf, \textit{Man without a Face. The Autobiography of Communism’s Greatest Spymaster} (New York: Public Affairs, 1997), 299-313.} The use of intermediaries enabled the Soviet officials to claim that they did not support international terrorism. For instance, KGB documents revealed that in 1975 Moscow shipped small arms to South Yemen for the Marxist-Leninist Palestine Liberation Popular Front (PFLP) that specialized in hijacking Israeli and western jets.\footnote{Albats, \textit{KGB}, 228-230.}

\section*{Summary}

The chapter has focused on the implications of the Cold War for the arming opportunities of NSAs that fought colonialism and ruling regimes. In a bipolar Cold War international system when regimes of global intervention took hold, anti-colonial NSAs had a fair chance of gaining a superpower ally, the Soviet Union or the United States, that would provide
weapons using remarkable logistic capabilities. Some countries, like Cuba, accepted a vanguard role to support ideologically close NSAs and were committed to arm them. Other sponsors could easily abandon their NSA-allies for their own interests, compelling the NSAs to look for other sources of weaponry, usually in the arms market, otherwise they could face defeat. Mobilizing the masses including army units (or gaining their neutrality) against destabilized regimes, they could rise up with very limited weaponry. Thus, revolutionary guerrilla writers like Mao and Giap emphasized the need of rebel groups to be self-sufficient in weaponry. The chapter reveals that supporting crossborder armed NSAs became consistent element in the international states system. States use NSAs against each other’s. Following the end of the Cold War, black arms markets became the major source of NSAs’ weaponry rather than state sponsorship with one outstanding exception – Iran’s military support of the Lebanese Hezbollah and other radical Islamic groups. The next chapter elaborates on these subjects.

Struggles of “national liberation” between superpowers and guerrilla armies, especially between the United States and the Vietcong, are the basis of Van Creveld concept of strong well-equipped armies that are defeated by weak and small NSAs. This chapter demonstrates that the reality of state-NSA conflict is more complicated. Regardless of Van Creveld’s moral reasoning for the outcomes of state-NSA conflict, remove from the equation superpowers’ military support of NSAs and many of them would fail even though they look “just.” The Vietcong were not a “child” fighting a grown man as Van Creveld describes them but an integral part of North Vietnam that was intensively armed by both China and the Soviet Union. Without aggressive American involvement, the Contras rebels that received large amounts of weapons had no chance against the Sandinista government of Nicaragua. Possessing newly developed anti-aircraft missiles they received from the superpowers, some NSAs refuted Van Creveld’s argument about poorly armed rebels. Also, Van Creveld underestimates geo-strategic considerations that affected NSAs’ arming. Without transborder sanctuaries and support, many NSAs would have lost the struggle for national liberation and social revolution. Therefore, the chapter reveals that supporting crossborder armed NSAs became consistent element in the international states system. States use NSAs against each other’s.

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514 Van Creveld, Changing Face of War, 222-225.
Following the end of the Cold War, black arms markets became the major source of NSAs’ weaponry rather than state sponsorship with one outstanding exception – Iran’s military support of the Lebanese Hezbollah and other radical Islamic groups. The next chapter elaborates on these subjects.
Chapter Six: Contemporary Trends in State Sponsorship of Rebellious NSAs

Previous chapters review how ancient and modern armed NSAs acquired their weapons, revealing a shift from self-sufficiency to outside military support that reached a peak in the Cold War. The next two chapters complete the historical review, dealing with contemporary trends in the arming of rebellious NSAs. In the context of dramatic technological advances and a globalized world, the current work aims to reveal how much today’s NSAs differ from their predecessors in acquiring weapons, and the factors that facilitate or constrain the arming efforts of today’s NSAs. The first of the two chapters analyses state sponsorship of rebel groups, the dominant source of armaments during the Cold War. The research reviews the questions, to what extent did the end of the Cold War affect states' patronage of rebel groups, and whether changes in state sponsorship of NSAs are a cross-national phenomenon. The core of this chapter analyses Iran’s military support of radical Islamic NSAs, mainly the Lebanese Hezbollah. The research argues that Iran-Hezbollah connections, including in the arming, are ideologically well-established, demonstrating a unique organizational structure as has been demonstrated (from 2011) in Syria’s civil war.

Foreign Sponsorship of NSAs in the Post-Cold War World

The number of states arming rebellious NSAs grew during the Cold War era as shown in the table below.\(^{515}\) As discussed in the previous chapter, in a bipolar world both the Soviet Union and the United States were deeply involved in regional conflicts, supplying huge quantities of weapons to states and NSAs, directly or through client states, mainly in Southeast Asia, South and Central America and Africa. Further increases in state sponsorship manifested in the re-escalation between the West and the East from the early 1980s, following the

The Sandinistas revolution in Nicaragua, the conflict between China and Vietnam in Indo-China and the Reagan administration’s anti-communist policy that sent weapons to non-democratic NSAs (and states) deemed to be fighting communism.

Table 1. State-NSA conflicts with foreign sponsorship including arms supply

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The table above shows a decline in the number of states that arm NSAs fighting other states (from 47 in 1983 down to 18 in 2013). The decline is salient in both Europe and the Americas where outside military support almost completely disappeared (one case in 2003 and 2013). In Asia and Africa, the decline in state support of rebellious NSAs has been moderate (10 cases in Asia and 6 in Africa). Contemporary rebel groups are compelled to acquire weapons from other sources, chiefly through black arms markets. The decline resulted from the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist nations of the Warsaw Pact. Consequently, many long and bloody wars between governments and rebel groups that were fueled by a steady flow of weapons from the United States, the Soviet Union and their proxies came to an end. United Nations’ peacemaking efforts had some notable success, occasionally after decades of international pressure to bring a conflict to an end; as in Cambodia (1991), Mozambique (1992), Angola (2002), and Liberia (2003), as well as the abolition of the apartheid regime in South Africa (1994). Without the financial and military support of the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, North Korea and Nicaragua, revolutionary guerrilla movements withered; some were encouraged to compromise, such as
in Honduras (1991), El Salvador (1992) and Guatemala (1996) and others ceased to operate such as the military wing of the Chilean Communist Party (FPMR-D).516

Cramer argues that Soviet leaders in the late 1980s began encouraging the political resolution of armed conflicts in Latin America, Southeast Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. This shift of policy was in keeping with Gorbachev’s basic effort to improve East-West relations. In 1989, the Soviet Union and China refused to keep arming Mengista, the dictator of Ethiopia who failed to suppress the Eritrean Liberation War (started in 1961).517 It was a major factor for the total defeat of Mengista who was toppled in 1991, and Eritrea was granted independence in 1993. Also, the great powers might be less interested in the existing conflicts after a series of humiliating results of Western intervention (Afghanistan and Iraq) and an economic limit on Russia's ability to supply clients. Other causes could be Russian and Chinese diplomatic threats against Western intervention such as in Syria (the veto in the UN against intervention in Syria) and the financial crisis in Europe and the USA. A more general explanation for the decline refers to the link between a state’s formation and internal conflicts that consume armaments. Few new states have been formed in the last twenty years, while more than twenty were granted independence following the end of the Portugal’s Colonial Wars (1961-1974), and the collapse of the Soviet Union and the East Block. Therefore the potential for additional state-NSA conflicts is decreasing. Ongoing peace negotiations between governments and rival NSAs could further reduce the number of conflicts involving foreign sponsorship, such as the peace talks between the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army of Colombia (ELN), being conducted in Cuba from 2012.518


517Kramer, 47.

Foreign sponsorship of rebel groups has declined dramatically but remains a consistent pattern of the international system. It is an integral part of longstanding conflicts between neighboring nations that the international community has failed to terminate, such as between Israel and the Palestinians and between India and Pakistan (over Kashmir). Sometimes, the United Nations have great difficulty in agreeing on when and how to stop civil conflicts and abuses in individual countries, and members of the Security Council fear that intervention could result in long and costly commitment prolonging state-NSA conflicts, as in the case of Syria’s civil war. States could play a double game between neighboring countries and rebel groups fighting each other.\textsuperscript{519} China is Myanmar’s largest trading partner and arms supplier. Still, despite Chinese denials, sources in Myanmar and the Jane’s Intelligence Review, argue that in the last couple of years China has supplied large weapon systems to the United Wa State Army (UWSA), including APCs in 2012, making it the strongest armed group in Myanmar. Wa are a Chinese-speaking ethnic group, controlling a wide wedge of territory along the Chinese border in northeast Myanmar, while China is unhappy with Myanmar’s improved relations with the West, especially the United States. In early 2014, Myanmar’s government and the UWSA maintained a cease-fire agreement and planned to negotiate a peace agreement.\textsuperscript{520}

Many of the contemporary state-NSA conflicts are ethnic-religious based and connected to contests over natural resources. Pakistan is arming Islamic guerrillas in Kashmir (possibly in Punjab too), radical Islamic terror groups that target India (Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed) and separatist NSAs in northeast India that have been fighting the federal government from its establishment. Uganda and Rwanda supply weapons to rebellious militias in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) where gold mines are located. There are also ethnic connections between the population of eastern DRC and adjacent areas of Uganda and Rwanda. There are no accurate details about the amount of arms contemporary NSAs acquire from their patrons. It seems marginal compared to the


large quantities of weapons the United States and the Soviet Union supplied to their NSA clients during the 1970s and the 1980s. RAND Institute research on state support for insurgencies argues that the decline in superpower involvement resulted in a decline in the scale of assistance. From the 1990s, most state supporters have lacked the tremendous resources that Washington and Moscow lavished on their insurgent proxies during the Cold War.  

The analysis of NSAs according to the level of outside support reveals different type of NSAs. Being an extension of the Iranian regime Hezbollah stands at one pole of the scale, followed by NSAs who regularly acquire military support from a state but are more independent, such as Indian rebel groups supported by China and Pakistan. Other armed NSAs acquire weapons from different sources including friendly states, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan and Shi’ite rebels in Yemen who get some arms shipments from Iran. Many NSAs use neighboring countries as transit states and even logistic centers rather than as weapons suppliers, such as Hamas use of Egyptian territory to traffic weapons from Iran and Libya to Gaza. States that facilitate smuggling operations (such as Sudan’s aid to Hamas) differ from states that stay indifferent or try to block arms flow through their land (such as Panama, Peru, Brazil and Ecuador’s efforts to intercept FARC arms smuggling to Colombia via their country. The opposite pole contains self-sufficient NSAs which acquire hardly any weapons from foreign states, for example, former Maoist guerrillas in Nepal or Pakistani Taliban and Al Qaeda branches in North Africa and the Arab Peninsula.

In 2005, Byman recorded thirty cases of state support of terrorist groups that included money, arms and logistics since the end of the Cold War. This is higher than the twenty five cases of states arming NSAs in 2003 according to the current research (and eighteen in 2013). Differences between the studies probably derive from the methodology. The current work examines instances of state support in specific years (such as 2003, 2013) while Byman numbers all instances of states that provide support to terrorist groups from 1990 to 2005. Byman refers to states that provide arms, money and logistics rather than arms only as in the


current research. The same explanations probably stand behind the difference between the current research and an earlier survey of the RAND Institute about outside support for insurgencies (1991-2000). The RAND survey found that forty-four insurgencies active since 1991 received significant or critical state support (military, political, financial and logistical activities) compared to twenty-five NSA conflicts in 2003 in which NSAs received arms shipments according to the current research.

The great powers are still deeply involved in arming NSAs willingly or unwillingly. Russia has backed separatist movements in several newly independent states that enabled it to gain leverage over incumbent central governments. For example, the Transnistrian separatists who broke away from the Republic of Moldova (1990) are better armed than the forces of Moldova due to the active involvement of Russian officers in the creation of the Transnistrian armed forces (Russian units are still present in the breakaway region). Russia sends weapons to Syria that delivered it to the Hezbollah. China supplies weapons to Eritrea, which arms rebel groups fighting in the Horn of Africa, and Darfur rebels are using modern Chinese and Iranian weapons captured from Sudan’s armed forces. Superpower weaponry continues to serve rebel groups many years after former wars ended as part of a globalized arms proliferation. The end of the Cold War in 1989 meant that enormous stockpiles of weapons from the Eastern Bloc suddenly became surplus. These weapons flooded the black markets, and were procured by rebel groups around the world. American weapons left behind in Vietnam were passed on to militant groups in Southeast Asia and elsewhere by the Vietnamese government and arms traders in Thailand. Following the end of the civil war in Cambodia, Chinese weapons found their way from Cambodia to rebel groups in neighboring countries through illicit trade.

524 Daniel Byman et al., Trends, 9-16.
As the table 1 shows (p.181), of 18 cases of contemporary conflicts with foreign sponsorship of NSAs, 16 are in Asia and Africa, specifically in Sub-Saharan Africa, South and Southeast Asia. Developing countries in these regions are among the poorest in the world, such as the DRC, Eritrea, Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Pakistan and Yemen. They are ruled by ineffective governments with corrupt and inept leaders, nepotism and the abuse of power. They are struggling with famine, rapid population growth, over-urbanization, extreme wealth inequalities, neo-colonization (exploitation of local people by developed societies and transnational corporations), waves of displacement and competition for scarce land and water resources in densely populated areas. As is the case across much of the Asian and African continents, regional and tribal loyalties and domination of political patronage undermine states’ capacity to rule and ensure security including fighting arms trafficking. Many of the current state-NSA conflicts are conducted in multiethnic and multicultural states that were invented by European powers, ignoring the natural divisions of the ethnic populations and geography. In the 1960s, the newly independent African states inherited colonial boundaries, together with the challenge this legacy posed to their territorial integrity and to their attempts to achieve national unity. Rival communities may perceive that their security, perhaps their very survival, can be ensured only through control of state powers. Conflict in such cases becomes virtually inevitable. Incongruence between state and nationalism and the violent politisation of ethnicity could facilitate outside intervention in these troubled countries, including the supply of arms to rebel groups.

In Africa, the number of conflicts with state sponsorship of NSAs increased in 2003 (16 compared to 10 in 1993), followed by a decline in 2013 (five). Against this background escalation of sectarian and economic/demographic-based conflicts, such as the civil war in Liberia (1999-2003) and genocide in Rwanda (1994), spread violence into neighboring Burundi and the DRC, creating proxy wars, especially in the eastern provinces of DR Congo. The Horn of Africa was further destabilized from the early 1990s, partly because of the Islamization and the sponsorship of Islamic terror groups by the National Islamic Front (NIF) government of Sudan. Following Eritrea’s independence (1993), Asmara started support for Sudanese, Ethiopian and Somali armed NSAs to destabilize the region (Sudan supported

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radical Islamic militants in Eritrea). Both Somalia and the DRC served as a battlefield for proxy wars between their neighbors (Eritrea against Ethiopia and Uganda against Rwanda). Eritrea and Rwanda armed local warlords to undermine the interests of their foes. East Africa faces natural disaster (drought), stimulating famine and mass emigration that escalate regional conflicts among armed militias.\(^{529}\) In Africa, the number of state-NSA conflicts with foreign sponsorship has declined as a result of settlement of inter-states and state-NSA conflicts, such as in Liberia, Senegal, Cote d’Ivoire, Burundi, the Cabinda province of Angola and the formation of the South Sudan.\(^{530}\)

More than previously, states use private companies, criminal networks and smugglers to facilitate arming of their client NSAs. It is a combination of governmental and private elements, and while in the 1960s and 1970s states were responsible for the whole logistic operations, contemporary states and their client NSAs are using professional smugglers. Unlike the Cold War era when the United States and the Soviet Union shipped weapons across the world, contemporary governments supply weapons to rebellious NSAs, mostly in neighboring countries, consequently facing fewer logistic and political challenges.\(^{531}\)


January 2014, a Bangladesh court sentenced to death fourteen senior officials, including former ministers and intelligence chiefs who were all involved in a Pakistani plot to arm Indian rebel groups with a ten truckloads of Chinese arms and ammunition (small arms and rockets). The Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) funded the purchase from the Chinese Norinco, a state-owned arms manufacturer. Senior members of the Indian rebel groups and Bangladeshi smugglers facilitated the shipment from China to the port of Chittagong, Bangladesh, where it was intercepted (2004) by local policemen. Bangladesh media claimed it was the largest arms haul in Bangladesh’s history. 532

Scholars highlight the advantages of state sponsorship of rebellious NSAs, being a low cost, cheap option to destabilize, bleed and even defeat the nation-state. The above table (p. 181), reveals that for most countries this mode of operation is becoming less valuable probably because of economic and security considerations. From the 1980s, Libya was top of the list of states sponsoring terrorism and armed dozens of terror groups around the world. In order to break out of international isolation and gain lifting of western sanctions, Libya renounced terrorism (2003), curtailed its support for international terrorism and started to cooperate with the United States and the United Kingdom in the fight against radical Islamic groups. 533 Often, government changes affect states’ support of rebellious NSAs in neighboring countries. In light of the rise of Hugo Chavez’ socialist government in Venezuela (1999), both the FARC and the ELN armed themselves with weapons from Venezuelan army stocks. 534 At the same time, enjoying more security collaboration with Bangladesh and Myanmar in recent years, the federal government of India inflicted heavy losses on insurgent groups in the Northeast, such as the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN), and the United National Liberation Front (UNLF) in the state of Manipur, encouraging some of them to lay down their weapons. Therefore, denial

533 533
of outside support from neighboring countries is a precondition of successful counterinsurgency.535

As in previous decades, lack of external support could be a major constraint on insurgents’ operational capabilities. It might bring their struggle to a disastrous end or lengthen their campaign. In 1975 Fretilin, the East Timor guerrilla movement, declared the independence of the former Portuguese colony. However, the declaration was soon followed by an invasion of the Indonesian military forces, declaring East Timor to be that country’s twenty-seventh state. Fretilin gained the sympathy of the western world but no tangible support and struggled to capture Indonesian army weapons to carry on the fight. Only in 2002 did East Timor become an independent state after up to two hundred thousand people were killed during the whole Indonesian period from 1976, mainly by the Indonesian army. From 1991 the people of Western Sahara, under Moroccan control, have been waiting for a national referendum (as declared by the U.N.) that might grant them independence. The local militia, the POLISARIO, does not have access to the Atlantic seaboard and all imported material has to come through Algerian territory. But Algeria, who used to arm the POLISARIO, abandoned them in the 1990s, preferring good relations with Morocco because of economic interests.536

This section reveals that state support is no longer the only, or necessarily the most important method of arming. Still, state support remains the most effective mechanism to make a rebellious NSA a lethal military force as the case of Iran arming the Lebanese Hezbollah demonstrates.

**Iran’s Support of Radical Islamic NSAs**

**Ideological background and the Quds Force**


Middle East developments in recent years, chiefly the 2006 Lebanon War and the Hezbollah involvement in the civil war in Syria, have drawn attention to Iran’s sponsorship of militant Islamic groups as a unique case of state sponsorship of rebellious NSAs. The thesis suggests that state sponsorship of NSAs is an old phenomenon intensified by the ideological struggle between two international groups of states, the West vis-à-vis the East. Byman argues that ideologically driven regimes, such as Iran, are exceptionally difficult to engage because cost-benefits calculations that motivate most regimes counts less for regimes that are willing to sacrifice more standard interests for spreading a particular faith or worldview. The Islamic Republic’s concept of itself, and the manner it supports friendly NSAs is not different than the communist export of revolution since the 1920s led by Russia joined in the 1950s by China. Cuba armed and trained more rebellious NSAs than Iran, and engaged in more military conflicts around the world. Still, the current sub-section aims to prove that the rise of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1979) and its commitment to “export the Revolution” through subversive activity, demonstrates not only a different ideological base compared to communism but a new state-NSA association and integration. The Iran-Hezbollah alliance implies an organic connection rather than a state-proxy model. Hezbollah is an extension of the Iranian regime much more than a client that serves its patron. Iran supports Palestinian Islamic groups too, using independent arms smugglers.

Part of the following section analyses Iran’s support of armed NSAs from the state perspective, because it is a remarkable phenomenon in the current international system. Based on shared religious ideology, the state (in this case, Iran) cooperates with different NSAs for various purposes including for the acquisition of arms. Hezbollah is a special case of a rebel group which is an extension of a foreign state and operates as an NSA in its own

537 Byman, Deadly Connections., 26-32.
country. Iran’s arming of Islamic NSAs, mainly Hezbollah and Hamas, with strategic weapon systems (Scud missiles, medium range rockets) illustrates that state sponsorship is still currently the most efficient mode of NSAs’ military build-up. Leading from the early 1990s the so-called “resistance axis,” Iran has provided its client NSAs with military capabilities usually in the possession of states’ armies and that balances their technological inferiority against Israel. Without Iranian military backup, Hezbollah and Hamas could hardly compete with the IDF, probably the most advanced army in the Middle East. Thus, from 1992 the United States State Department has defined Iran as “the world’s principal sponsor of extremist Islamic and Palestinian groups, providing them with funds, weapons, and training.” According to the Country Reports on Terrorism 2011, issued by the United States Department of States in July 2012 “Iran, the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism…was known to use the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) and terrorist insurgent groups to implement its foreign policy goals… The IRGC-QF is the regime’s primary mechanism for cultivating and supporting terrorists abroad.”

Iran has supported radical Islamic groups: to further its Islamic ideology, and to advance its international political and strategic position. The aspiration to export the Islamic Revolution to other Muslim societies (and to humanity at large) was an integral part of the philosophy of the Ayatollah Khomeini, who led the revolution and founded the Islamic Republic in 1979. Khomeini and his supporters sought to ignore the religious differences between Shi'ites and Sunnis, as well as the national divisions in the Arab-Muslim world. They wanted to create an Iranian-led revolutionary Islamic force which would defeat and eradicate the “root of evil,” the superpowers which were corrupting the world. According to that concept, which is deeply embedded in the current Iranian regime led by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's principal enemies are the United States ("the big Satan") and its allies, especially Israel ("the little Satan").

We shall export our Revolution to the whole world…. The struggle continues to the whole world… The struggle continues, and wherever there is struggle in the world against the mustakbirin (oppressors) we are there, too…. Our

authorities should know that our Revolution is not confined to Iran. The Revolution of the people of Iran is the starting point of the great Islamic Revolution of the world under the banner of the Imam of Mahdi... The great objectives of the revolution, i.e. the establishment of world-wide Islamic government.  

Khomeini regarded as desirable the use of force and power for the attainment of the ultimate objective, unity of the Muslim world. All his life, Khomeini advocated the pan-Islamist utopia of a de-territoried *Umma* united in brotherly love. The concept of *Umma* is inherited from Islamic thought, referring to the idea of a supranational community tied together by an overarching allegiance to a particular religious identity. Khomeini himself and mainly his successors were forced to slowly move focus from the international agenda to one more focused on Iran itself, but they have maintained the pan-Islamic rhetoric and in contemporary Iran the Supreme Leader is called the leader of the *Umma* rather than of Iran only.  

Ali Shari‘ati, one of the ideologists of the Islamic Revolution in Iran advocated for violence: “Iran should be a community that is in the midst of battles; it has a universal mission. It is not a self-isolated, closed, and distinct community. It is a shahid (martyr) community.” Following Iran’s most revered saint, Husain bin Ali who revolted against the Muawiyah Caliphate in the seventh century, the Shi’ite school of thought preaches Jihad against “internal enemies,” referring to oppressive rulers. Fighting them legitimizes Iran military support of insurgency. Imam Khomeini states: “let us overthrow tyrannical governments by cutting all relations with government institutions, refraining from cooperating with them, refraining from an action that might be construed as aiding them; and creating new judicial, financial, economic, cultural, and political institutions.” For the founders of the Islamic Republic, Iran has a leading role in facilitating Islamic insurgency.  

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This role demonstrates rejection of the western traditional distinction between state and religion, as Khomeini argues: “…you would clearly see no distinction between religious and political leadership, and moreover, it would become apparent that political strife is an integral part of religious duty.”

For Khomeini and his heir, Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, exporting the revolution is used to leverage Iranian strategic interests in the Middle East and around the globe. Iran's principal strategic interest is to achieve regional hegemony by eroding Western influence in the Middle East and by gaining influence over various countries and organizations, especially those in the "resistance" camp (including Syria and militant NSAs such as Hezbollah, Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad). Iran also aspires to widen its political, ideological and religious influence in Muslim population centers around the globe, especially in Africa, South America and Central Asia. Iran was willing to overlook religious disagreements in order to build up the stature of the Iranian regime throughout all Islam, not just within the minority Shi’ite sect. This strategy has direct implications for arming of Iran’s non-Shi’ite NSAs.

Shortly after coming to power and despite the war with Iraq that commenced in September 1980, Khomeini’s government began supporting radical Shi’ite and Sunni elements from Afghanistan in the east to North Africa in the west. The success of the revolution created a monumental Islamic awakening, whose waves reached all the Muslim countries and communities worldwide. Shi’ite communities around the globe were radicalized and hundreds of young Shi’ites visited Iran for studies and training in the use of firearms, explosives and executing suicide bombings. Thereafter they returned to their countries to establish clandestine infrastructures that, during the 1980s, initiated a string of terror attacks and attempts at destabilization in countries like Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and Iraq (often the IRGC supplied the explosives used in the bombings). Extreme Sunni movements were also assisted. This activity was initially facilitated by the Revolutionary Guard’s Office of Liberation Movements, established by order of Khomeini in 1981, and given the mission of assisting Islamic revolution in other countries and establishing relations with movements “fighting for freedom from servitude and fetters of Western and Eastern

imperialism and world Zionism.” Yet, because of cultural and religious differences, the Islamic Revolution failed to spread into Arab, Sunni lands, and stayed a mainly Iranian-Shi’ite phenomenon. Moreover, in light of the civil war in Syria, the Iranians no longer perceive Shi’ite and Sunni equally; they are as heavily involved in fighting the Sunnis as they are in fighting the non-Moslems.

Iranian support of NSAs is associated with the Resistance (muqawama) doctrine praised by the Iranian leadership and executed by Tehran clients, mainly the Hezbollah and Hamas. Rabinovich argues that Resistance is both a form of mind and a concerted policy of opposition to the United States, and to Israel. The peace process of the 1990s and its sequels were seen by Iran and radical Islamic NSAs as an attempt to subjugate the Arab world and fit it into an American order. Iran built the so-called resistance axis (Syria, Hezbollah, Hamas and smaller Palestinian groups) to contradict the moderate camp, led by Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, negating the very idea of peace with Israel which had to be rejected and defeated and the alternative – resistance and victory – upheld. Operationally, as Ehud Yaari explains, “resistance” implies a constant state of combat or a persistent warfare. Following recent engagements with Israel (the 2006 Lebanon War and Israel operations in the Gaza Strip in 2008-2009 and 2012) Hezbollah Secretary General, Hassan Nasrallah and the Hamas Secretary of the Political Bureau, Khaled Mashal, argued they could survive an all-out confrontation with a vastly superior military force such as the IDF by employing classical guerrilla tactics; that is a war aiming at methodical erosion of the enemy’s resolve rather than fighting over territory, waging continual warfare if only on a small scale. The goal is directed at denying victory to the enemy, and not at achieving a quick result. An endless war requires a steady flow of weapons and the Quds Force is a major mechanism to make resistance a reality.

550 Shimon Shapira, Hizbullah between Iran and Lebanon (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2006), 172-182, 96-97, 106-109, 135-139 (Hebrew).
The Quds Force is the most important and effective tool of the Iranian leadership and decision-makers for the “export of the Islamic Revolution.” It was established in the 1980s and inherited roles of the Revolutionary Guard’s Office of Liberation Movements that was disbanded in 1987, including arming of radical NSAs. It became the IRGC’s elite unit; the long arm of Iranian clandestine military and terrorist activity, enabling the regime to strike perceived enemies abroad, especially the United States, Israel and pro-Western Arab countries. The Quds Force is one of five branches of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), which is the strongest military-security body in Iran and the regime’s main support. The Quds Force funding assignment was to engage in operational and political activities to export the revolution beyond the borders of Iran. A short time after taking office in 1989, Khamenei declared that a leading mission of the Quds Force was to ”set up Hizbullah cells all over the world as part of the…Islamic Revolution in the world.” According to Khamenei, there is no doubt the IRGC will take part in this task: "we are not claiming that we will send our military forces to other places and intervene in the internal affairs of others, but rather that the Islamic Revolution is not without responsibility [and cannot remain indifferent] in the face of armed Hezbollah cells throughout the world." Previously, much of the Quds Force activity stayed out of the spotlight and the international and local Iranian media. Against the background of the uprisings in the Arab World, the Iranian leadership has been trying, with limited success so far, to translate the changes in the Middle East (the “Islamic awakening” as Tehran calls it) into achievements, particularly when it comes to spearheading the Islamist agenda as well as for deterrence and counterattack assignments. Therefore, Tehran has activated the Quds Force all the more, as part of Iran’s wider strategic response to changes in the regional and international arena and the intensification of military and political threats involving sanctions. The Quds Force is regarded as the mechanism of deterrence and counterattack by the Iranian regime. For the

554 O’Hern, Iran, 91. The Iranian armed forces are divided into two armies: the Regular Army which had served in the pre-revolution time, is better armed and more professional but less trusted by the regime. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) was established by the Islamic Republic. As the title hints, the IRGC contains conventional force which is less skillful but its primary assignment is to protect the regime. They are also responsible for Iran’s strategic apparatuses, such as the SSMs, supporting Islamic NSAs and initiating terror attacks against Iran’s foes.


556 The Mair Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “The Qods Force, an elite unit of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps,” 10.
theory of NSAs’ arming, the Quds Force demonstrates a remarkable state sponsorship similar to the CIA and KGB sponsorship of various groups during the Cold War.  

Specifically, the Quds Force is leading Iran’s growing military involvement in the civil war in Syria; it uses Hezbollah – Iran’s premier proxy – to provide critical support to Bashar Assad’s regime that might itself become an NSA. The Quds Force is involved (directly and indirectly) in terror attacks and guerrilla activity throughout and beyond the Middle East against Iran's foes; for example the deadly attacks on Israeli tourists in Bulgaria (July 2012), and the plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States (October 2011). The Quds Force is also responsible for part of the daily toll U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan have paid as the former has assisted, including via Lebanese Hezbollah, the radical Shi’ite organizations in Iraq and the Taliban in Afghanistan. Finally, the Quds Force is supposed to hit back at “enemy” territory, both by itself and through proxies it has cultivated in case the United States and Israel plan to attack Iran’s nuclear sites.

The newspaper Kayhan, which is close to Khamenei and generally reflects his position, illuminated the ideological aspect of the Quds Force which is often underestimated in the West:

The IRGC-QF is in fact more than a tangible, operational force; it is an ideology, an ideology that does not recognize borders, a doctrine that includes terms and beliefs that exist in direct confrontation with Western culture. … The IRGC-QF is indeed arming the warriors of the region – but not with weapons, rather with an ideology that is a thousand times more potent than any weapon. Qasem Suleimani [the Quds Force commander] has not provided weapons to anyone in the region; there is no need for it, since he has taught the warriors of the region how to think in order to strike the body of imperialism….The fear of the IRGC-QF is the fear of the loss of the significance of the borders. The IRGC-QF has taught the believers to fight the enemy on his home turf.

General Ghasem Soleimani has been the commander of the Quds Force since March 1998. In 2011 he was put on America's terrorist list after the discovery of his involvement in the Iranian plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian ambassador to the United States. His predecessor was General Ahmad Vahidi, Iran's former minister of defense, who is also on the American terrorist list as a result of his involvement in the terrorist attack which blew up the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1994. The high command of

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557 Segal, Revolutionary Guards, 72-76.
558 Segal, Revolutionary Guards, 72-74.
559 Segal, Revolutionary Guards, 76.
the Quds Force is directed by Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and reports directly to him. The supreme leader supervises the Quds Force through his permanent representative in the Force command. The Quds Force is also subordinated to the National Security Council, Iran’s supreme strategic policy authority and seems to enjoy high prestige within the Iranian leadership. It has many resources and influences the strategic and security decisions made in Tehran, including arming NSAs in Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan and the Gaza Strip.\textsuperscript{560} Soleimani is a very close associate of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei who regards him as someone who “is a living martyr of the revolution.” On January 24, 2011 Khamenei promoted Soleimani to the rank of major general, the highest rank in the IRGC since the end of the Iran-Iraq War, and which is equal to that of the IRGC chief, Mohammad Ali Jafari. For some time Suleimani emerged as one of the candidates for the presidency of Iran.\textsuperscript{561}

The Quds Force includes staff branches, especially designated headquarters, and regional geographic headquarters, such as the Lebanon Corps, the Iraq Corps (Ramadan), the Ansar Corps, which is responsible for Iranian subversion in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the Africa Corps. The large scale of Quds Force military activity overseas probably involved military and government organizations of the Iranian regime, such as financial institutions, transportation companies, Iranian Regular Army and various governmental ministries. Given that Iran has been channeling weapons to its proxies, most important is the Quds Force cooperation with the Iranian Defense Industry Organization (DIO) which produces Iranian arms and the Iranian Air Force that employs transportation jets. In the 1980s, the Quds Force was committed primarily to the war against Iraq. During the 1990s, as the Iraqi regime no longer posed a danger to the Islamic regime, and Iran attempted to disrupt the Israeli-Arab peace talks, the Force was focused in arming Israel’s foes. Iran supported radical Palestinian groups that used terrorism and called for the annihilation of Israel. Encouraged by the outset of the Second Palestinian uprising (2000), and assisted by the Hezbollah, the Quds Force intensified its support to Palestinian radical groups, mainly Hamas.\textsuperscript{562}

Being involved in a number of wars simultaneously, the Quds Force channels arms and tactics between its clients, demonstrating a comprehensive military system. For example,

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\textsuperscript{560} O’Hern, Iran, 72. \\
\textsuperscript{561} The Mair Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “The Qods Force, an elite unit of the Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps,” 18-23. \\
\textsuperscript{562} The Mair Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “The Qods Force, an elite unit of the Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps,” 13-14; The Mair Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “Using the Quds Force of the Revolutionary Guards as the main Tool to Export the Revolution,” 3-4; Byman, \textit{Deadly Connections}, 96.
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from 2004 coalition troops in Iraq were targeted by Iranian-manufactured armor-piercing formed projectiles, known as EFPs that were identical to devices used by the Hezbollah against the IDF.\textsuperscript{563} Quds Force instructors and Iran’s clients share accumulated experience among Iranian-supported NSAs. For instance, in March 2007 coalition forces in Basra captured Ali Daqduh, a senior Hezbollah operative who was sent (2006) to Iraq to support Iraqi Shi’ite militia in training and organizing; he even participated in an operation against coalition troops in Karbala (January 2007), during which four American soldiers were abducted and executed. The Quds Force tasked him with establishing a commando unit of Shi’ite operatives in Iraq using the model of Hezbollah in Lebanon.\textsuperscript{564}

Iranian military support to different NSAs introduces similar patterns while differing in others such as the scope of assistance, logistic complexity and modus operandi. Iran sent limited arms shipments, mostly explosives for terror attacks, to the Gulf countries, Azerbaijan and Pakistan. In Iraq and Afghanistan, Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, where indigenous insurgencies were engaging in guerrilla warfare, Iran’s military support was more extensive including larger weapon systems. The following section reveals that these differences were associated with geo-strategic elements and the strength of the target states. Iran employs an impressive logistic apparatus to channel arms and ammunition to friendly NSAs, including air and shipping lines, banks and semi-government funds. Facing U.N. sanctions on arms export and arms embargos, Iran has faced growing challenges to transport weapons overseas, to both states and NSAs and has been compelled to use various tactics of concealment and camouflage to smuggle weapons.\textsuperscript{565} As an illustration, a SIPRI report from 2012 reveals that the Iranian Shipping Lines (IRISL) has renamed a total of 90 out of 123 ships since 2008. The company also reflagged a significant percentage of its fleet in order to avoid inspection.

Counter maritime smuggling operations of the US navy reveal that the IRISL has chartered European-owned ships to conceal its identity.\(^{566}\)

The following sections analyze three major cases of Iran’s arming of Islamic NSAs: arming of militant groups in Iraq and Afghanistan, logistically a less complicated operation deriving from regional interests; arming of Hezbollah which reframes the traditional state sponsorship model; and arming the Hamas and the PIJ, demonstrating complicated smuggling networks, connecting states and NSAs in trafficking weapons to the Gaza Strip.

**Iran’s Arming of Cross border NSAs**

Iran is deeply involved in subversive activity in all neighboring countries: Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Azerbaijan, derived from both strategic considerations and ideology. Iran benefited both from the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, which removed a significant threat to Iran and greatly increased Tehran's influence in Iraq, and the removal of a vehemently anti-Iranian and anti-Shia government from neighboring Afghanistan. Still, Iran was worried about a long-term American presence on its doorstep, regarding that as a threat to national security especially in Iraq.\(^{567}\) Furthermore, Iran aimed to convince the United States that attacking Iran, as it had attacked Saddam Hussein’s regime and the Taliban, would be far more costly. Iranian support of NSAs in its backyard demonstrates cross-border activity. Exploiting long and porous borders, using traditional smuggling trails and pack animals, the Quds Force is channeling weapons to Islamic insurgent groups in relatively simple logistic operations.\(^{568}\)

**Iraq**

Iran’s subversive activity in Iraq derives from Tehran’s preference for a weak Shi’ite Islamic-dominated government that is aligned with Iranian interests and does not pose a threat to

\(^{566}\)CSIS (October 2012), [http://csis.org/files/publication/120312_Iran_Chapter_X_AfPakCentAsia_AHC.pdf](http://csis.org/files/publication/120312_Iran_Chapter_X_AfPakCentAsia_AHC.pdf) (accessed 22 April 2013).


Iran’s position in the region. Dozens of Quds Force officers and operatives captured by the coalition forces in Iraq in the last decade are major evidence of that. IRGC arms smuggling operations in Iraq did not begin with the United States’ invasion in 2003. The IRGC had supported Shi’ite Iraqis opposed to Saddam Hussein for years. The IRGC formed and armed the Badr Corps, the military arm of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq (ISCI) which originated among Iraqi refugees in Iran and took part in the fighting against Iraq. The Badr Corps was extremely experienced in smuggling operations into Iraq supported by the Quds Force First Corps, known as Ramadan Headquarters. In the post-Saddam period, Iran provided considerable financial, political and material support to the ISCI and its militia, the Badr Corps that eventually integrated with the Iraqi security forces.569 Exploiting the political vacuum that was created in Iraq to increase its influence while undermining the United States’ efforts to stabilize Iraq, the Quds Force sponsored the establishment and handling of new Shi’ite militias in Iraq. The Mahdi Army under Moqtada al Sadr was the main Shi’ite militia in Baghdad for years before it was routed in a series of U.S.-Iraqi offensives and agreed to a pact in 2008 that generally halted attacks. A breakaway group of Sadrist, the Kataib Hezbollah and Asaib Ahl al Haq (League of the Righteous) carried out attacks against Coalition forces and other Iraqi security personnel and civilians before the American army pulled out of Iraq in late 2011. With the withdrawal of U.S. military, Iranian backed militias have observed a cease-fire, opting to pursue opportunities in the political spectrum. Throughout the American presence there was a continuous, little reported and far more deadly struggle between Shi’ite and Sunni groups for control over areas of Iraq. The Shi’ites gradually 'ethnically cleansed' mixed-areas in Baghdad and southern Iraq. Since the American withdrawal the Shi’ite dominated government has received the support of the Shi’ite militias, but they are still attacking Sunnis – though less frequently.570

As a manifestation of Iran’s growing influence in Iraq, the Quds Force has steadily funneled money and arms to Shi’ite NSAs as well as training their activists in both Iran and Lebanon. The Iranians provided large quantities of weapons, some newly produced, including rockets, mortars, Iranian versions of anti-tank missiles and SAMs, plastic explosives and small arms which were smuggled mainly along the porous southern border. In July 2011, the director general of the intelligence division in Iraq’s interior ministry, Hussein Kamal, argued that "there has been a systematic flow of weapons into Iraq for the past eight years. Of course they try to say it is not state-sponsored. But when weapons are flowing from the borders of a sovereign state, it is very clear where the blame lies.”

The most effective weapon the Quds Force provided its proxies in Iraq was the EFP, which is an improvement of the shaped charge; a tube packed with explosive and capped with a metal (usually copper) platter, that can penetrate armor and spray metal shards inside the vehicle compartment. The EFP is more lethal than any IED seen before in Iraq thus causing large numbers of U.S. and coalition casualties. The Quds Force also supplied a special trigger that uses a passive infrared sensor to fire the EFP that could overcome countermeasures the U.S. forces employed against roadside IEDs. Some of the passive infrared sensors found in Iraq were traced to sensors shipped to Iran in large orders from manufacturers in Taiwan and Japan. An intelligence report of the U.S. forces argued that organized networks aligned with the IRGC were supplying EFPs as early as 2005. The use of EFPs as well as Iranian improvised rocket-assisted munitions (IRAMs), an improvement on the ordinary mortar, led to the heaviest monthly casualties of the United States military in Iraq in three years in June 2011 when fourteen of its soldiers were killed in action. At least twelve of them were killed by Iranian-based insurgency groups.

Senior American military personnel in Baghdad showed examples of explosives bearing serial numbers and Iranian script. One of the Americans said that the Revolutionary Guards’ Quds Force had supplied the explosives. From 2008 and 2009, U.S. and Iraqi forces seized 1,000 arms caches in Iraq that contained more than 900 weapons reportedly of Iranian

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origin, many of them found in Maysan province that borders Iran. In 2007, during a raid on a Shi‘ite arms storehouse in the city of Hillah in southern Iraq, Iranian-manufactured armor-penetrating side charges were found. Some of them were plate charges which had been camouflaged in plastic made to look like rocks, reminiscent of the charges used by Hezbollah in south Lebanon against the IDF in the 1990s. Infrared sensors were also found, as were electronic detonators and information about explosives exclusive to Iran. Ten SA-7 anti-aircraft missiles were also found in the raid, manufactured in China and repainted by Iran. Armed with Iranian-produced rockets, the Shi‘ite guerrillas could launch indirect fire attacks over U.S. targets in Baghdad’s International Zone and Basra.

In September 2007, U.S. forces in the Kurdish city of Sulamaniyah arrested Mahmoud Farhadi, a senior Quds Force officer, arguing he was involved in transporting weapons across Iraq’s border (Iran claimed he was a commerce official).

Iran purchased advanced weapon systems for the Iraqi insurgents. For example, the latter fired the anti-tank weapon, RPG-29, that could penetrate the armor of most Western main battle tanks including the British Challenger tank and the U.S. Abrams tank. Iran procured RPG-29s from Russia. Also, in late February 2007 a British newspaper revealed that 100 sniper rifles sent to Iran by the Austrian firm of Steyr-Mannlicher between 2004 and 2005 for use against drug smugglers operating along the Afghanistan border had found their way into the hands of the Shi‘ite opposition and were actually used to carry out attacks against the coalition forces in Iraq. The rifles are extremely accurate and their ammunition is manufactured in Iran.

576 King and Schroeder, “Surveying,” 326.
The Iranians have used middlemen to smuggle weapons into Iraq, probably for security reasons. The most effective smuggling network for getting Iranian IED’s across the border into Iraq was run by Iran-based Abu Mustafa al Sheibani, known as the leader of the Sheibani Network that funnels Iranian arms to Iraqi Shi’ite militias. A former Badr Corps commander, Sheibani supervised operations of weapons smuggling to Baghdad in Saddam Hussein’s time. After the American invasion, al Sheibani carried on for his old masters against a new enemy – the United States and coalition troops. In 2007 he smuggled rockets from Iran using them to shell Coalition Forces. Western sources claimed that al Sheibani’s network was the first to smuggle EFPs into Iraq. These were smuggled from Iran in trucks hauling cigarettes, sheep, cement, crates of fruit, or propane gas cylinders through the southern Iraqi cities of Basra, Amara, and Diwaniyah. Another route for EFPs was through the southern marshes and waterways that connect Iran and Iraq, especially in the area of Qal’at Salih, a small town southeast of Amara. They could be unloaded anywhere along the shoreline. Eventually, the EFPs arrived in Sadr City, a violent Shi’ite neighborhood in Baghdad, from where they were distributed to Shi’ite militias. Seeing Hezbollah as a role model and being trained in Lebanon, the Sheibani network became an operational militia, called League of the Righteous that conducted guerrilla and terror attacks against coalition convoys and soldiers and Iraqi government officials. By 2006 Sheibani was on Baghdad’s most wanted list but in 2010 the Shi’ite dominant Iraqi government allowed him to return from exile in Iran and he joined the Iraqi political system.

Iran’s influence over the Shi’ite community should not be exaggerated. Iraqi Shi’a are opposed to Khomeini’s version of the Vilayat-e-Faqih; as shown in the Iraq-Iran War most of them are Iraqis first and Shia second. There is suspicion and mistrust of Persians by Iraqi Sunnis as well as many Iraqi Shia. Iran is not the sole source of weapons for Iraqi NSAs. The Shi’ite insurgents in Iraq confirmed a basic principle in NSAs arming – the use of various methods of arming to gain sustainability. They looted weapons from Iraqi government depots, mainly after the fall of the regime in 2003; former soldiers have sold some of the weapons that now circulate illicitly in Iraq. Reports indicate that members of the reconstituted

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Iraqi army and police have sold their weapons on the black market, including those procured with United States government funding.\textsuperscript{579}

Following the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq and declaration of a cease fire by Iran-backed militias (in late 2011-early 2012) Iran tasked a new goal for its Iraqi clients – to support Assad's forces in Syria. Iran established (late 2011) the Abu al-Fadhel al-Abbas Brigade (LAFA), a transnational militia, based on the Shi’ite diaspora, mainly from Iraq, numbering (early 2014) about 10,000 militants. Prominent among them are operatives from the Asae'b al-Haq, Kataib Hezbollah and Kataib Sayyid al-Shuhada.\textsuperscript{580} Originally, the LAFA was formed to defend the compound of the grave of Al-Set Zaynab from the SunniGlobal Jihad attacks. It was involved in fighting around the compound and the Syrian army has employed them for other operations across the strategically vital southern Damascus sector. The Quds Force and the Hezbollah are training the Shi’ite volunteers both in Iran and Lebanon. They enter Syria via Damascus on Iranian flights or by road from Iraq. The Quds Force arms the LAFA and a source claimed they are well equipped. Unlike other patrons of NSAs, Iran forms new organizations to serve its interests, rather than only supplying weapons. An American security expert speculated that once they return from Syria for good, Iraqi volunteers could become a security threat to the Iraqi government as well as a common feature of Iranian-backed proxy wars elsewhere.\textsuperscript{581}

\textbf{Afghanistan}

Iran’s military support of Islamic NSAs in Afghanistan is limited compared to Lebanon and Iraq, and Iranian weaponry is not a dominant part of local insurgencies’ armament. Still, Afghanistan demonstrates a special case where Iran’s regional interests overshadow the traditional religious gap. Historically Iran supported the Shi’ite Hazara in western

\textsuperscript{579} King and Schroeder, “Surveying,”328; Milani, \textit{Iran}, 86, 96.


Afghanistan against the Sunni Pashtun, and sent weapons to Hazara militias since the days of the Soviet occupation. In the 1990s, Tehran poured arms, ammunition and fuel into the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance, mainly to the Persian-speaking Tajiks (under the command of Ahmed Shah Massoud) against the Pakistani-supported Pashtun Islamists’ regime. After NATO forces conquered Afghanistan in 2001, Iran continued to supply weapons to the Hazara militia groups but on a more limited scale due to ideological differences.\(^{582}\) Despite historic animosity, Iran has been arming the anti-Shi’a Taliban from around 2007, in order to weaken and tie down the American military in Afghanistan and put pressure on the Afghan government. Although not the primary source of support for the Taliban, Quds Force arms shipments to the Taliban aim to distract the United States from focusing on Iran and its nuclear program. Commentators have argued that the decision to provide weapons to the Taliban is not a product of Iranian government policy but an independent internal decision by elements in the IRGC, though the government does little to stop it. Yet, growing quantities of arms and the centralized character of Iranian command of external operations imply a state-driven involvement. Iranian support of NSAs in Afghanistan is probably directed by the Fourth Quds Force Corps which is responsible for activities in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Asian republics.\(^{583}\)

In recent years, NATO’s International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) intercepted many attempts to smuggle weapons from Iran into Afghanistan such as in the Herat province that borders Iran, while seizing Iranian-made weapons in caches that were found in the Taliban’s areas of operations. For example, in March 2011 British Special Forces intercepted an Iranian shipment of forty-eight 122mm rockets in Nimruz province in southwest Afghanistan bordering Iran and Pakistan. British intelligence claimed that the logistics of the shipment were arranged by a Taliban facilitator in Iran.\(^{584}\) In the same province, in June 2010, Afghan authorities reported their seizure of nineteen tons of explosive devices that had been transferred inside a container from Iran over a bridge linking Afghanistan and Iran. In April and May 2011, American troops in the Helmand province captured vehicles smuggling a


**Iranian and Syrian Arming of the Hezbollah**

The roots of the Iran-Hezbollah alliance

The Hezbollah arming project is remarkable in two ways: the heavy and advanced weapon systems Iran has provided Hezbollah and the unique relationship between the Iranian leadership and Hezbollah. Iranian support of Hezbollah is best manifested by the Hezbollah strategic artillery apparatus that balances Hezbollah military inferiority against its major foe – the State of Israel, developing a deterrence equation with a much stronger army. US Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, announced in April 2010 that Hezbollah had more missiles than most of the world's countries, which it received from Iran and Syria. Hezbollah is almost entirely dependent on Iran and Syria too, for weapons supply but enjoys the strategic and operative backing of the Islamic Republic with considerable military abilities committed to take care of its arming needs. It is very likely that Hezbollah operatives are not required to undertake weapons trips around the world as NSAs usually do; they receive a regular supply of weapons from Iran for free.\footnote{“Hezbollah armed with improved missiles – US,” 28 April 2010, BBC, \url{http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8647909.stm} (accessed 21 May 2013).}
More interesting from the theory of arming perspective, is the mechanism of arming Hezbollah and its significance regarding the relationship between Iran and Hezbollah. Many countries have supported NSAs, some intensively, but Iran-Hezbollah relations are more comprehensive and multidimensional than the regular state-proxy model. Byman argues that this close relationship is perhaps the strongest and most effective relationship between a state sponsor and a terrorist group in history. Hezbollah is almost part of the Iranian regime, both politically and militarily, conducting countless services for Tehran. Iran is embedded within Hezbollah’s command and control system and the latter’s operational apparatuses are part of Tehran’s military arsenal for wartime. Hezbollah is an Iranian stronghold in the heart of the Arab world, providing Iran with a military option to both attack Israel and destabilize the region during a crisis without direct involvement. Hezbollah might fire rockets and missiles into Israel in case of a war between Iran and Israel. The 2006 Lebanon War and mainly Syria’s civil war have demonstrated that arming Hezbollah is a triple mechanism involving Iran, Syria and Hezbollah, because of the key role Syria has been playing for the Hezbollah military buildup. Hezbollah’s efforts to rescue the Assad regime illustrate the flexibility of state-NSA relations. Hezbollah who used to be sponsored by Syria has become, together with Iran, the sponsor of Assad. The weapon systems Iran (and Syria) provided to Hezbollah and the missions Hezbollah executes under Iran’s directions signify a new meaning of state sponsorship.\textsuperscript{587}

Hezbollah (Party of God) was established under the auspices of Iran’s IRGC following its entry (in June 1982) into the Syrian-controlled Beqa’a Valley of eastern Lebanon to organize resistance to Israeli invasion. It was Iran that acted to establish Hezbollah among Lebanese Shi’ite forces that it assembled under its auspices. It was Iran that acted as middleman and unified these forces, and it also provided them with a common shelter and aid at the start of their journey. Iranian clerics sought to convert Lebanon into an Iranian-style Islamic state, as part of the Islamic nation with Iran at its centre. They set up Hezbollah to compete with and eventually replace the Amal Shi‘ite movement, which is nationalist-secular, and which refused to subordinate itself to the revolutionary Islamic regime in Tehran.\textsuperscript{588} Lebanon and Iran share a religious connection embedded in the Lebanese Shi‘ite community,

\textsuperscript{587} Byman, \textit{Deadly Connections}, 80.
\textsuperscript{588} O’Hern, 48; Azani, 186. During the 1960s and the 1970s, many of the Shi‘ite clerics from Lebanon trained at Iraqi Shi‘ite seminaries in Najaf where they associated with senior exiled Iranian clerics, primarily Ayatollah Khomeini. Among them were Subhi Tufayli and Abass Musawi the first two leaders of Hezbollah. The establishment of Hezbollah is often described as a response to Israel’s June 1982 Operation “Peace for Galilee”, but in fact, though that operation provided a back-drop and opportunities for the Iranians to establish Hezbollah, their attempts to “export the revolution” would have led to them doing so in any case.
about one-third of Lebanon’s population. The founding of Hezbollah was comprised of Lebanese Shi’ite clergy in various regions who had strong pre-existing ties with their Iranian counterparts. The former rejected Lebanese and Arab nationalism and advocated for an Islamic state in Lebanon based upon the concept of the *velayet faqih* (rule of the Jurist). This principle, which was cultivated by Ayatollah Khomeni, states that the community of Islam is obligated to subjugate itself to the authority of the most senior cleric in its midst and to obey his will. Officially, Khomeini was the leader of Hezbollah and Hojat al Islam Ali Akbar Mohtashemi Pour, the Iranian ambassador in Syria, was appointed to head the Hezbollah organization. Hezbollah’s charter of 1985 (the Open Letter) reveals that Hezbollah is the only organization in the Shia world outside of Iran which officially subscribes to the *Wilayat al Faqih*.\(^{589}\) During the early 1990s, following dramatic domestic and regional changes (mainly, the Taif Agreement of 1989 that ended Lebanon’s civil war) Hezbollah was compelled to soften its dogmatic Islamic rhetoric and demands for an Islamic state. Hezbollah joined the Lebanese political system and emphasized national motives but maintained its Islamic and Iranian identities.\(^{590}\)

In 1992, Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah became the personal representative of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei in Lebanon, demonstrating the close relations between Iranian and Hezbollah leaderships. Hezbollah is a political party, part of the Lebanese government, and influential in internal Lebanese politics. But Nasrallah maintains his argument that Hezbollah sustains its ideological commitment to the Islamic Republic and to the *velayet al-faqih* even though such declarations provide grist to Hezbollah critics, and in recent years, the March 14 political group, who deride the organization as an Iranian puppet. Hezbollah subordination to the *velayet al-faqih* has direct operational implications as can be understood from the statements of senior Iranian and Hezbollah officials. Sheikh Naim Qassem, Hezbollah’s deputy secretary general explained in an interview in the Lebanese newspaper Nahar al-Shabab in July 2009 that Hezbollah could not begin an operation against Israel without religious authorization from the ruling cleric in Iran. However, he added, the ruling cleric is not supposed to go into detail about how the attack


\(^{590}\) Shapira, *Hezbollah*, 53-63, 124-138, 185-191. Historically, Iran-Hezbollah relations are outstanding. Some similarity exists with medieval Catholic military orders (such as the Teutonic Order of the thirteenth century) that conducted crusades in the Levant and the Baltic under the blessing and material support of the pope. See for example, Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt, *The Popes and the Baltic Crusades: 1147-1254* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 246-247.
would be carried out.\textsuperscript{591} In an interview with Al Kawthar, the Iranian Arabic TV (April 2007) Qassem argued that Hezbollah accepted the authority of the Iranian leadership and received religious guidance from it in every facet of its fighting against Israel (for example, when to fire rockets and carry out suicide bombing attacks). Hence, Iran-Hezbollah relations redefine the interaction between state sponsor and its client. Iran’s control over Hezbollah weaponry and operational capabilities surpasses previous employments of NSAs by host countries for insurgency and terror. But it is the religious-base linkage that turns the Iran-Hezbollah connection into an extraordinary structure of state sponsorship of an NSA.\textsuperscript{592}

IRGC’s initial expedition (2,500 members) arrived in Lebanon with plenty of cash, much-needed weapons, and a proven method for mobilizing Lebanon’s long dormant Shi’ite underclass. Syria prevented them from participating directly in the fighting against Israel and large numbers of them returned to Iran. The remaining 1,000-1,500 Iranians entrenched themselves in Sheikh Abdallah camp in Ba’albak (which they took over from the Lebanese army), and at the Zabadani camp in Syria, which became an important logistic facility near the Lebanese border. The IRGC force was involved in military training, raising the religious consciousness of the local people and spreading the teachings of Khomeini in preparation for the struggle against Israel. IRGC staff indoctrinated Shi’ite volunteers who came to Ba’albak from all over Lebanon with the Iranian revolutionary doctrine. The focus on jihad against outsiders converged perfectly with the interests of Iran’s newly born Islamic Republic which hoped to legitimize itself in the Arab world and retaliate against the “Great Satan.”\textsuperscript{593}

Syria was suspicious of Iran’s influence in Lebanon, considering it to be within its sphere of influence. Therefore, Damascus channeled Iranian arms shipments to Damascus airport rather than Beirut.\textsuperscript{594} Khomeini and the secular Bath socialist Hafez al-Assad were odd allies, but they had common enemies, Israel and the United States. There was also an ideological aspect – while orthodox Islam considers the Alawite Muslims infidels, they have been considered border-line Shi’ites by Iran and Lebanese Shi’ite clerics. This religious

\textsuperscript{591}Nicholas Blanford, \textit{Warriors of God. Inside Hezbollah’s Thirty-Year Struggle against Israel}(New York: Random House, 2011), 92-94; 482.

\textsuperscript{592}The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Center, “Hezbollah as the strategic long arm of the Iranian regime,”\textsuperscript{17} June 2012, www.terrorism-info.org.il/Data/articles/Art.../E_115_12_459755210.pdf (accessed 21 May 2013).


\textsuperscript{594}Azani, \textit{Hezbollah}, 191. Azani argues that in light of the peace talks with Israel in the mid-1990s, Syria refused to allow Iran to equip Hezbollah with heavy artillery.
legitimacy facilitated the close collaboration between the Shi’ites in Lebanon and the Syrian regime from the time of Hafez al-Assad to the present day. Iran managed to develop strategic relations with Damascus and recruited its cooperation among other things, by free supply of oil and publicly reaffirming that Alawi are Muslim. The 1982 Lebanon War and the Syrian-Iranian alliance provided the Iranians with the opportunity to get their foot in the door of the Arab-Israeli (Moslem-Jewish) conflict. Kramer argues that Syria opened Lebanon’s back door to Iran’s emissaries, who were invited to inspire resistance against the foreigners. Damascus became the indispensable link in the import-export trade in the Islamic revolution, and that partnership produced dramatic successes.595

From the 1980s Iran sent hundreds of arms shipments to Hezbollah, by air, sea and land, and Hezbollah slowly assumed leadership of the military struggle against Israel in the security zone along the Israeli-Lebanese border, until it became the IDF’s main adversary on this front, eclipsing the Palestinian organizations that were previously Israel’s bitter adversaries there. Accompanied by other Iranian regime agencies and foundations, the Quds Force led the establishment of a state within a state in Shi’ite centers in Lebanon (the south, Bek’a Valley and Dahiya, the Shi’ite-populated southern neighborhood of Lebanon's capital city, Beirut). By 1990 Hezbollah was no longer a militia, but an organized military force with a core of regular troops and a gradually more regular reserve force. Today it is a regular non-state army with career troops and reserves. At the same time, Hezbollah is a political and social movement whose goal is to promote Shi’ite interests in Lebanon. Under Iranian sponsorship, Hezbollah has also become an economic empire that includes industrial factories, small and medium sized businesses, and real estate. Hezbollah contains religious-cultural institutions, a judicial and arbitration system, television and radio stations, social welfare activities among the Shi’ite communities of Lebanon (medical and educational services, a youth movement, and charitable funds), and construction and rehabilitation activities. Hezbollah rose out of the Shi’ites who generally lived on the margins of Lebanese society and the geographical periphery of the state and it is seen as the main “achievement” of Tehran’s strategy to export the Islamic revolution. Iranian military support of Hezbollah strengthened and installed Hezbollah among the Shi’ites in Lebanon and helped the organization construct a military infrastructure with greater capabilities than many states. Beyond concern for the Shi’ite population and the desire to export the revolution, Lebanon

was becoming a small scale manifestation of a great confrontation between Iran and its major regional foes (the United States, Israel and Saudi Arabia).

The Quds Force has a separate command that operates in Lebanon and Syria in support of Hezbollah. IRGC’s staff in Lebanon is involved in almost every aspect of Hezbollah’s day to day military activity. Iran has two permanent representatives in the Majlis al-Shura, the higher executive body of Hezbollah, one of whom might be the commander of the IRGC in Lebanon. Iran regularly and generously funds the organization (hundreds of millions of dollars per year); the Quds Force formulates operative plans for Hezbollah and provides operatives with military training, both in Lebanon and Iran.

Hezbollah’s elite units, such as the External Security Organization that executes terror attacks out of Lebanon, are mutually subordinated to Hezbollah and the Iranian leadership. Hasan Nasrallah the Secretary General of Hezbollah and Mustafa Badr al Din, the military commander, work very closely with IRGC senior commanders, both in Lebanon and Iran. Badr al Din heads the Jihad Council, the institution within Hezbollah headquarters responsible for constructing a military force and preparing it for emergencies, which is being supervised and assisted by the Quds Force. Badr al Din is the main suspect in the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri in February 14, 2005. He replaced his cousin and brother-in-law, Imad Mughniya who was assassinated in Damascus, allegedly by Israel (2008). Mughniya was a very strong figure in Hezbollah partly, because of his close ties with the Iranian leadership who acknowledged his operational expertise. Mughniya constructed the military infrastructure of the Hezbollah in Lebanon which was used against Israel during the 2006 Lebanon War, and at the same time commanded many terrorist attacks carried out against Israelis, Westerners and Arabs in Lebanon and beyond. Both Hezbollah and Iran were determined to revenge Mughniya’s


assassination in spite of repeated failures to attack Israeli targets across the world, and in July 2012 Hezbollah terrorist attacked an Israeli tourist bus in Bulgaria killing six people.598

Iran arms Hezbollah to become a powerful NSA

Both Iranian and Hezbollah leadership employ a policy of ambiguity regarding Iranian military support. Yet, arming has been the major aspect of the Iranian role in the military buildup of Hezbollah and the Quds Force deserves credit for converting Hezbollah into a military organization of significant capabilities. The operational needs of Hezbollah, Iran’s military industry’s capabilities and Syria’s policy toward Hezbollah have all shaped both the quantity and quality of arms supplied to Hezbollah. In the 1980s Iran supplied mainly small arms, RPGs, mortars and short range rockets, helping Hezbollah to rise as a powerful militia that could counter Amal. Hezbollah’s role in fighting the IDF at that stage was minimal – most attacks were either by Palestinians or by Amal.599 Hezbollah took the leading role only from 1991. Against this background, Iran sharply stepped up arms shipments to Hezbollah, equipping it with weapons procured from foreign countries or that Iran self-produced based on Chinese and North Korean technologies. The supply of standard 122 mm rocket launchers with a range of 20 kilometers enabled Hezbollah to start firing rockets into Israel, thus defeating the purpose of the Israeli presence in south Lebanon and creating a pattern of reciprocity (balance of terror) with the IDF. Iran assisted Hezbollah in accelerating the construction of an operational, logistic, and organizational framework in southern Lebanon and Beirut. Iran provided Hezbollah with access to modern ATGMs with tandem warheads. These were capable, in certain circumstances, of penetrating the armor of the Israeli Merkava tank. 600

The supply of the US-made TOW ATMs to Hezbollah demonstrates the implications of arms proliferation in modern times: the TOW missiles had been delivered from Israel to Iran as part of the arms-for-hostage affair during the 1980s. The Iranian government had


599Blanford, Warriors, 133, 198.

transferred the TOWs to Hezbollah who used the missiles against the IDF in southern Lebanon. Supply of EFPs and other IEDs was critical for Hezbollah’s guerrilla-style war of attrition against IDF and the South Lebanon Army (SLA). IDF casualties caused by Hezbollah were limited; an average of twenty per year, but eventually the Israeli government decided that a change of strategy would be better than continuing the fight inside Lebanon. The IDF withdrawal from Lebanon (May 2000) caused an immediate drop in Hezbollah attacks, and the new Israeli strategy (defend along the border) proved better for a few years, until 2006.601

The IRGC’s Quds Force was behind the military buildup of Hezbollah that continued and intensified without any interruption by either the Lebanese government or Israel, after the IDF unilaterally withdrew from the security zone in south Lebanon and deployed along the international border (the Blue Line). For instance, in November 2004 Hezbollah launched an Iranian manufactured UAV into Israel, and Israeli intelligence claimed that IRGC officers were involved.602 This event was the basis upon which the movement’s deterrence against Israel was established. It allowed Hezbollah to portray itself as the “protector of the South” from possible Israeli aggression. Hezbollah rejected local and international calls for its disarmament (mainly the Security Council resolution 1559 from 2004 calling for disarming militias including Hezbollah), arguing that Israel still occupied Lebanese soil (the Shebaa Farms), the “resistance” weapons were needed to release Lebanese prisoners from Israeli jails, and to support the Palestinian struggle for national liberation.603 Nasrallah argued that fighting against Israel should continue until its annihilation. The task of protecting Lebanon from Israeli aggression was imposed upon the resistance, and therefore, it must remain armed. Israel is an illegitimate entity that must disappear. The Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005 left Iran as the only country with a direct military presence on Lebanese soil.604

Iran has shipped arms to Hezbollah by air, sea and land. In the 1980s and 1990s Iranian Air Force transport jets freely delivered weapons to Hezbollah via Syria. More recently, faced with the embargo placed by the Security Council on exporting weapons from

601 Blanford, Warriors, 133, 198, 214-215, 304-305; The Mair Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “Using the Quds Force of the Revolutionary Guards as the main Tool to Export the Revolution” 8-9.
Iran and the ban on Hezbollah's arming according to resolution 1701 (2006), the Iranians use civilian airlines supposedly flying civilian equipment according to their bill of lading. The Quds Force has used Iran’s national air carrier, Iran Air, and other commercial airways (such as Mahan Air) to transport military equipment for both friendly NSAs and states. Arms supplies for Hezbollah are loaded onto Iranian planes and land at Damascus International Airport, coordinated with Syria. Hezbollah’s logistic unit is responsible for transporting the weapons from Syria to Lebanon in trucks where they are smuggled to the Beq’a’a Valley, greater Beirut and south Lebanon. Until recent years Iranian transport flights to Syria went mainly over Turkey which occasionally intercepted the flights. In March 2009, for example, the Turks forced an Iranian cargo plane on its way to Aleppo, Syria, to land for inspection. In its cargo the Turks found some 2,000 mortars, light weapons and ammunition. The bill of lading stated the plane was transporting car parts. A UN experts report later published estimated that similar aerial cargoes were sent from Iran to Syria and were not inspected by the Turks or were not reported to the UN. Iran might also use longer but safer routes for air shipments. From 2012, western intelligence sources have reported that Iran is using Iran Air, Mahan Air and Yas Air fleets to deliver large quantities of weapons to the Syrian regime and Hezbollah, on an almost daily basis, assisting them to suppress the Syrian uprising. Due to the firm Turkish position against Assad’s rule, the supply operation is executed across Iraqi airspace thanks to Iraq and Iran’s close relations since the American withdrawal from Iraq leaving a Shi’ite dominated government in power there.

Iranian aerial arms supply activity has demonstrated flexibility and creativity taking advantage of various opportune situations. For example, the Mair Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center claims that on at least nine occasions the Quds Force used Iranian and Syrian cargo planes flying humanitarian aid in to the earthquake victims at Bam (in southeastern Iran) to take large quantities of weapons for Hezbollah on their return flights (December 2003 – January 2004). A technical incident exposed an aerial link between Iran, Islamic NSAs and weapons exporters in the Far East. In December 2009, a cargo plane on its...

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605 The Mair Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “Hezbollah: Portrait of a Terrorist Organization,” 57.
way from North Korea to Iran was forced to land in Bangkok because of a technical problem. The Thai authorities exposed a cargo of thirty five tons of weapons including surface-to-air missiles, rocket propelled grenades and maybe 240mm rockets too. According to press reports the cargo was intended for Hamas or Hezbollah.608

Cases of interceptions of Iran's maritime arms smuggling for Hezbollah have revealed parallel use of the high seas to channel arms to Hezbollah in Lebanon, directly or via Syria’s ports. For instance, in November 2009 the Israeli navy stopped a shipment of arms delivered from Iran to Syria intended to reach Hezbollah in Lebanon. The shipment left the port of Bandar Abbas in mid-October in a ship from Iran's national shipping company heading to the port of Damietta, Egypt. There the load was transferred (2-3 November 2009) to a cargo ship called ‘Francop’ flying the flag of Antigua and Barbados. The ship was German owned and operated by the Cypriot company 'UFS Cypriot Shipping Company'. It was intended to reach Syria and stop at the ports of Limassol and Beirut. The ship's crew, including the Polish captain, claimed that they were unaware of the ship's contents. The arms discovered onboard the ship amounted to over 500 tons of arms, hidden in 36 containers, disguised as a commercial shipment of polyethylene bags. The bags were placed on all sides of the containers with the weapons, sheets of Styrofoam and corrugated plastic separating the bags from the weapons crates. This amounted to over 2,000 107 mm rockets, some 700 122 mm rockets, thousands of mortar shells, 106 mm recoilless gun ammunition, hand grenades and light weapons' ammunition. A false bill of lading was used according to which it contained 24,228 polyethylene bags. It is possible that the smugglers’ confidence in not being caught led them to leave so many Iranian inscriptions onboard the ship, including on some of their containers and polyethylene bags.609 A different naval smuggling method was revealed in August 2010 when in the Italian port of Gioia Tauro local police discovered an Iranian shipment of seven tons of the explosive, RDX, packed in sacks labeled "milk powder," which is similar in appearance to RDX. This type of explosive is used in the warheads of

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Hezbollah's missiles and rockets. The Greek-owned ship had arrived from the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas under the Liberian flag and the container was to be transferred to a different ship and sent to the Syrian port of Latakia.\footnote{The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center. “In recent months two more Iranian attempts to ship weapons were exposed,” 15 March 2011, \url{http://www.terrorisminfo.org.il/site/html/search.asp?isSearch=yes&isT8=yes&searchText=T90} (accessed 3 May 2013).}

The land route from Iran to Syria and Lebanon is probably used less for trafficking weapons because of security risks. While Iraq turns a blind eye to overland arms shipments from Iran to the Syrian regime, Turkey is determined to intercept arms shipments to Syria. For example, in April 2011, Turkish security forces stopped a convoy of Iranian trucks carrying a large quantity of weapons and ammunition adjacent to the Syrian border. Previously, the Turks were less committed to monitor trucks from Iran crossing their territory.\footnote{Turkey Foils Iranian Arms Shipment to Syria,” \textit{Ynetnews}, 8 April 2011, \url{http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4104311,00.html} (accessed 21 May 2013).} Israel and the US complained (August 2006) to Turkey about a shipment of rocket parts and spare parts transported in a truck that traveled from Iran through Turkey to Syria, intended for Hezbollah. The railroad tracks connecting Syria and Iran through the south of Turkey were used in the past for weapons trafficking to Hezbollah.\footnote{Eli Lake. “Iranian Shipments to Hezbollah Strain Israeli-Turkish Relationship,” \textit{New York Sun}, 23 August 2006, \url{http://www.nysun.com/foreign/iranian-shipments-to-hezbollah-strain-israeli/38364/} (accessed 21 May 2013).} In May 2007, Kurdish rebels attacked a freight train in the south of the country that was making its way from Iran to Syria. As a result the train stopped and several cars were derailed. In an inspection carried out by Turkish security forces a large weapons shipment was found hidden between boxes of building materials, including 300 rockets and light weapons.\footnote{The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “Hezbollah as a Strategic Arm of Iran,” 20-21; The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center. “One year since the acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which ended the second Lebanon war: An interim report,” 13 August 2007, \url{http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/data-pdf/PDF_07_145_2.pdf} (accessed 20 April 2014), 16.}

\section*{From state sponsorship to a triangle alliance}

The 2006 Lebanon War (July-August 2006) demonstrated the effects of Iran and Syria’s arming of Hezbollah and prominent among these effects was the rocket apparatus. On the eve of the war Hezbollah had more than twenty thousand rockets with ranges long enough to allow them to attack the greater Tel Aviv area and the northern region. Under close IRGC supervision, Hezbollah successfully carried out a plan for methodical rocket fire on Israel.
During the fighting Hezbollah fired almost four thousand rockets of various types at Israeli population centers, killing fifty three Israelis and causing considerable damage. Armament and skillful logistic doctrine were key elements of the artillery campaign as Nasrallah explained: “We made sure that the capabilities we needed for a long war were available to us, and they are still. Anyone who wants to disarm us should know this. We divided our capabilities in a way that would make cutting off the supply lines futile.” Hezbollah had surprised the Israeli Navy, firing Chinese-manufactured land-to-sea C-802 cruise missiles it had received from Iran few years earlier at an Israeli missile ship, damaging the boat and killing four crew members (some reports claimed that IRGC soldiers fired those missiles).

Using Iranian and Syrian supplied advanced anti-tank missiles, Hezbollah disrupted the IDF’s limited ground offensive. Hezbollah adapted its use of anti-tank missiles for mobile fire support against Israeli troops taking cover in buildings and ambushing IDF’s armored vehicles. An IDF helicopter shot down by Hezbollah fire in August 2006 was hit by an anti-tank missile. The war also demonstrated the sophisticated intelligence system Hezbollah had developed and implemented regarding Israel and its security infrastructure along the border, thanks to Iranian aid in both equipment and expertise, far beyond anything seen in most rebellious NSAs in history. For example, Quds Force supplied Hezbollah with the latest Iranian electronic interception devices and jamming equipment to monitor and block Israeli military communications.

The 2006 Lebanon War manifested a dramatic development of Hezbollah military buildup – Syrian integration into the Iran-Hezbollah arming system. Both Iran and Hezbollah have conducted a great portion of the arming activity in Syrian territory. While Bashar Assad’s father regarded Nasrallah as a subordinate, and had regarded Iran as an ally to a limited extent, exploiting Iran’s support of Hezbollah for his own purposes, Bashar saw Hezbollah as a strategic partner and Hezbollah’s leader as a mentor, embracing the organization and creeping closer to Tehran. Hezbollah and Iran have exploited Bashar Assad’s sympathy to the organization since his appointment as the Syrian President (2000) for upgrading Hezbollah’s military activities to the level of an Iranian military unit. Iran could send greater quantities of weapons and more advanced systems across the border into

614 Bergman, Iran, 61, 255; The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “Hezbollah: Portrait of a Terrorist Organization,” 52-53.
615 Nasrallah, “Interview with New TV,” 396-397.
617 Blanford, Warriors, 121, 337-339, 343-344.
Hezbollah’s arms depots. Hezbollah stored some of the quality weapons it had been receiving from Iran in Syria, based on the assumption that Israel would avoid attacking the storage facilities in Syria. Syria was no longer only a transit country for weapons sent from Iran to Lebanon. From about 2001, it became a major arms supplier of Hezbollah, with or without coordination with Iran. Syria is a storage base for much of Hezbollah’s advanced arms, a training site and a major weapons supplier for Hezbollah. In the 2006 Lebanon War the majority of Israeli casualties were inflicted by weapons that came from Syria, in particular, Chinese-made 220 mm (50 km and 70 km range) and 302 mm (115 km range) surface-to-surface rockets, enabling Hezbollah to hit the city of Haifa. Syria supplied Hezbollah with the latest Russian antitank weapon systems it purchased from Russia (with Iranian money) the Kornet anti-tank missiles and an improved version of the RPG-29, all of which were used effectively by Hezbollah operatives against IDF troops in South Lebanon.

The above trends became more radical following the end of the war of 2006. The IDF severely damaged Hezbollah’s military infrastructure, but, in spite of the embargo imposed on arms shipments to Hezbollah, Iran and Syria replenished, increased and upgraded Hezbollah’s rocket arsenal in both quality and quantity. Hezbollah remains the only faction in Lebanon to retain its heavy weapons, and was not willing to give these up without a fight. Already in 2005 Nasrallah made his stand clear:

Weapons without the resistance have no value…If anyone – listen to me – if anyone tries to disarm the resistance, we will fight with him the way the martyrs fought in Karbala, because we know that any action of this kind would be an Israeli action, an Israeli decision, and a move to further Israel’s interests. We will

621 Dominique Avon and Anais-Trissa Khatchadourian, Hezbollah. A History of the “Party of God” (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), 71-100; Azani, Hezbollah, 231. Following the devastating damage of the 2006 Lebanon War and fearing more “luxury war,” the March 14 alliance, a Christian Sunni-Druze coalition, blamed Hezbollah for conducting a Syrian-Iranian policy that was damaging Lebanon. They demanded the disarmament of Hezbollah and termination of its operations out of Lebanon. Hezbollah leadership, on the other hand, was determined to preserve the “resistance” with its heavy weaponry. Hezbollah was willing to use the arsenal of the “Resistance” against other Lebanese, threatening to seize power. Being the most powerful group in Lebanon, armed with Syrian-Iranian backup, Hezbollah could easily overcome the Sunni-Moronic opponents whom it called “Zionist collaborators.”
consider any hand that tries to seize our weapons as an Israeli hand, and will cut it off.\textsuperscript{622}

Within a year after the end of the 2006 war, Hassan Nasrallah declared that Hezbollah had already renewed its entire military organizational structure and its armaments. With its new arsenal of long-range rockets, Hezbollah is able to continue launching heavy barrages at Israeli’s population centers from the depth of Lebanese territory even if the IDF conquered South Lebanon. Therefore, the IDF’s capability of removing the rocket threat would be questioned, enhancing Hezbollah’s image as a surviving organization and an invincible opponent.\textsuperscript{623} Hezbollah has an estimated one hundred thousand short, medium and long range rockets and missiles (including 5,000 rockets and missiles with range more than 100 km), five times what it had during the last Lebanon War. More shipments of unknown numbers have continued to arrive from Iran since.\textsuperscript{624}

The upgraded quality of the Hezbollah missile arsenal includes the addition of precise long-range missiles which have the capability to pinpoint targets deep within Israel, as claimed by Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. By late 2009, Hezbollah had acquired the Syrian-manufactured M-600 short-range ballistic missile (250 km range). In May 2010, Israel passed to the London Times satellite photographs of the largest Syrian missile bases, located 25 kilometers northeast of Damascus, near the town of Adra where Hezbollah operatives had been training. The site reportedly includes living quarters for Hezbollah fighters, arms sheds of rockets and missiles and a fleet of trucks used for transferring weapons across the border. The facility was believed to be one of several used as a base for weapons deliveries. Israeli and American intelligence reported that Syria transferred about ten Scud missiles (300-500 km range) to the Shi’ite organization to be stored in a Syrian warehouse used by Hezbollah. With these missiles, Hezbollah could target the nuclear reactor at Dimona in southern Israel.


225 km south of the Lebanese border. In 2011, Israeli and western intelligence sources reported that the Assad regime transferred to Hezbollah 700 km range Scud-D missiles which could bring all of Israel within Hezbollah’s range (as well as Jordan, the south of Turkey and northern Saudi Arabia). In numerous statements, Nasrallah affirmed the build-up of a strategic missile apparatus. In August 2012, in a speech given on the Iranian-initiated annual Jerusalem Day, Nasrallah boasted that Hezbollah had "precise missiles, a small number of which can hit pinpoint targets." He added that Hezbollah had a number of missiles which could strike precisely at a large number of targets in Israel and that Hezbollah had their coordinates. Striking those targets, he said would "turn the lives of thousands of Zionists into a living hell." He said he meant tens of thousands of dead Israeli civilians, not 300 or 400 or 500. A few months earlier, in a televised speech commemorating Ashoura, Nasrallah argued that “the battle with us will range over the whole of occupied Palestine [Israel] – from the Lebanese border to the Jordanian border and the Red Sea… from Kiryat Shmona to Eilat.” The Hezbollah manifest of 2009 for the National Dialogue affirms that Hezbollah defines itself via an endless conflict with Israel while pretending to be a national army, subsequently demanding a steady supply of weapons.

Facing the continuous threat of an Israeli attack against its nuclear infrastructure, Iran regards Hezbollah’s long range arm as part of an Iranian response to such an attack, or in an offensive scenario, as part of an Iranian military initiative. Zisser argues that without Hezbollah, Iran’s ability to deter Israel from operating against Iran and against its nuclear facilities is highly limited. In November 2011, Sayed Yahya Rahim Safavi, former commander of the IRGC and Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei’s advisor, stated in an interview by Al Alm TV that “Iran does not need to target the Zionist entity with ballistic missiles. Our

630Zisser, 11.
friends in Hezbollah, in Lebanon, are now capable of targeting, with Katyusha rockets, all the settlements, which were constructed with billions of dollars. They are all within the 25-30 kilometer range of the Katyusha rockets… Therefore, I believe that the Zionists know full well that if they start a war, they will be targeted with full force from Southern Lebanon, as well as by Hamas and by Iran. The number and range of the Iranian missiles are unlimited.” On a few occasions Safavi emphasized that "Sayid Hassan Nasrallah regards himself as a soldier of the Iranian Leader."  

Iran and Hezbollah’s commitment to rescue Bashar Assad’s government at any cost signifies Syria’s role as a transit state of Iranian weapons shipments for Hezbollah, as well as an independent source of weapons and strategic and diplomatic backing for the organization. Following the fragmentation of Syria and the growing military involvement of Hezbollah in the fighting, it became unclear who is the state and who is the NSA, for both Iran and Hezbollah have played a critical role in changing the power balance in Syria’s civil war in favor of Assad during 2013. They regard the preservation of the Assad regime as of supreme strategic interest. Hassan Nasrallah is risking Hezbollah’s own raison d’etre (dragging Lebanon into the war in Syria, undermining the security of Lebanon’s Shi’ite community, alienating regional Arab public opinion) in order to secure Hezbollah’s strategic interests in Syria especially in the arming field. Nerguizian argues that Assad’s Syria has been a key lifeline of support to Hezbollah from its patron Iran, and its loss could prove critical to Tehran’s ability to influence the Levant and the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the group’s long term local and regional posture. While other ways exist for Iran to deliver weapons to Hezbollah, most are subject to interdiction. Though Israeli air strikes are a growing threat, overland routes are still the most effective means of resupply. Nasrallah stated: “Syria is the back of the resistance. It is the supporter of the resistance. The resistance cannot stand by while its back is being exposed and its support is being broken.”

634 “Hezbollah Secretary General, Hassan Nasrallah,” Al Manar TV, 25 May 2013.
Therefore, Hezbollah provides the Assad regime with guidance, military training in guerrilla warfare, intelligence and weapons, and combat support. Several thousands of Hezbollah troops are fighting alongside Assad’s troops against the Syrian opposition and Hezbollah lost few hundred operatives in Syria, though acquiring battlefield experience. The Shi’ite organization played a critical role in recapturing Qusayr (June 2013), a strategically important Syrian border town which is a major transit route for weapons and fighters from Lebanon. Qusayr is also a key pipeline for overland weapons transfers from Iran via Syria. In March 2014, Hezbollah troops assisted the Syrian army to take over the city of Yabrud, located near the main road leading from Damascus to Homs. Should Hezbollah commit major forces as far afield as Aleppo, this could expose the group to overstretch in terms of its forces and supply lines.635

Assad is repaying Hezbollah by supplying it with sophisticated weapons systems. Israel security sources assess that with his back to the wall, President Assad might supply Hezbollah with chemical weapons too. Israel declared it will do whatever it takes to prevent Hezbollah profiting from Syria’s turmoil by smuggling “game changer” weapons across the Lebanese border.636 From early 2013, Israeli warplanes destroyed, mostly in Syrian territory, a number of convoys and warehouses of weapons, such as Russian-made SA-17 anti-aircraft missiles and Yakhont long range anti-ship missiles that Assad planned to supply to Hezbollah as well as Iranian-made Fath-110 SSMs that have the range to strike Tel-Aviv and much of Israel from southern Lebanon.637

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Hezbollah’s involvement in Syria is only one example of the organization’s wide activity as a proxy and subcontractor of Iran. From the 1980s, Hezbollah has conducted subversive activity and terror attacks to exact revenge on Iran’s opponents and deter them from trying to harm it. These operations offer Iran a degree of deniability and include the kidnapping of Western citizens in Lebanon, attacking government and Western targets in Kuwait, and attacking an American military compound in Saudi Arabia (1995). The most recent example is a Hezbollah attack against a bus load of Israeli tourists in Bulgaria in 2012, causing the death of five Israelis and a Bulgarian, and the Bahrain government’s accusation that Hezbollah is involved in a series of explosions in Manama. Hezbollah has trained operatives of Iranian proxies from Iraq, Yemen and Bahrain, as part of Iran’s efforts to build up their military infrastructure. Also, Hezbollah shares information and evaluations with Iran regarding Israel and the IDF. The next sub-section describes both Iran’s and Hezbollah’s (assisted by Syria) arming efforts of Islamic NSAs in another region - the Palestinian Territories, mainly the Gaza Strip, which have become in the last decade a major contest between Iran and Israel.

### Iran’s Military Buildup of Hamas and the PIJ

During Operation Pillar of Defense (14-21 November 2012) Hamas and the PIJ launched eight Iranian produced medium-range Fajr-5 rockets and M75 self-manufactured rockets (75 km range) based on Iranian technological expertise, targeting Israeli civilian population centers, including – for the first time – a number of rockets fired at Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Many other medium-range rockets were destroyed by an Israeli airstrike at the outset of the

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operation. Operation Pillar of Defense affirms Iran’s important role in the military buildup of Palestinian militant groups. Iran’s arms shipments to the Gaza Strip in recent years, the delivery of Iranian technological know-how, and training of Palestinian operatives, have been critical for the establishment of the Hamas and to some extent the PIJ too, as military organizations rather than terror groups. Hamas being the major force in the Gaza Strip, the following section focuses on its military buildup.

Hamas and Hezbollah present different types of NSAs regarding state sponsorship. Hezbollah is almost completely integrated into the Iranian regime, militarily and politically, while Hamas is autonomous, acquiring weapons from other sources. In recent years, Iranian weaponry enabled the Hamas movement to create a balance of deterrence against Israel while increasingly challenging Fatah’s traditional dominance of the PLO and becoming an alternative government for the Palestinian Authority. Creating a large arsenal of rockets in the Gaza Strip was intended to give Iran the possibility of opening another front against Israel in addition to the Lebanese front in the north.

The 1979 revolution in Iran played a critical role in consolidating the Islamic revival in the Palestinian territories, inspiring Palestinian fundamentalists by demonstrating the ability of revolutionary Islam to overthrow mighty enemies like the Shah. Iran and Hamas share some principles of Islamic fundamentalism, such as a return to the foundations of religion as a solution to the hardships of the individual and society and hatred for the west and modernity. But they are not natural allies; the former is governed by clerical Shi’ite elite whereas Hamas is a wing of the Moslem Brotherhood, a Sunni Islamic movement. Unlike Hezbollah, while being assisted by Tehran, Hamas has always been an independent organization and was not subordinated to Iran’s agenda. Similar to Hezbollah, Iran’s commitment to arm the Palestinian militant groups is deeply rooted in the doctrine of the

640 The PIJ, much smaller, less flexible and pragmatic than Hamas, preaches a violent blend of jihadism and Palestinian nationalism, and violent imposition of an Islamic government in Palestine as part of a first step toward the Islamization of the world. Although a Sunni organization, the PIJ ideologically differs from Hamas by adhering to the Khomeini-Shi’ite principle of a wilayat al-faqih; the PIJ’s policy is greatly influenced by Tehran.

641 “Ceasefire Agreement Comes into Effect,” IDF, 21 November 2012, http://www.idfblog.com/2012/11/21/ceasefire-agreement-comes-into-effect/ (accessed 14 May 2013). The IDF reports that of those 1,506 rockets fired from Gaza, more than 875 rockets hit open areas in Israel, 421 were intercepted by the “Iron Dome” anti-missiles system, 58 hit urban areas, and 152 were failed launch attempts. By comparison, in Operation Cast Lead (late 2008-early 2009), the Palestinians fired 640 rockets.

Islamic Republic – albeit, given that Sunni Islam is a rival to Iran's Shi’ite Islam, a different section of that doctrine, defeating the Jews is more urgent than defeating the Sunni Moslems.  

At the center of Khomeini policy was the Iranian strategy of bolstering Palestinian resistance, and indeed expanding the scope of the low intensity irregular warfare against the Jewish state by launching a multinational jihad, spearheaded by the Islamic Republic’s Revolutionary Guards in concert with local Shi’ite paramilitary auxiliaries. According to Khomeini:

Our intention has always been to stand by our Palestinian brothers, and wherever we have power, we will join them in defending their rights like brothers standing as equals in the same line of battle as them…We must all rise up and destroy Israel, and replace it with the brave nation of Palestine… We say Israel must be erased from the pages of history, Beit al – Moqaddas, belongs to the Muslims and is their first pillar… with the final defeat of the Iraqi government, pave the way for an advance towards Beit al Moqaddas.

Tactically, arming the Palestinians has been a greater logistic-security challenge for Iran. While Tehran enjoys easy access to Lebanon through Syria and the porous Lebanese border, it is more difficult to transport weapons into the Gaza Strip because of its relative distance from Iran and tight Israeli inspection.

Publicizing Iran’s arming of Palestinian NSAs

Due to Iranian political interests, the round of escalation between Israel and the Palestinian militant groups (November 2012) emphasized the unique profile of Iran’s arming of Palestinian NSAs. Iran usually employs a policy of denial regarding its military support of radical Islamic NSAs. Toward the end of this round of fighting, Tehran and its NSA clients

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644 Somhari, Piallla, 174.

645 Ruhollah Khomeini, Palestine from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini (Tehran: The Institute for the Compilation and Publication of the Works of Ayatollah Khomeini, 1999), 97, 133, 166.

initiated a media campaign showering praise on Iran’s military, financial and technological support for the Palestinian militant groups in the Gaza Strip. Iran probably felt its regional interests were at risk from rival Sunni Muslim states: the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood being elected to govern Egypt and assuming patronage of Hamas and the growing involvement of Turkey and Qatar in Gaza – all of which are rival states of Iran. At the same time, Syria’s civil war created a political dispute between Hamas, which is ideologically committed to supporting the Syrian rebels, and Iran and Hezbollah which intensively back Bashar Assad. As a result, the events in Syria reinterpreted and reframed Iran’s role of arming Hamas. It became another arena of engagement between the rival players of Syria’s civil war rather than manifestation of Iran’s traditional support of the Palestinian struggle against Israel.647

Speaking before the parliament on November 21, 2012 Chairman Ali Larijani said, "We are proud to defend the people of Palestine and Hamas ... and that our assistance to them has been both financial and military." General Mohammed Ali Jafari, Commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, denied supplying rockets to Gaza, claiming that Iran had supplied Hamas with the technology to produce long-range Fajr-5 missiles, so the missiles would not have to be shipped to Gaza.648 The daily newspaper Kayhan said that while Hamas was firing Iranian missiles at Israel and the leaders of Arab countries remained silent, Hamas fighters and hundreds of millions of Muslim observers in the region now knew better than ever that Iran was the one supporting the Palestinian people and that it placed no significance whatsoever on differences between Shi’ite and Sunni Muslims.649 The Iranian website Tabnak, affiliated with Mohsen Rezaee, currently the secretary of the Expediency Discernment Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran, argued:

If not for Iran’s financial and military support of Hamas, the results of the current confrontation would have been completely different. The Iranian missiles launched into Israeli were the main cause of the Israelis’ fear and the ceasefire forced on Israel. What, on the other hand, did Hamas’ Arab

and Turkish friends do?\textsuperscript{650}

The PIJ leader, Ramadan Shallah stated: “the weapons that are being used today to resist this Israeli aggression and arrogance…come mainly from Iran… the weapons are either Iranian manufactured, or their purchase has been funded by Iran.” The Islamic Jihad commander also said “the entire world knows this and it is no secret”. He also stressed that “if there is a difference of opinion with Iran regarding what is happening in Syria, I do not think that there is any difference of opinion between ourselves and Iran – as the Islamic resistance – regarding what is happening in Palestine or in the Gaza Strip.” Shallah also called on the Arab states to arm the Palestinian factions. He stressed that “regarding the symbolic Palestine, we are 100 percent with Iran. Iran has given us all the support, aid and assistance… It is not reasonable that arming the resistance in Gaza should be limited to or monopolized by Iranian arms…we want arms from all the Arab states.” He stressed that “it is important that the Palestinians should have arms to defend themselves.” The PIJ displayed a Kornet anti-tank missile, probably supplied by Iran, at an exhibition of weapons used by the PIJ during Operation Pillar of Defense.\textsuperscript{651}

Senior Hamas officials (after a certain delay) joined the campaign praising Iran's military aid. For example, Mahmoud al-Zahar, one of the Hamas leaders, praised Iran for its military and financial support of the Palestinian militant groups, while stressing Hamas' political independence. He said that “we have the right to take money and weapons from Iran,” and that the money had been invested in developing missiles which had a longer range than those received from Iran. He admitted that some of the rockets had been \textit{manufactured in Iran} and that Iran supported Hamas with weapons and money adding that Iran had never asked for anything in return but only that the rockets be used to "liberate Palestine." \textsuperscript{652} After Operation Pillar of Defense, posters thanking Iran were hung at the main intersections in Gaza City, possibly by PIJ activists. The objective was "to emphasize the important role played by Iran in the fighting by giving the Palestinian resistance military and financial

\textsuperscript{650}The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “Iranian support for the Palestinian terrorist organizations,” 14.


\textsuperscript{652}The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “Iranian support for the Palestinian terrorist organizations,” 13.
support.” The posters were written in Arabic, Farsi, English and Hebrew on a background illustration of Iranian manufactured Fajr-5 rocket launchers.653

Hamas’ production of the M75 rockets in the Gaza Strip with Iranian assistance reveals another unique characteristic of Iran’s arming of Palestinian NSAs – the importance of self-production in order not to be dependent on external sources of support and to be able to fight Israel for a long period of time. More than Hezbollah and other Iranian proxies and in spite of Israel aerial attacks, Palestinian groups established a military industry in the Gaza Strip based on Iranian technological know-how.654 Adnan al-Ghul, Hamas senior operative and the founder of Hamas’ weapons industry received extensive training and expertise in manufacturing missiles, explosives and small arms in Iran (early 1990s). Thereafter he masterminded a series of spectacular terror attacks in Israel (1996), and supervised the production of the first Qassam models (2001) targeting Israeli towns near the Gaza Strip (he was killed by Israel in 2004). Hamas manufactures and uses IEDs with higher armor piercing capabilities, such as the EFPs (called Shawaz, Arabic for “flame”), plate and hollow charges, based on technological knowledge transmitted by Iran and Hezbollah. While the latter received UAVs from Iran, the IDF claims that Hamas has attempted to manufacture UAVs.655 In March 2008, the Sunday Times interviewed a Hamas explosive technician who revealed that "One of the things that has been helpful is that they (Iran) have taught us how to use the most ordinary things we have here and make them into explosives…anything they think will be useful, our guys there (in Iran) e-mail it to us right away.”656

Arms smuggling system of Hamas and the PIJ


The logistic-organizational aspect of arming Hamas and the PIJ by the Quds Force is a remarkable phenomenon (Figure 1, p. 230). For Iran, channeling weapons to the Gaza Strip is a more complicated and risky operation as it lacks a friendly transit state that borders Gaza. Israel and Egypt imposed a blockade over the Gaza Strip and shared information about smuggling plans. Moreover, the IDF has allegedly employed its long operational arm to strike arms convoys in Sudan and vessels carrying weapons in the Red Sea while the U.S. navy patrols the Arabian Sea. Weapons shipments to Hamas and the PIJ make long journey of many hundreds of kilometers from Iran to the Gaza Strip, passing through territories of countries, unstable regions and varying terrains (deserts, mountains). Egypt’s position is one of the factors greatly influencing Iran’s arming of Hamas because the Sinai Peninsula has become a 'bottleneck' in recent years for arms convoys wishing to enter the Gaza Strip. During the regime of former Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, Egyptian security forces made some effort to thwart weapons smuggling through Egypt (with partial success). Regarding Hamas as a terror group and a national security threat, the military regime of General Abdul-Fattah el-Sisi has waged (from September 2013) uncompromising war against smuggling of weapons in the Sinai Peninsula.

These challenges have created a complicated arms smuggling system of which the Quds Force is one component. The arming of Hamas and the PIJ is a multinational system, encompassing different elements, both states and NSAs. Until the divergence between Iran and Hamas in light of Syria’s civil war, this system contained IRGC’s Quds Force in Iran, Syria and Lebanon, and the Sudanese government. Hamas leaders and smuggling controllers (such as Mahmoud Al-Mabhouh, killed in the UAE in 2010 and his successor, Kamal Ranja, killed in Damascus in 2012) operated mainly from Damascus where they could easily interact with Quds Force officials. The smuggling systems also include members of Hamas’


military wing in Gaza who received the weapons, the operators of the Rafah tunnels and smuggling activities, Bedouin smugglers and weapons traffickers in Egypt and Sinai, and arms dealers in Sudan and Yemen. Each of these elements has different motives (political, ideological, and financial); they had separate well-defined roles and there was little mobility between them. For instance, cases of Iranian military officials, trafficking weapons to the Gaza Strip themselves is unheard of, probably for reasons of security.  

Iran was responsible for the first segments of the smuggling operation, trafficking arms to Sudan by sea and air. For example, in 2009 Iran chartered Sudanese Badr Airlines airplanes to transport irregular cargoes from Iran to Sudan via Oman and Saudi Arabia or via Jordan and Egypt. From Sudan the arms were apparently smuggled to the Gaza Strip using local smugglers through Sudan and Egypt. No details were divulged on the specific cargo on these aircraft, and it is assumed they carried Iranian arms, mainly rockets.

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In April 2013, based on information from western diplomats, the Sunday Telegraph reported on unscheduled Iranian cargo flights that had been logged between Tehran and...
Khartoum. The sources assessed that Iran was trying to smuggle significant quantities of arms to Gaza via Sudan.662

Sudan, which has close relations with both Iranian and Palestinian radical groups (as well as Sunni Jihadis), is an important transit state for delivering weapons to the Gaza Strip. Military cooperation between Sudan and Iran dates back to the early 1990s. Iran has been a major supplier of weapons to the Islamic regime of President Omar Bashir, supporting him against rebel groups in the South Sudan (which broke away to become an independent country in 2011) and the western region of Darfur.663 For many years Hamas has employed an operational infrastructure in Sudan. Mahmoud al Mabhouh, a senior Hamas operative who was responsible for arms smuggling into the Gaza Strip was reported as working in Sudan. He was assassinated in Dubai (2010) apparently by the Israeli Mossad.664 On October 2012 Israel allegedly attacked forty containers in the al-Yarmouk weapons factory and arms depot near Khartoum. Media reports claimed the facility was operated by the IRGC and produced weapons destined for Hamas, and one report claimed that the target was a drone-ammunition store. Assuming these reports are correct, similar to Syria, Sudan’s role in arming Hamas surpasses the traditional model of a transit state.665

To reach Sinai Iranian arms are transported by land and sea routes that have been used for thousands of years to transport goods from Sub-Saharan Africa to the Middle East. Sudanese smugglers gangs, mostly from the Rashaida tribe, moved the cargos with trucks to the Egyptian border through the desolate expanses of the Nubian Desert in east Sudan. The Egyptian army captured a few arms consignments near the Sudanese border, but could not block its full 1,275 kilometer length. The tribesmen know the desert routes well and enjoy the


security services of other tribes through whose territory the cargo passes. Hamas and the PIJ exploited their skill, and their Arab identity contributed to the business relationship between the two parties.\footnote{Security Council, “Letter from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council,” 11 July 2012, http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF9EF7D/Somalia%20S%202012%20545.pdf} Arms also reached Sudan from Eritrea and Yemen, a major arms market serving fighting militias in Somalia, Sudan and other countries in the region. Hamas exploits the lack of government supervision of these routes but this might work both ways – several Hamas arms convoys passing through Sudan or the Red Sea have been attacked from as early as 2009 in operations attributed to Israel. Israel would neither confirm nor deny its involvement, but a senior Israeli defense official made it publically clear that Sudan is “a dangerous terrorist state,” an enemy like Hamas and Iran. Accumulated reports imply that Israel has launched a clandestine campaign of air strikes and naval commando operations to block Iran’s efforts to arm Palestinian radical groups in Gaza. The effectiveness of these counter arms smuggling operations is disputed since plenty of weapons continue to reach Gaza either from Sudan or Libya.\footnote{John Young, “The Eastern Front and the Struggle against Marginalization,” Small Arms Survey (2007), http://protection.unsudanig.org/data/east_YoungThe%20Eastern%20Front%20and%20the%20Struggle%20against%20Marginalization%20(May07).pdf (accessed 12 May 2013).} As an illustration, Time Magazine reported that in January 2009 Israel attacked a large truck convoy in the Sudanese desert, which was carrying Fajr rockets and other Iranian arms for Hamas. The arms shipment was transported to Sudan by sea. Eventually, other Fajr shipments reached Gaza.\footnote{Amos Harel and Avi Issacharoff, “Reports in Sudan: Israel struck Two Weapons Convoys in Past Month,” Haaretz, 25 December 2011, http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/reports-in-sudan-israel-struck-two-weapons-convoys-in-past-month-1.403521 (accessed 15 May 2013); Harel and Issacharoff, “Israel, Iran scrap over Red Sea zone,” UPI.com, 30 October 2012, http://www.upi.com/Top-News/Special/2012/10/30/Israel-Iran-scrap-over-Red-Sea-zone/UPI-83281351619305 (accessed 26 April 2013).} In November 2012 a Palestinian militant group fired an advanced ATGM at an IDF patrol jeep near the border fence between Israel and the Gaza Strip, wounding four soldiers. Israeli security officials estimated the missile was acquired from the stores of the disintegrated Libyan army rather than from Iran.\footnote{Elior Levy and Neri Brenner, “PRC unveils video documenting attack on IDF jeep,” Ynet News, 13 November 2012, http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4304855,00.html (accessed 15 May 2013).}

Bedouins from Sinai, Egyptian citizens, mostly from the Sawarka and Romaylat tribes, received Iranian arms shipments on Egyptian soil. They moved north along the Red
Sea coast in uninhabited areas, crossed the Suez Canal to the Sinai Peninsula and smuggled the weapons to the Gaza Strip through the Rafah tunnels. While security supervision in the south of Egypt is slack, it is tighter in the Suez Canal area. Therefore it is likely that the smugglers mask the weapons shipments with civilian goods or that they bribe the Egyptian security forces and thus successfully enter the Sinai Peninsula. It is estimated that the smugglers split up their convoys and send a few trucks at a time so as to not draw suspicion. Before transporting the weapons into the Gaza Strip through the tunnels they store them in their houses, caches in open areas or storage facilities. In June 2011 Egyptian security forces in central Sinai seized a store of explosives waiting to be smuggled into the Gaza Strip. The weapons cache was discovered in a two meter deep pit, covered with palm leaves. The Palestinian militant groups have exploited Israel's respect for Egyptian sovereignty as well as the weakening control of the Egyptian government over the Bedouins in Sinai, especially since the outset of the 2011 revolution against President Mubarak’s government, to smuggle large quantities of weapons through the Sinai Peninsula. Egyptian and Israeli sources have claimed that Hamas is smuggling advanced weapons (rockets, SA-7 anti-aircraft missiles) into Sinai and Egypt. Egyptian authorities blame Hamas for supporting its longstanding allies, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, who were removed from power in July 2013 and are fighting the Egyptian army.

Facing the IDF already in the entry to the Red Sea, Iran attempted to smuggle weapons to Gaza through friendly ports, using various concealment tactics. For example, in March 2011 Israel's naval forces captured the 'Victoria', a German owned ship, operated by a


French maritime transport company (CMA-CGM) while flying a Liberian flag. The 'Victoria' was carrying 50 tons of armaments (approximately 2,500 60 mm and 120 mm Iranian-made mortar bombs, six Iranian-made copies of 35 kilometer range Chinese C-704 anti-ship missiles, small-arms ammunition and communications equipment) hidden in three of the containers behind bags of cotton and lentils. The arms were marked with lettering in Farsi and the C-704 instruction manuals were in Farsi with the emblems of Iran and the IRGC. The IDF claimed it was the first attempt by Iran planned to supply anti-ship missiles to Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip. The ship was loaded in Latakia, Syria, sailed first to Mersin, south Turkey, and was captured en route to Alexandria, Egypt (Iran might have sought to exploit the destabilization in Egypt to increase smuggling of arms to Gaza through the Egyptian mainland). After capture, the ship was led to Ashdod, Israel, where the cargo was unloaded. CMA-CGM was probably unaware of the military cargo on board, however, this wasn't the first time Iran had used CMA-CGM to smuggle arms.672 In October 2010, Nigerian security forces captured the ship 'M/V Everest', owned by the IRGC and operated by CMA-CGM under a Liberian flag. It had sailed from the port of Bandar Abbas, Iran, to the port of Apapa, Nigeria, carrying 107 mm rockets and 120 mm mortar bombs intended to reach Gambia and possibly separatist elements in West Africa. The French company claimed to be unaware that the shipment included arms, citing the containers' bill of lading that stated they contained building supplies.673

Iran’s arming of the Palestinian militant groups reveals the remarkable role Hezbollah plays as part of the Iranian military system. From 2000, Hezbollah became a part of the Iranian efforts to build up the military infrastructure of Hamas, and Hezbollah’s operational approach became a role model for Hamas on how to conduct asymmetrical warfare while taking advantage of conditions on the ground and Israel’s weaknesses (such as the use of violence to affect Israeli public opinion and decision makers). The military infrastructure established by Hezbollah in Lebanon and the use it made of rockets, IEDs and anti-tank missiles were a source of inspiration for the Palestinians.674 Aside from training Palestinian

672 The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “Most of the Weapons found aboard the M/V Victoria.”
673 The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, “In recent months two more Iranian attempts to ship weapons were exposed.”
674 There are a number of basic differences between the conditions in Lebanon and those in the Gaza Strip, and Hamas has attempted to take them into consideration. For instance, the Gaza Strip is small and its area is defined, while Lebanon has depth from which the terrorist organizations can operate and gives them a much longer breathing space. South Lebanon, where the hard core of Hezbollah’s infrastructure is located, is mountainous and forested, while the Gaza Strip is flat and exposed.
militants and conducting joint terror attacks with the PIJ, Hezbollah was involved in smuggling weapons to the Palestinian Territories by land and by sea, some of them as a joint operation with Palestinian radical groups. In June 2001, Jordanian security forces arrested three members of Hezbollah transporting twenty five rockets of 107 mm caliber, which had been transferred from Lebanon via Syria to Jordan and were obviously intended to reach the Palestinian territories.675

From the outbreak of the Second Palestinian Intifada (2000), Hezbollah recruited Arab-Israeli citizens and used them, among other things, to smuggle weapons and technological know-how about IEDs and rocket production, to the West Bank. This was part of a joint Hezbollah-Iran intelligence and terrorist campaign in the Israeli arena during which Hezbollah funded and directed Palestinian terrorist squads. Unit 1800 of Hezbollah provided financial aid, explosives, and weapons to its networks in the West Bank and Gaza.676

In late 2008 the Egyptian security services detained members of a Hezbollah network operating in Egypt. The network was handled by Unit 1800, which provides support to the Palestinians through the countries bordering Israel. During questioning, the network operatives said that Muhammad Qabalan, the network’s chief handler in Lebanon, was involved in infiltrating operatives and smuggling weapons into the Gaza Strip. The weapons, which included high-quality C-4 plastic explosives, were intended for preparing explosive belts and IEDs to be used in terrorist attacks against Israel. There were many other details, including charges that they had been storing “explosive belts.” Egyptian officials claimed the Hezbollah cell had planned to buy a ship to ferry weapons into Egypt, for eventual shipment to Gaza, and to smuggle weapons there through tunnels.677 Hassan Nasrallah admitted Hezbollah’s plot, arguing: “If aiding the Palestinians is a crime, then I am guilty and proud of it.” 678

Hamas’ refusal to side with the Assad regime and its support for the Syrian rebels caused Hamas’ relations with until recently close allies, Syria, Iran and the Hezbollah to deteriorate. Consequently, Hamas leadership admitted that Iran cut its support but it is not clear if that includes arm shipments too. Unlike Hezbollah Hamas enjoys additional weapon sources including the Libyan and Yemeni arms markets. But as Hamas improved and regularized its military organization and acquired heavier weapon systems, it was more dependent on Iran for its military buildup. During 2012, Hamas’ external headquarters were compelled to move from Syria and some of the staff relocated to Egypt and Qatar. Hezbollah ordered Hamas personnel in Lebanon to leave the country. Without an operational headquarters in Damascus, Hamas probably faces greater challenges to coordinate arms trafficking to Gaza. Iran probably maintains its military support of the PIJ, which is neutral toward Syria’s civil war, regarding a stronger PIJ as an efficient tool to undermine Hamas authority in the Gaza Strip. Hamas and the PIJ demonstrate two different modes of state sponsorship of an NSA: Hamas being more independent and guarding its sovereignty and the PIJ is more subordinated to external authority.

During late 2013 Iran supplied dozens of Syrian-manufactured M-302 rockets with a range of around 150 km to Hamas. In March 2014 in the Red Sea, Israeli naval forces intercepted an Iranian shipment of 40M-302 rockets, and 180 122MM mortar shells, probably intended for Palestinian groups in Gaza. Israeli allegations portrayed sophisticated planning—the Iranian air-shipped the Syrian weapons to Iran where they were loaded onto a civilian cargo ship that made a stop in an Iraqi port to add containers of cement as camouflage. This episode integrates state sponsorship and the outcome of a civil war, serving the arming of NSA.

Summary

This chapter reveals that state sponsorship of armed NSAs has reduced since the end of the Cold War, helping to put an end to many long conflicts. Iran’s military support of radical Islamic groups, mainly Hezbollah, is currently the major expression of outside support to NSAs, deriving mostly from religious motives. Armed NSAs devoted to persistent conflict like Hezbollah and Hamas, require steady supply of weapons which they acquire from Iran. As seen in Syria’s civil war, Hezbollah is an operational extension of the Iranian regime far more than a regular alliance. This war demonstrates the strength of an NSA that used to be armed by a state that becomes its main defender. In a number of unstable regions in Africa and Asia rebel groups acquire weapons, exploiting rivalry between neighbor states.

The chapter questions the validity of Smith and Van Creveld’s paradigm of states-NSAs conflict. They regard NSAs as a homogenous and monolithic category while in reality they are extremely diverse and that affects the profile and outcomes of state-NSA conflicts. Iran’s extensive support of Hezbollah and Hamas might be a particular case but with tremendous effects over the Middle East. But these two scholars devalue the strength of present NSAs both in their arguments and terminology. Van Creveld calls NSAs armed with long range rockets and anti-ship missiles like Hezbollah a “lightly armed” guerrilla force instead of a military organization. He does not address the special links between Hezbollah and Iran, being much more than a proxy and sponsor. Calling Palestinian Hamas that controls the Gaza Strip and until recently had a government of its own an insurgency is inaccurate.683

The collaboration between governments and NSAs in order to arm friendly NSAs has evolved into complicated systems using the advantages of globalization. The arming of Palestinian militant groups in the Gaza Strip demonstrates the operation of SOSs: these systems are independent of each other; they are highly diverse and geographically dispersed, easily communicating with each other, and performing emergent behavior (large shipments of smuggled weapons). These SOSs feature evolutionary development overtime, such as using the outcomes of the civil wars in Libya and the destabilization of Egypt to locate new sources of weapons as the next chapter elaborates.

The next chapter demonstrates the growing importance of black markets for NSAs’ military buildup. Collapsing regimes, stockpiles of weapons from previous wars, corrupt

683 Van Creveld, Changing Face of War, 272.
government officials and officers are all part of the transition from a state-based system of NSAs’ arming to private/transnational-networks of arms smuggling that serve many of the current rebel groups.

Chapter Seven: Major Trends in the Arming of Contemporary NSAs

The previous chapter reveals a decline in state sponsorship of armed NSAs following the end of the Cold War and Iran’s military support of Hezbollah and other Islamic armed groups
being exceptional. The current chapter concludes the review of NSAs’ arming efforts from antiquity to the present day. It reveals a reverse trend – contemporary NSAs that are struggling to arm themselves are compelled to be more self-sufficient and independent than during the Cold War. NSAs acquire weapons through leakage and looting from states’ armies, demonstrating a timeless modus operandi, and few depended mostly on this method. Eritrea’s struggle for independence from Ethiopia (1961-1993) and Nepal’s Maoist People’s War against the royal government (1996-2005) manifest a role model for successful uprising with limited weaponry. Engaging demoralized, undisciplined, poorly trained and poorly equipped government forces, highly skillful, well-disciplined NSAs could gain victory, though lacking outside aid and financial popular and backup. The Afghan Taliban’s war against President Karzai’s government and al Qaeda groups fighting in Syria and Iraq feature a similar pattern.\(^\text{684}\)

The following chapter focuses on two other more influential mechanisms assisting contemporary NSAs to decrease the force imbalance with governments; both use globalization to facilitate NSAs’ arming and operations. The first of these mechanisms is the acquisition of weapons through intensive use of black arms markets. Armed NSAs acquire weapons from local dealers and international arms traders, smuggling shipments through porous borders and failed states into their sanctuaries. They are deeply involved in illicit trade, chiefly the narcotics trade, enabling them to secure a steady flow of funds to procure weapons and ammunition. The theory of arming of NSAs argues that NSAs’ favored mode of arming is modified by the emergence of new weapon systems; and the organizational structure and operational approach of rebel groups. Contemporary NSAs have adopted an asymmetric approach, attacking the weakness of stronger opponents. Thus, the second mechanism refers to NSAs’ intensive use of Improvised Explosives Devices (IED) in guerrilla warfare against regular armies and in terror attacks against civilians. In this context, the chapter addresses the powerful combination of suicide bombing (with or without IEDs), radical Islamic doctrine, and globalization outcomes, mainly transnational NSAs, active

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diaspora, wireless communication and trans-oceanic transportation. This combination has enabled NSAs using terror to challenge international security in a way never seen before.  

**Contemporary NSAs’ Use of Black Arms Markets and Arms Dealers**

**NSAs’ use of Illicit arms trade**

The following sub-section discusses three aspects of contemporary rebel groups arming through private elements rather than states: using black arms markets, associating with international arms traffickers and dealers, and funding arms purchases through illegal trade in goods, mainly narcotics. Consequently, even without state support many NSAs with some financial resources manage to sustain longstanding conflicts, inflicting heavy casualties on governments. Black arms markets are vital for the readiness and maintenance of NSAs’ force. For many years, NSAs have associated with private companies and dealers not committed to export regulations but profit-motivated and with insurgents struggling to acquire arms. Today, NSAs are part of much larger global trade systems. Lacking financial and equipment support from states some have become deeply involved in illicit trade of goods, especially narcotics, as an attractive source of funds to an extent that could undermine their political goals.

Armed NSAs associate with black arms markets which are defined as the agents of a completely illegal trade of weapons. Evidently, governments too still play an important role in the illicit arms trade, because government intelligence services organize and finance illegal arms deals for proxies, and corrupt politicians are involved in selling and shipping weapons to NSAs. Therefore, NSAs are sharing gray markets, which are defined as covert supplies of weapons from a state to a non-state-actor in another country. Stohl and Grillot argue that black and gray arms trades are intricately intertwined. Many shadows of gray significantly complicate the illegal truck in arms. NSAs have also become expert at acquiring weapons by legal means, by utilizing loopholes in existing laws and regulations.

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The private arms trade has operated from ancient times, and in recent decades has become a dominant method of arming NSAs, integrating outcomes of the end of the Cold War, the rise of global commerce, and privatization of transportation services and arms industries. The illegal trade in weapons is a relatively small part of the world global trade in arms. In 2002, Muggah and Griffiths estimated the illicit small arms trade at close to one billion dollars (10-20% of the total trade). Current figures are probably much higher since by 2013 the total arms trade had risen to seventy billion dollars. The illicit trade in arms is believed to be among the causes of instability and violent conflicts. The distinction between legal and illegal arms trade has always been partial because of a continuous leaking of weapons from states to NSAs in different ways; stealing, looting, and the deliberate supply of weapons by states via proxies.  

Current research identifies five major black arms markets serving armed NSAs: Southeast Asia, East Africa and Yemen; North Africa and the sub-Saharan, the Balkans and the United States. Spreading over a large territory and featuring a transnational smuggling network, they feed a considerable number of NSAs as well as criminal gangs. They are located near active war-zones or in former regions of conflict that have a surplus of poorly guarded weapons. Most of the host governments are weak and cannot monitor their porous land and maritime borders. Large black arms markets share a country-based division of labor: countries that produce or export arms, transit states and NSAs who are the consumers. Active players include arms dealers, smugglers, brokers, sea and air crews, gunsmiths, rebels, terrorists, drug traffickers, money changers, corrupt army officers, governmental officials, and politicians. Black arms markets are subordinated to security considerations (therefore less likely to offer large weapon systems), and supply and demand roles.

These black arms markets differ in age, size, number of NSAs involved, amount of weapons traded, involvement of governments, and self-production of weapons. In Southeast Asia and Yemen the arms trade stems from a long tradition of smuggling and contraband trade, whereas contemporary black arms markets in North Africa and the Balkans are relatively new. North African and Southeast Asian markets are used mainly by regional rebel groups (internal focus) whilst the Balkan arms market channels weapons mainly to overseas NSAs (external focus). The U.S., Philippines, and Yemen black arms markets are connected


687 Stohl and Grillot,International, 93, 95.
688 Stohl and Grillot,International, 93, 95.
to indigenous gun-carrying cultures and local weapons production. Serving many NSAs over a large territory, Southeast Asian and East African-Yemen arms markets feature the most complex structures. All trade in small arms; the Yemeni market specializes in explosives, while heavier weapons systems (anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons) can be found in Libya and the Balkans.

Black arms markets highlight a strong link between NSAs’ operations and topography, which influences their methods of transportation. Rebellious NSAs tend to use maritime rather than air transportation because of fewer security risks. Maritime transportation also allows transfer of greater bulk (more weapons / bigger weapons) than aerial transportation. Armed NSAs that purchase weapons through black markets in Southeast Asia and Yemen-East Africa are intensively using naval transportation. They exploit the long coasts and archipelagos of these regions for easy smuggling. In the Balkans air transportation is dominant and NSAs are smuggling weapons through North Africa by land. A substantial part of NSAs’ smuggling activity, including transshipment of arms cargo, is takes place near the coast in littoral regions like the port city of Chittagong in Bangladesh and Aden in Yemen. The sea serves as an easy highway and acts as a catalyst for promoting arms smuggling by NSAs. NSAs in land-locked counties, like the Taliban in Afghanistan, are heavily reliant on smuggling weapons through neighboring countries. For internationally isolated NSAs like Al Qaeda Central and Al Qaeda regional branches, black arms markets are extremely important. An Al Qaeda training manual from the 1990s contains a special lesson about purchasing illicit weapons, transporting them using cautious measures, storing, and selecting a weapons arsenal.

Southeast Asia arms market. A number of factors have contributed to the development of a significant black arms market in Indochina, serving many NSAs(Figure2, p. 245). This region contains a large number of inter-state conflicts, post-conflict zones with availability of small arms, and long maritime and continental frontiers which are difficult to monitor and police. Most of the states in Southeast Asia are “weak states,” lacking the capacity to effectively

689Hoovestal, Globalization, 86, 96.
control their borders and interdict arms traffickers (to illustrate, Indonesia is responsible for policing more than 17,000 islands that stretch across an area equal to one-sixth of the equator; Myanmar and Thailand share a 2,500 kilometer border, much of which is thick jungle, isolated from major towns or roads), while suspicions and mutual distrust among countries in Southeast Asia cripple joint counter-smuggling activity.692

The Southeast Asian arms trade system has witnessed a major change in recent years, demonstrating the dynamics of role changes. In the 1980s and 1990s, Asian rebel groups acquired most of their weapons (everything from assault rifles to surface-to-air missiles) from the post-conflict states of Vietnam and Cambodia through Thailand. The government of Vietnam sold weapons left behind by the Americans (including an estimated 1,500,000 small arms and 150,000 tons of ammunition) to communist allies and terror groups around the world. A portion of these weapons was traded on local black markets. The LTTE were the first to access Cambodian weaponry, followed by Indian separatist groups such as the Nationalist Council of Nagaland and the United Liberation Front Arm. The Small Arms Survey reports that by 2006, due to a collection and destruction operation, only 22,000 to 85,000 weapons continued to circulate illegally in Cambodia, compared to 153,600 to 216,250 in 1998.693 Weapons from the Cambodian military’s arms depots and warehouses probably still leak to illicit trade, but Cambodia is no longer a prominent regional weapons source. Accumulated information suggests China, Thailand and the Philippines have become primary sources of arms and ammunition to armed NSAs in northeast India, southern Thailand, southern Philippines, remote border areas of Myanmar, and Indonesia (mainly the GAM in Aceh), in addition to local criminal groups. In 2008, the Jane’s Intelligence Review claimed that China had replaced Cambodia and Thailand as the main supplier of weapons to the insurgent groups in India’s Northeast, Myanmar and Sri Lanka. This theme was first confirmed by the large arms shipment that was intercepted in Bangladesh in 2004 on its way

692 Archana Padyaya, India's fragile borderlands: the dynamics of terrorism in north east India (I.B. Tauris, 2009),53;David Capie, Small arms production and transfers in Southeast Asia (Canberra: Australian National University, 2002), 69-70.
693 Christina Wille. “How many Weapons are in Cambodia,” Small Arms Survey, Working Papers, no. 4 (June 2006).http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/F-Working-papers/SAS-WP4-Cambodia.pdf (accessed 11 August 2013), 30; The Small Arms Survey Institute reports that in 1993 the total pool of Cambodian conflict weapons was 320,000 and 463,000. In 1998, the total number of weapons outside government control was between 153,600 and 216,250. By 2006, due to a collection and destruction operation, only 22,000 to 85,000 weapons continued to circulate illegally in Cambodia.
from China to rebel groups in northeast India, and by arms caches of Chinese weapons found in Myanmar near the Chinese border.694

The United Wa State Army (UWSA), a Myanmar rebel group operating in the northeast of Myanmar along the border with China, acts as a middleman between Chinese arms manufacturers and insurgent groups in the Northeast, with most weapons routed through China’s Yunnan province. According to sources in Bangkok, the UWSA buys weapons from China North Industries Corporation (NORINCO) and sells them to other insurgents for profit. Sources claim the UWSA have been manufacturing small arms under an informal franchise from NORINCO. Muse-Ruili is the main border crossing between Myanmar and China. Ruili has long been a legal and illegal trading center, seen as the “wild west” of China, in part because of its proximity to the drug producing region that covers Myanmar, Thailand and Laos, as well as human trafficking. From here, arms shipments take the long route to Myanmar and from there are moved to the Indian border at Tamu, opposite Manipur.695 Many of the exports are shipped from the Chinese ports of Zhanjiang, Guangzhou and Hong Kong. Usually, the buyers of these arms take delivery of the ammunition at the Chinese docks and do the shipping themselves. Cambodia operates as a transit state; many of the Chinese consignments are shipped to Sihanoukville, on the southern coast of Cambodia, moving on to ports in the Gulf of Thailand for land transport to ports such as Ranong on the Andaman Sea coast. Arms trade between NSAs demonstrates a process of commercialization and privatization of NSAs' arming, facilitated by globalization. It is no longer only a force buildup mechanism but a source of income.696

Figure 2. Weapons' smuggling routes in Southeast Asia
Surrounded by neighbors coping with insurgencies and on-going conflicts, Thailand serves as the hub of the East Asian arms smuggling network. Previously, Thailand’s arms trade was based on surplus arms smuggled from post-war Cambodia. Today, Thailand is an important center for the brokering and facilitating of weapons transfers from additional sources. Asian rebel groups are making new business connections in Thailand; they procure and store weapons in hideouts and coordinate arms transportation. The rebels operate offices in Thailand and their procurement officers often visit Bangkok. For example, Bangkok hosted Anthony Shimray, chief arms procurer of a faction of the Nationalist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM). In 2009, he paid an advance to a Bangkok company to source a few thousand rifles, rocket launchers, and ammunition for Naga and other insurgent groups in India, from a weapons supplier in mainland China (India arrested Shimray in late 2010). Riaz explains that the illegal arms trade in Thailand has taken an organized shape and some influential members of Thai society (businessmen, the military, and politicians) have become involved in this hugely profitable trade. To illustrate, until a few years ago weapons destined for the Tamil Tigers were frequently shipped on trawlers, some of which were owned by former or serving members of the Thai military. Large arms bazaars allegedly operate in the Three Pagoda Pass near Myanmar’s border and on the Ranong coast in the south.\(^{697}\) Thailand is also an arms transit state. In 2007, Hmong ethnic rebels resident in the United States planned to smuggle weapons (including Stinger SSMs and LAW ATMs, purchased in the United States) through Thailand into Laos to overthrow the local communist government. Burmese rebels like the Karen National Union (KNU) and Shin State Army (SSA), smuggle weapons by land through Thailand, with the porous Thai-Cambodian and Thai-Myanmar borders making these transfers relatively easy to accomplish.\(^{698}\) In March 2012 Thai police intercepted ten rocket launchers a local smuggler planned to smuggle over the northern Myanmar border to insurgents in exchange for drugs. In March 2013 Thai police confiscated more than 100,000 rounds of ammunition and four rocket launchers which Thai arms dealers (one of them a

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With more than 10,000 vessels fishing Thai waters and a large number of islands where weapons can be transshipped, patrolling the vast waterways and islands is extremely difficult. The most important areas of activity for arms smugglers using sea routes are the islands off the coast of Phuket, as well as the southern provinces of Ranong and Satun. The LTTE used to operate logistic bases in southern Thailand for storing and transshipping weapons. In recent years, Thai authorities have not reported the capture of vessels loaded with large arms cargo. Weapons destined for Indonesian rebels, such as the Aceh, are shipped through south Thailand and from there across the Strait of Malacca to Aceh. Malaysia is an important crossing point, on land and sea, for arms smuggling from Thailand and the Philippines to Indonesian armed NSAs. Weapons for armed NSAs in India and Myanmar are transshipped from southern Thailand via the Three Pagoda Pass and the Ranong coastline, then by Burmese insurgents in fishing vessels, through the Andaman Sea to Cox Bazaar in Bangladesh. From here, the arms are routed to destinations in Northeast India and Myanmar through different routes. Insurgent groups of South and Southeast Asia use anything from commercial ocean freighters to fishing boats to deliver arms. Speedboats are frequently used to unload cargo at sea and ferry the shipments through the coastguard patrol line to shore.\footnote{Capie, Small Arms, 18-27, 92-96; Denik I. Witarti. “Malaysia as the Crossing Point for Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) to Indonesia: Issues and Challenges,” Sociology Study, vol. 2, 5 (May 2012): 357-358.}

Bangladesh is another important segment of Southeast Asian NSAs’ arms trade system. Originally serving as a transit state for weapons shipments from Indochina, in the 1990s Bangladesh became a destination state because of growing insurgency in South Asia, including jihadist groups in southeast Bangladesh. For Indian and Burmese insurgents, it makes strategic sense to have bases in Bangladesh as it provides them proximity to the Cox Bazaar port – the key receiving point of weapons consignments shipped from the black markets of Southeast Asia. This change demonstrates the dynamics and flexibility of arms smuggling activity. For example, Rajkumar Meghen, the leader of the UNLF, used to operate
from Bangladesh, acquiring weapons from China. In a joint Indo-Bangladeshi operation, he was arrested in Dhaka in August 2010.701

The Philippines is both a large producer and importer of firearms to be consumed by the general population, criminal gangs (in Japan and Taiwan too) and to a lesser extent, by Marxist and extremist Islamic NSAs. There are at least 1.9 million illicit guns in the Philippines, twice the number of the estimated legally registered firearms (930,000). The Philippines’ “shadow gun economy” is based on impressive local arms factories, both legal and illegal, mainly on Cebu Island (300,000 people work in local workshops), and leakage from loose stockpiling of guns in various police and military units. Philippines law enforcement authorities appear helpless to stop production.702 As in Yemen and Pakistan, Philippino armed NSAs are using the local culture of gun ownership (close to that of the United States) and homemade weapons to arm themselves. While some insurgent groups have their own limited production capacity, most weapons are bought, stolen or captured from Philippines security personnel. The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was able to pay high prices for weapons on the black market, thanks to a successful campaign of hostage-taking during the 2000s. Military sources in the Philippines reported (2013) that the communist insurgent New People Army (NPA) had received large quantities of AK-47 rifles from abroad. The rifles were smuggled in foreign ships loading ore from the mines in the south. Some of the rifles were new and had defaced serial numbers. Local media hinted the rifles could have been smuggled from China.703

Being an archipelago, it is easy to smuggle weapons out of the Philippines, and its black arms markets in Mindanao serve NSAs in Malaysia and Indonesia. In the last decade, rebel groups in North Maluku, Poso, and Papua have all smuggled weapons from the Philippines to resist the Indonesian government. The Philippines’ arms markets have served terror groups too. Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), perpetrators of the 2002 Bali bombing, acquired explosives in Mindanao.704 A former member of the JI recorded that he used to travel to Mindanao, buying small arms there and smuggling them in fishing boats or tankers heading to Indonesia from the Philippines. No one ever checked their bags. The long coastline and land borders make it difficult for the Indonesian, Malaysian and Filipino governments to

701 Padyaya, India, 50-53; Capie, Small Arms, 70-72; Myint, “Police Seize;” Unnithan, “Chinese Gunrunners.”
703 Witarti, “Malaysia”353-355.
704 Capie, Small Arms, 21-22, 67-74.
secure completely. In the second half of 2011, Indonesia foiled a JI plot to bomb the Singapore embassy in Jakarta. The terror group (Abu-Umar’s cell) smuggled weapons into Indonesia from the Philippines through Malaysia. In February 2013, a group of two hundred militants, followers of the Sulu Sultan, Jamalul Kiram III, invaded Sabah (Malaysia), located on the northeastern tip of Borneo Island, claiming ownership of Sabah. From nearby Mindanao, the militants (including Abu Sayyaf members) organized the operation and smuggled weapons.

Though lacking reliable numbers, Southeast Asian rebel groups probably consume lighter and fewer arms stockpiles compared to Middle Eastern and some African NSAs. In contrast to previous decades, current state-NSA conflicts in Southeast Asia are mostly low intensity, featuring guerrilla warfare and in a few cases, terrorism. The majority of local rebel groups do not seek regime change or a religious revolution but regional autonomy or disengagement from the central government.  

**The Balkan Arms Market.** Wars in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s created a large surplus of weapons used by rebel groups and authoritarian regimes in different war zones. Regardless of the wind-down of conflicts, enhanced law enforcement measures and various anti-arms trafficking initiatives, local black markets and the internal arms trade have been flourishing in the Balkans. The breakdown of the Albanian government in 1997 led to the looting of large amounts of arms and ammunition from army stockpiles. Sources estimate those one million light weapons, one million five hundred thousand rounds of ammunition and thousands of tons of explosives became available on the black market in south-eastern and central Europe. For the most part, these weapons ended up in the hands of local armed NSAs: the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) that fought Serbia; the Albanian National Army (ANA) and the National Liberation Army (NLA). These last two are ethnic Albanian nationalists closely

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708 Capie, Small Arms, 21-22, 67-74.

Criminal groups from the Balkans gradually started to export their weapons to other regions, mainly to criminal gangs in West Europe and on a smaller scale to foreign armed NSAs too. In the late 1990s, Michael McKevitt, founder of the Real IRA, traveled to former Yugoslavia, establishing an arms supply network that purchased weapons (such as the anti-tank rocket system RPG-18 and high explosives) from Croatian mafia and from Bosnia-Herzegovina, smuggling them back into Ireland, exploiting the open borders policy of the European Union.\footnote{Jana Arsovska and Panos A. Kostakos, “Illicit arms,” 366; \textit{R. Oppenheimer, IRA. The Bombs and the Bullets. A history of deadly ingenuity} (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009), 171-172.} In August 2000, police in Croatia seized a rocket launcher, seven anti-tank weapons, 130 tons of plastic explosives and other munitions allegedly destined for the Real IRA. In 2000 European authorities discovered an attempt by the ETA to buy Croatian arms from the IRA. Balkan weapons were also transported to overseas armed groups.\footnote{A.R. Oppenheimer, \textit{IRA. The Bombs and the Bullets. A history of deadly ingenuity} (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009), 171-172.}

Amnesty International reports significant quantities of weaponry have been shipped from the Balkans via off-shore arms brokers to Rwanda since 2002, specifically from surplus stocks in Albania, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. From late 2002 to mid-2003, Israeli-based Verona Commodities and British Virgin Island (BVI) brokered at least ten flights, mainly for ammunition, from Albania’s state-run arms marketing company MIECO, using two African airline companies. These shipments probably served Rwanda-backed rebels in the east Congo DR.\footnote{Peter Danssaeart and Sergio Finardi. “The Arms Flyers. Commercial Aviation, Human Rights, and the Business of War and Arms,” \textit{IPIS}, July 2011, \url{http://www. ipisresearch.be/ publications_detail.php?id=368&lang=en} (accessed 30 August 2013), 62.} During 2012, Yugoslavian advanced weapons appeared to be used by Syrian rebels too. The rebels posted videos on YouTube showing anti-tank weapons such as RPG-22, M79 and M60 used against Syrian army tanks and posts. Media reports claim Saudi Arabia financed the purchase of large quantities of weapons from Croatia. Transport aircraft carried these weapons to Jordan and they were then smuggled into Syria. Croatia’s Foreign Ministry and arms export agency denied that such shipments had occurred, but a Croatian daily

newspaper reported a large number of Jordanian cargo planes at Zagreb Airport from late 2012.  

**Yemen-Northeast Africa’s arms markets.** Complex traditionally-based arms smuggling networks have spread from the Arabian Peninsula across the Gulf of Aden to the Horn of Africa. These networks are further linked to arms markets in North Africa, East Asia and the Middle East. They serve a variety of armed NSAs in one of the most unstable regions in the world: Al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP) has a stronghold in Yemen, Shi’ite Houthi rebels in north Yemen, radical Islamic Al Shabaab in Somalia with branches in Uganda and Kenya, Ethiopian Somalis in the Ogaden region and rebel groups in Darfur. All these armed NSAs have been exploiting inter-state rivalries (mainly Eritrea against Ethiopia), weak governments, divided societies, traditional maritime and on-land smuggling cultures, to build up military force. Therefore they associated with seamen, smugglers, arms traders (who use the same routes which have been used from as early as the Middle Ages), warlords, corrupt government officials and army officers.  

With a 2,500 kilometer long coast-line, Yemen is the hub of arms smuggling networks. Demonstrating a tribal culture of arms possession and spiraling political violence, Yemen has more than sixty million firearms, which means that there are three times as many firearms as there are Yemeni citizens. Around twenty arms markets are operating all over the country, due to inter-tribal fighting, on-going ethnic, religious, sectarian and political conflicts (the last major one was the Yemeni Revolution of 2010-2011 and fighting continues on a lower scale to this day). Weapons of all kinds are sold, from small arms to rocket-propelled grenades, even surface-to-air missiles, and other types of explosives. Weapons from past wars and leakage from poorly guarded army stockpiles find their way to arms

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markets. Moreover, Yemen's borders have seemed to amount to open gates for the importation of smuggled weapons. For example, in March 2011 Dubai police foiled an attempt to smuggle sixteen thousand handguns from Turkey to Yemen. The shipment was destined for Saada, apparently arranged by independent arms dealers. Authorities found the weapons in a red cargo shipping container, hidden behind boxes of furniture wrapped in plastic in a Dubai warehouse. From early 2013, Yemen authorities have confiscated more than twenty thousand small arms smuggled from Turkey. The Lebanese newspaper Daily Star interviewed Ahmad Saif, director of the government-funded Sheba Center for Strategic Studies who argues that local arms dealers (many of them are sheikhs) are obtaining licenses from the Defense Ministry and are legally importing weapons, mainly from Ukraine and Turkey. Part of the shipment goes to the ministry, while the other part goes to the black market. The Yemeni government has attempted to reduce the vast number of arms and to control the arms trade, but government officials themselves have a great interest in continuing the arms trade. To illustrate, in October 2009 a shipment of weapons from China was seized in Hodeida Governorate. The Yemeni media reported that the ship carried fake documents that had been signed by Yemeni Defense Ministry officials. The ship was permitted to leave, possibly with its cargo.

The Yemen black arms trade serves mainly local terror and insurgency activity. Saleh al Tays al Waeli was a Yemeni illegal arms trader, allegedly selling explosives and weapons to the Al Qaeda cell that was responsible for the suicide attack against the guided-missile destroyer, USS Cole (October 12, 2000; seventeen American soldiers were killed). The American army killed him in 2013. Moreover, Yemen’s geo-strategic location makes it an important transit point for arms flown to Africa and the Middle East, serving terrorists and insurgents. Al-Qaeda attacked government and American targets in Saudi Arabia using weapons they smuggled across the Yemeni border. In August 2002, Al Qaeda operatives shipped two SA-7 missiles from Yemen to Somalia and then into Kenya. A few weeks later

they attempted to down an Israeli passenger jet with the missiles but missed.\textsuperscript{719} A UN report from mid-2013 states Yemen was the top source of arms to Somalia. Lacking a functioning central government, Somalia has witnessed a bloody civil war since 1991.\textsuperscript{720}

In 2009, the Al Shabaab radical Islamist group that later merged with Al-Qaeda, became a dominant force within Somalia, in light of the withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Somalia, and the pragmatisation of the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), the former major opposition group, who reconciled with the Transnational Federal Government (TFG). Following the local tradition of low-intensity warfare the Al Shabaab militants captured and controlled a large territory, including airports and multiple port cities in southern Somalia, allowing the importation of large stocks of weapons and other goods. Al Shabaab possessed armored vehicles, rockets, some field artillery, anti-aircraft cannon, anti-tank weapons and speed boats, posing a security risk to Somalia’s neighbors too.\textsuperscript{721} By late 2012, a large foreign expedition (composed of Africa Union forces, and the Ethiopian army) and the Somali Transnational Federal Government’s army forced Al Shabaab out of southern and central Somalia (including the capital, Mogadishu) but Al Shabaab is still dominant in rural areas. Smuggling explosives from Yemen and adopting Al Qaeda tactics, Al Shabaab regrouped and launched a campaign of suicide bombings against government and foreign targets, mainly in Mogadishu, some of which were sophisticated (more than ten suicide attacks from early 2013).\textsuperscript{722}


Al Shabaab’s persistent struggle against the governments of East Africa has been facilitated by a steady flow of weapons. The U.N. Security Council stated (2010) that Yemen’s senior arms dealer, Sheikh Fares Mohammad Mana (the governor of Sa’ada province) was involved in supplying weapons, some of which he purchased in East Europe, to militants in Somalia (in 2011, Mana was arrested and released after few months). Using the unregulated and lawless coastal strip, northern Somali businessmen and warlords from the Boosaso area are involved in smuggling and brokering arms from Yemen ports for Al Shabaab. Weapons are smuggled in diesel containers and fishing boats to Somalia and Sudan. U.S and Yemeni navies and the autonomous Puntland authorities in northeast Somalia have been seizing boats and ships carrying arms and explosives from AQAP to Al Shabaab forces in southern Somalia. For example, in October 2012 Puntland authorities seized an arms consignment for Al Shabaab unloaded from a Yemeni dhow on the northeast Somali coast. The thirty seven sacks contained 220 RPG-7 rockets, small arms, and two sacks of ammonium nitrate and explosive materials.

Eritrea is another major arms supplier in East African smuggling networks. In July 2012 the Security Council Committee on Somalia and Eritrea noted that “Eritrea is currently a marginal actor in Somalia.” Yet, it reported Eritrea has “relationships with arms dealers and facilitators in Somalia known to have provided services and support to Al Shabaab,” as a strategy to confront its historical rival Ethiopia, which deploys troops in Somalia (therefore an arms embargo is still imposed on Eritrea). Senior staff in the Eritrean security services have been involved in smuggling weapons from Yemen into northern Somalia for Al child suicide bombers,” Sabahi, 5 March 2014, http://sabahionline.com/en_GB/articles/hoa/articles/features/2014/03/05/feature-02(accessed 21 April 2014).


Shabaab, and joint Yemeni and Eritrean crews operate the boats. Eritrean senior officers command arms smuggling and human trafficking networks, collaborating with Rashiada tribal criminal gangs and Arab Bedouins from Egypt. They have smuggled large quantities of weapons (such as rocket launchers and anti-aircraft missiles) through the Sinai Peninsula for Palestinian arms groups in Gaza and increasingly to Salafi-Jihadi groups in Sinai. The Eritrean government might stop air shipping of weapons to radical Islamists in Somalia, but it is heavily involved in the regional arms trade, funneling state-NSA conflicts in Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan. Being associated with two arms trade systems Sudan plays a unique role: it is a transit state for smuggled weapons from Eritrea and Yemen for armed groups in Egypt and Gaza Strip.

Black arms markets in Yemen and the Horn of Africa clearly demonstrate how rebel groups exploit environmental-political conditions, such as failed states, fragmentation of societies, inter-states rivalries, and porous borders. Local NSAs are part of complex heterogeneous networks, comprising governments and entrepreneurs, traditional frameworks and modern processes. Islamic NSA involvement in spectacular terror attacks (discussed later in this chapter) multiplies the importance of these arms markets though the former do not necessarily smuggle large quantities of weapons.

**Libyan Arms Market.** Contemporary rebellious NSAs and criminal groups are the first to benefit from weak or collapsing states where disintegrated armies fail to secure arms depots. Libya demonstrates well this timeless principle of the theory of arming of NSAs. The collapse of the Gadhafi regime in Libya (October 2011) after a civil war that lasted a year, resulted in an unchecked flood of weapons out of Libya to Al Qaeda-linked militants across

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northern Africa. The rise of radical Islamic NSAs in North Africa and the Sahel belt in recent years was greatly facilitated by a proliferation of modern weapons from Libya. These weapons are traded and trafficked by a complex network of Bedouin smugglers and Jihadist militants from Mauritania in the west to Egypt in the east. Libya’s looted weapons strongly demonstrate the connection between force build up and force execution among rebel groups. A stronger regime in Libya, which is not likely to arise in the near future, could reduce the illicit arms trade.

Being a former major arms importer, Libya could offer a variety of weapon systems including small arms, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, rockets, and explosives as well as more advanced light anti-aircraft and anti-tank missile systems. During the civil war, Libyan militias looted Libyan military depots and sold weapons to arms smugglers and radical Islamic groups. In the security vacuum that characterizes Libya since the fall of Gaddafi, heavily armed militias have challenged government authorities, refusing to disarm or join the national army. They are building their own arsenals against the background of resurgent tribalism and regionalism; some are threatening to secede from Libya, others connected to Al Qaeda have been involved in terror. The Islamists militants who attacked (September 11, 2012) the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, killing the U.S. ambassador and three other U.S. nationals, were well organized and armed. Reports note they fired RPGs, mortars and rockets into the two American compounds. Libya’s government has struggled to bring armed militias under control. For example, in August 2012 the Libyan Interior Ministry reported they seized more than one hundred tanks and nearly thirteen rocket launchers from a pro-Gaddafi militia southeast of Tripoli. Militias sell their weapons on the black arms market directly to foreign militants from war-ridden countries or to arms dealers from third countries, who then sell them to warring factions. Most notable are the Strela and more advanced anti-aircraft missiles. The American government assessed that Gaddafi’s forces had about twenty thousand SA-7 of which a few hundred have already been smuggled to rebellious

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NSAs in North Africa and the Gaza Strip, creating a major risk to civilian air traffic. Armed with advanced weapon systems, radical Islamic NSAs could destabilize countries neighboring Libya that have been weakened by the uprisings in the Arab World and internal sectarian conflicts.\(^{733}\)

In Mali, the Tuarag, a nomadic Berber people who live in the Sahara, complained against discrimination and neglect by the government in far-off Bamako. In January 2012, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) launched a rebellion, with returned gunmen who fought with Gaddafi bringing with them weapons from Libya. Exploiting the lack of central order after the government had just been toppled in a military coup, the MNLA seized northern Mali, declaring (April 2012) Azawad’s independence.\(^{734}\) In just a few months the power balance in northern Mali changed as Ansar al-Din, a Tuarag jihadist militia, supported by a dissident group of Al Qaeda in the Land of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), defeated the secular MNLA and established control over MNLA-held territories. The AQIM operates mainly in the northern coast areas of Algeria and parts of the desert regions of southern Algeria and northern Mali. Only with massive outside military support, comprising the French army and African-led international Mission in Support of Mali (AFISMA), did the government of Mali recapture the north in early 2013, pushing back radical Islamic militants into Algeria and Niger. Scholars noted that unlike previous rebellions in north Mali the current rebellion has been difficult to put down because of the influx of weapons and war-hardened fighters from Libya. In April 2011, African sources reported a convoy of eight Toyota pickup trucks crossed into Chad, Niger and into northern Mali from desert armories in eastern Libya. The cargo contained RPGs, anti-aircraft missiles, small arms, ammunition and explosives.\(^{735}\) A year later, the Nigerian army intercepted an AQIM truck containing around six hundred and fifty kilograms of explosives that were marked as belonging to the Libyan army. The Algerian army intercepted many attempts by AQIM operatives to smuggle Libyan weapons into the AQIM stronghold in northern Mali through southern Algeria. One source describes Libya as an “open air arms market” which has allowed AQIM to acquire large quantities of heavy weapons. While still employing terror tactics, AQIM’s acquisition of heavier weapon systems signifies that Al Qaeda regional branches who seek to control territory, are adopting a military structure closer to that of

\(^{733}\) Zoubir, “Qaddafi’s Spawn;“ *World Tribune*, 31 August 2012.


regular armies. Despite temporary operational setbacks in Mali and southern Algeria, the AQIM remains a major strategic threat to North Africa.\textsuperscript{736}

In predominantly Muslim northern Nigeria, weapons looted in Libya assisted the Boko Haram, a radical Islamic militia, to intensify its struggle against the Nigerian government and Christians. Nigerian Islamic militants, who sought to establish an Islamic state in the north, are crippling economic activities, mainly in the states of Borno and Yobe, compelling the government to declare a state of emergency in May 2013 in three northern states.\textsuperscript{737} In 2012, Boko Haram militants visited north Mali to join the fight there, and they have returned with heavy weapons smuggled from Libya. They are connected to AQIM who train them in north Mali and south Algeria; therefore they have adopted AQIM terror tactics, suicide bombing and kidnapping foreigners. Nigerian security apparatuses have intercepted many arms caches in the north, containing military-grade weaponry, such as RPGs and anti-aircraft guns, which upgrade the firepower of the rebels. Arms smugglers are using Nigeria’s leaking borders, making effective control of smugglers a mirage. They employ various concealment and deception tactics to transfer looted Libyan weapons into Nigeria, including fuel tankers and bags of grain with little attention given from security agents. Arguing the armed group is better equipped than the Nigerian militia fighting it, a Nigerian senior official admitted: “given the present state of affairs, it is absolutely impossible for us to defeat Boko Haram.”\textsuperscript{738}

Libyan military arsenals appear to be a substantial source of arms supplies for Syrian rebels. The arming of these rebels differs from arming jihadist groups in Africa, being logistically more complicated because of security considerations, and demonstrating involvement of both state and sub state elements. In August 2012, Free Syrian Army (FSA) spokesmen reported a Libyan ship carrying more than four hundred tons of apparently


humanitarian aid docked in Iskenderun, Turkey. The cargo, reported as the largest consignment of weapons since the uprising, contained, among other things, SA-7 anti-aircraft missiles and RPGs. This shipment was followed by air deliveries of Libyan weapons to the Free Syrian Army (more than twenty, one source reported), landed in south east Turkey or Jordan and then transferred over the border into Syria.739 A Reuters reporter in a Benghazi military base watched a container of weapons (small arms, rocket launchers and ammunition) being prepared for delivery to Syrian rebels, and in northern Syria the New York Times reported about crates with Libyan marked weapons in the possession of a FSA affiliated group.740 Libyan militias who sympathize with Syrian rebels supply the weapons while the weak Libyan government turns a blind eye or is “actually directly involved” as a U.N. report notes. Syrians living abroad and Arab donors are funding and even coordinating arms supplies to the FSA. One of them, Abdul Basit Haroun, originally a Libyan businessman residing in Britain and currently a Libyan warlord, claimed (mid 2013) he sent to Syria twenty eight metric tons of weapons by air or sea, using a Benghazi-based relief organization as a front company. Turkish authorities’ support has been vital for delivering military aid into Syria, enabling the FSA to operate on Turkish soil.741 Also, the Qatari government finances arms shipments to Syrian opposition, and has provided cargo aircraft to deliver weapons from Libya to Syria via Turkey. Most of the weapons have been relatively light, but included a number of second-generation anti-tank systems that have been destroying Syrian tanks. Though Libyan weaponry has not kept up with the enormous ammunition demand of Syrian rebels, they are critical to sustain the Syrian rebels’ war against the powerful Syrian army (but the SA-7 never got into Syria). Weapons’ commercialization and recycling means that both Libyan and Syrian rebels have relied on Russian manufactured weapons, though Russia has supported Gaddafi and Assad.742

742 Doornbos, and Moussa. “Comrades in Arms.”
The U.S’s Arms Market. The United States is the world’s largest conventional arms exporter (thirty percent of global arms exports), and has the highest gun ownership rate in the world (88.8 guns per one hundred people). The Second Amendment of the American Constitution (1791) secures the right of people to bear arms and this is one of the reasons the United States has the highest per capita rate of firearm-related murders of all developed countries.  

Although the United States has a vast array of federal and state laws governing arms purchase and ownership, as well as elaborate and comprehensive arms export regulations, significant loopholes have allowed foreign NSAs, including terrorist networks, to acquire U.S. weapons with relative ease. They use gun shows, straw purchasing, and ordering gun kits through the mail and employ corrupt gun dealers. More than other weapons markets, immigrants to the United States affiliated with foreign armed NSAs are playing an important role in facilitating arms smuggling. Thus, during the twentieth century the IRA smuggled weapons and explosives they acquired in America’s arms markets across the Atlantic in small successive consignments into Ireland more than other NSAs. They have been using strong local support networks and trading with local gangsters. According to Oppenheimer, by the early twenty-first century the supply of weapons from the United States had become increasingly restricted due to U.S. federal agencies’ policy of stemming the flow of illegal weapons to Ireland in light of 9/11 and British government pressures.

The Colombian FARC regards the U.S. as a major source of weapons. In the last decade, U.S. security agencies intercepted plots in different stages to smuggle weapons for the FARC by American citizens with a Latino background; payment was made in cocaine or

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U.S. currency. In 2004 the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives uncovered in a Miami neighborhood warehouses full of weapons hidden in ceiling, freezers and washing machines. They seized seven hundred thousand rounds of ammunition, gunpowder and two hundred weapons (including machine guns). The supplier was a local gun shop owner, a member of a U.S.-Venezuelan group that shipped containers loaded with arms and ammunition to ports in Venezuela, assisted by corrupt Venezuelan custom officials. The customers were the FARC and their right-wing rival paramilitary groups, the United Self-Defense Forces. The smugglers planned to ship one million rounds of rifle ammunition in two cargo containers. Cragin and Hoffman provide a detailed analysis of smuggling networks trafficking illicit weapons from North America to Colombia via Central America, using variety of land and sea routes which are difficult to monitor. El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua serve as collection points and distribution hubs where the weapons are gathered together in small clusters and delivered into the black market. The FARC stores weapons in Panama before smuggling into Colombia.

The rise of global trade and transportation capabilities stimulated stronger links between U.S. black arms markets and overseas business partners. The U.S. legal system’s indictments and convictions reveal intensive attempts of local and foreign arms dealers, occasionally working together, to smuggle weapons outside the country. Criminal gangs have been predominant customers and they trade directly and indirectly with foreign terrorists and insurgents. American security employees with access to weapons stockpiles (such as soldiers deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan) were involved in arms smuggling. For example, the FBI arrested (2013) three brothers, one of them an veteran NYPD veteran police officer and one a custom border officer, on allegations of smuggling rifles (from 2009) they purchased through dealers in the United States to the Philippines, disassembling the weapons and smuggling them out of the United States in disguised shipments. A third brother residing in the Philippines would deliver the guns to customers whom authorities claim had likely gang.

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even terrorist connections. A similar conspiracy was intercepted in 2003 when U.S. authorities arrested a U.S. citizen of Philippine origin who led an organization trading American guns for drugs from the Philippines with the Abu-Sayyaf Group. In 2009, the FBI disrupted a Hezbollah support cell of ten Lebanese nationals, most of them American citizens from the New York area. Among other things, they planned to smuggle one thousand and five hundred Colt machine guns from Philadelphia to the port of Latakia. Like other U.S. based Hezbollah cells, this one was linked to criminal activity of Hezbollah infrastructure in the Tri Border Area in South America.

Because of geographic location, black arms markets of the United States manifest a global influence. Foreign armed NSAs use diaspora communities, wireless communication, trans-Atlantic trade and U.S. overseas military involvement, facilitating arms smuggling.

**NSAs’ Arms Logistic Mechanisms**

Globalization introduces new opportunities for NSAs’ smuggling activity; the ability to transport large quantities of weapons by sea or air to the most remote locations. NSAs have to demonstrate considerable logistic skills, safely delivering arms shipments into their sanctuaries. NSAs that enjoy state sponsorship, like Hezbollah, can rely on the transportation apparatus of their patrons, thereby reducing security risks. Most NSAs have to find other solutions, which will be discussed here. Self-sufficiency in arms transportation is a great challenge for NSAs for financial and security reasons. Therefore the Tamil Tigers’ Liberation Front (LTTE) arms smuggling campaign stands out. From 1987, the LTTE waged a bloody lengthy war against the government of Sri Lanka, introducing a real security challenge. By

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2009, the Sri Lankan army defeated the LTTE and the Sri Lankan civil war had ended but the LTTE smuggling skills remain a role model.\textsuperscript{752}

The LTTE had a close nexus with the sea and it controlled a major part of the Sri Lankan coast. The organization's naval power was the basis for its sturdy stance against the Sri Lankan army for some thirty years. Sri Lanka is an island nation and the Tamils have a long tradition of fishing, maritime trade and smuggling, thus the LTTE smuggling came by sea. During the 1980s LTTE leader, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, decided that there was a need for an independent arms channel because Indian military assistance was limited and of poor quality and because of his concern that India would cease to support the LTTE. The LTTE quickly adjusted to the need to acquire ammunition after a peace accord was signed between India and Sri Lanka in 1987. He ordered the establishment of a merchant fleet tasked with secretly transporting arms from around the globe to Sri Lanka, which would also carry out civilian trade as a source of income for the organization. The task was assigned to the organization's chief procurer, Selverasa Pathmanathan (KP, arrested in 2009).\textsuperscript{753}

The LTTE's merchant fleet was one of the organization's outstanding strengths enabling the LTTE to independently transfer weapons across the high seas, defending the territory under their control in north and east Sri Lanka and to inflict great damage on the Sri Lankan army. In the early 2000s the organization's use of charter ships grew after their own fleet was exposed. The LTTE operated approximately ten merchant ships, dozens of speedboats and hundreds of fishing boats. The registered owners of the LTTE shipping companies were senior operatives in the organization and the crew sometimes included armed military operatives.\textsuperscript{754}

During the 1990s and until the war's end in 2009, the LTTE transported large amounts of high quality weapons by sea, including: light aircraft, cannons, rockets and mortars, anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles, ammunition, light weaponry, advanced communications systems, night vision equipment and even a torpedo launcher and missiles. The LTTE smuggling system was very centralized and had clear command and control.


\textsuperscript{754} Brade O’Neill., Insurgency and Terrorism. Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare (Washington: Brassy’s, 1990), 148-152.
control patterns. KP, the chief procurer of the organization, closely managed the acquisition efforts. He worked under Prabhakaran, the autocratic leader, but probably enjoyed plenty of leeway in his work because of the many years he spent outside Sri Lanka. KP and his assistants traveled the world, signed procurement deals with arms dealers or corrupt military officials using front companies, mediators, and bank accounts that they managed in various countries. Mao's comparison of guerrilla warfare to a fisherman casting his nets at sea seems very appropriate for KP's way of working: he split the smuggling activity between different areas, managed it in a centralized fashion and moved the center of his activity from one location to another in accordance with the security situation. LTTE's fleet of ships blended well in the massive merchant traffic passing through the Sunda Malacca and Lombok straits, just as the boats carrying the arms to the island's shores blended well with the dozens of small fishing trawlers operating off the shores of east and north Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu. Sri Lankan government success in dismantling the LTTE merchant fleet played an important role in terminating the civil war.

NSAs lacking LTTE's logistic skills might collaborate in purchasing and smuggling weapons, especially when sharing borders and theatres of operation. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) is an old ally of the Afghan Taliban and Al Qaeda, fighting alongside the Taliban against the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the Afghan government. According to unconfirmed reports IMU acts as a go-between in arms supplies to the Taliban. In three separate incidents in late 2012 the ISAF arrested three IMU arms facilitators who smuggled rifles, mortars and explosives into Afghanistan for IMU and Taliban militants. Aside from training and shelter, Indian and Burmese rebel groups joined forces to facilitate arms shipments from China, Thailand and other sources through Bangladesh and Myanmar. Myanmar rebels were more involved in maritime smuggling while northeastern Indian insurgents negotiated arms deals in Thailand and China. Previously, Van de Voorde Cecile. “Sri Lankan Terrorism: Assessing and Responding to the Threat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE),” *Police Practice and Research* 6, no. 2 (2006): 185-196.


Indian (for example the ULFA) and rebel groups from the Philippines allegedly associated with the LTTE, using its powerful fleet to acquire weapons from overseas markets.\textsuperscript{758}

The third and most used smuggling method by contemporary NSAs is through privateers. Armed NSAs associate with smugglers and gunrunners, sharing cross-border smuggling networks. Hamas’ use of traditional networks of African and Arab Bedouin smugglers is discussed in chapter six. The globalization process which created a new type of arms smuggler serving states as well as rebel groups will be reviewed in the following paragraphs. Stohl and Grillot refer to “individuals who negotiate and arrange weapons transfers and purchases or sales in exchange for the transaction or some kind of fee.” They are product of globalization, an integration of modern transportation and privatization of the arms trade. During the Cold War they were well-connected individuals, running arms for either the United States or the Soviet Union. In the post-Cold War time, they maintained their connections, finding that illegal arms dealings were quite lucrative. Large sections of the state-run networks engaged in transport, training, provision of arms and equipment, money laundering and the like were privatized – not only in the hope of a more peaceful globe, but as part of the downsizing of the defense and security sectors that followed the collapse of the Berlin Wall.\textsuperscript{759} Rebellious NSAs benefitted from the rise of globalized association between private arms dealers and brokers and arms-producing states without proper export control, mainly in former Soviet Union countries, where governments looked to modernize and upgrade and quickly get rid of obsolete and surplus stocks. Their great times were during the 1990s. In recent years private arms dealers are under stronger state supervision but still play an important role in arming both states and NSAs.\textsuperscript{760}

International arms dealers have benefited from a lack of government oversight and control, and, in some cases, direct government support. Feinstein explains that they operate from many locations around the world, transferring money, weapons and other goods across multiple jurisdictions through intricate channels, and are seldom physically present when the weapons are delivered. Prosecuting arms dealers is also difficult because of a lack of political will. The dealers employ logistic assets usually owned by states, operating beyond geographic boundaries. They operate in different regions, employing transnational business networks, demonstrating globalization. They mask themselves by conducting legal business

\textsuperscript{758} Prakash, Encyclopedia, 58-59, 93-94, 102-107, 265; Riaz, Islamic, 72.
\textsuperscript{759} Stohl and Grillot, International, 107-108.
\textsuperscript{760} Stohl and Grillot, International, 108.
with governments and international organizations, undermining differences between states and NSAs. Their remarkable logistic capabilities, though very expensive to hire, are a great advantage for insurgents looking for high quality weapons systems. For armed NSAs under international sanctions, located in remote areas, international arms dealers driven only by economic interest are natural partners.761 Most of the weapons supplied in defiance of arms embargoes from the 1990s came from East European states such as Bulgaria, Serbia and Ukraine. The lack of control often begins at the weapon stocks ostensibly controlled by armed forces, extends to production facilities and goes on to border controls. Arms dealers use various methods for skirting the legal system and flouting the law. Loopholes in national laws, weak law enforcement and gaps in border surveillance, have been major problems facing the implementation of arms embargoes.762

Vicktor Bout, a Russian national, was regarded as the largest arms trafficker in the world until he was arrested in Bangkok (2009), after trying to sell weapons to American DEA agents pretending to be Colombian FARC representatives. In 2012, Bout was convicted by a United States court, and sentenced to twenty five years in a U.S. prison. Bout, known as “the merchant of death,” had tremendous success, a combination of the Soviet Union collapse, the end of the Cold War and globalized trade. Using his connections with Russian aviation and airport officials, Bout exploited political and economic chaos to purchase old yet very efficient Antonov and Ilyushin cargo jets in Russia in the early 1990s. Unemployed experienced former Soviet pilots and flight crews were easy to hire. With assembly lines in arms factories across Russia’s interior and in former East Europe states shut-down because of a lack of money for material and salaries, Bout could cheaply buy a variety of weapons, from rifles to helicopters. Older weapons written off as destroyed were shipped to clients (including insurgents) in developing countries as top-grade arms. Russia was a safe haven for Bout, and he allegedly shared profits with Russian government, military and intelligence officials, demonstrating government involvement in black arms trade. 763

763 Farah and Braun, Merchant, 15-17, 36; Bazoska and Lopez, “Putting Teeth,” 247; Feinstein, Shadow, 115.
Farahs and Braun describe Bout as a globalized phenomenon: Bout “built an operation that ranged across continents and hemispheres, carefully scattering planes, handpicked employees, corporate entities, and hidden wealth, creating a formidable empire capable of operating at a moment’s notice in dozens of cities across the world.” Bout’s cargo jets took off from Belgium to East European countries where weapons consignments were loaded. From there, they might fly to Sharjah, were the weapons shipment could be stored for later flights, transported to other planes, or flown on, after refueling toward night landing zones in Afghanistan. The planes could fly directly south into Africa. On the way back, Bout’s planes were loaded with payments for the weapons deliveries, mainly diamonds and gold. For international arms dealers like Bout every combatant was a legitimate customer. Bout’s planes armed warring factions in several different conflicts, arming the UNITA and government troops in Angola and several sides in the prolonged wars that continue to convulse the Congo DR, as well as the Liberian-backed Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) rebel group. Bout transported supplies to American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan while delivering arms to the Taliban. Bout's major advantage was his impressive logistic arm, demonstrating arms smugglers with global transportation skills, facilitating NSAs’ arming efforts. Bout had a private air force which grew to more than sixty Russian cargo planes and a handful of American planes purchased in the late 1990s, making him the top private supplier and transporter of weapons. One of his last operations, in 2007, was to purchase two Boeing aircraft from American companies via front companies in order to smuggle more weapons to war zones.

In his final meeting with DEA agents disguised as FARC representatives in Bangkok (April 2009) Bout offered a $15 million deal including 700-800 surface-to-air missiles, 5,100 AK-47 firearms, millions of rounds of ammunition, C-4 explosives, night-vision equipment, ultra-light air-planes and unmanned aerial vehicles. All these weapons were to be supplied by an arms manufacturer in Bulgaria, and would be air-dropped into Colombia by two hundred parachutes, during a fly-over from Nicaragua to Guyana. Bout was jailed in August 2012, and an NGO called The Conflict Awareness Project published a detailed report claiming that

764 Farah and Braun, Merchant, 15.
766 Feinstein, Shadow, 165.
two of Bout’s former associates sought to re-establish his arms smuggling business by setting up an air cargo company registered in Mauritius. Consequently, the Mauritius government refused to grant the dealers the Air Operation Certificate needed to facilitate their arms smuggling plans.  

Globalized trade and international transportation services create more opportunities for armed NSAs and their business partners. A single arms smuggling operation could be geographically dispersed over many countries, involving a network of companies and practising extensive labour differentiation. Having each company set up to complete a separate part of the transaction in a separate jurisdiction, enables arms brokers to disguise their identity and in many cases escape prosecution. Stohl and Grillot note that brokers particularly like to set up freight-forwarding and transport services that provide the aircraft, boats and other transportation methods to move concealed weapons between sellers and buyers.  

United Nationsexperts investigated a foiled attempt by North Korea to airlift a large arms shipment to Iran, apparently for Hezbollah or Hamas (December 2009). The aircraft was seized by Thai authorities at Bangkok airport where it had stopped to refuel. As many as eight companies were involved at various levels in the brokering of arms from North Korea with connections to at least ten different countries spanning Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. Aside from North Korea and Iran, two Ukrainian citizens planned and coordinated the arms smuggling operation, using a Georgian registered company, operating the IL-76 (previously, the plane was controlled by Viktor Bout). A UAE-based company owned the IL-76 aircraft that took off from Ukraine and an air company from Kazakhstan supplied the crew for the flight. The Ukrainian arms dealers opened a shelf company in New Zealand which chartered the plane from the Georgian company. Well-known Kiwi businessmen established a shelf company, listing a young Chinese immigrant as

768 Danssaert and Finardi, 47-66, 97, 144; Stohl and Grillot, International, 109.  
the sole director of the company. She was director of seventy eight similar companies, all of which were located at the same mailing address in Auckland. The front company in New Zealand contracted with a shelf company in Hong Kong to transport apparently “oil industry spare parts” from Pyongyang to Tehran. A bogus Spanish citizen living in Barcelona was named as the director of the shelf company. This complex network served to conceal and deceive. Those who were involved in the actual transport of the proscribed cargo and who set up the web of front companies knew very little, if anything, about the real cargo. Under existing international law, weapons merchants have few obligations to ensure their arms supplies go to legitimate armies of states. Cargo carriers have little legal obligation to view and confirm what their containers really hold. Registration of planes in a country far from where they are actually based, using only an on-paper company and nominee directors, is only one of many deception tactics using by arms traffickers.770

NSAs Fund their Arms Purchases

The third aspect of contemporary NSA arms trade is their involvement in the illicit trade of goods. NSAs’ finance issues are beyond the scope of the current research which briefly discusses aspects of funding closely linked to NSAs’ arming. Lacking state sponsorship and facing expensive arms markets, contemporary NSAs are encouraged to collect funds. They generate revenue from a wide range of sources, some of which are new and facilitated by globalization. Hazen notes the greater the number of sources of support the NSA can develop, the more options it has for accessing resources it needs, and the more adaptable it can be when the flow of resources from any given actor changes. Globalization and global trade have created new opportunities for NSAs’ fundraising, critical for their arming. They could also ignite internal dynamics and shape the strategies of NSAs. Armed NSAs that control natural resources have their own source of income and are more independent and powerful.771 From late 2013, the ISIS has seized control of the oil and gas fields in the north and east of Syria, exporting the oil through middlemen overseas and allegedly to its major foe, the Assad regime. But, in the most basic form, helpless civilians are the easiest target for armed NSAs’ fundraising. For example, a U.N. report about the Congo DR civil war notes

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771 Hazen, Rebels, 179.
the M23 rebel group of east Congo has been generating income of around $180,000 a month from taxes they exact from the population in the areas where they have been active.\textsuperscript{772}

From the nineteenth century, fundraising among foreign diasporas has been a favorite channel for NSAs to arm themselves. For example, since the outbreak of open war between Tamil militant groups and the Sri Lankan state in 1983, the Tamil diaspora, estimated at around one million people, has provided money for weapons. At the height of the conflict the diaspora contributed an estimated $200 million a year to the Tigers. Money raised in North America and Europe was often sent to operatives in Asia to procure weapons and other war-related items. Fundraising was essential for the LTTE to sustain of a long civil war. Following the 9/11 attacks the LTTE’s international status deteriorated, since it was declared a terrorist organization by many western countries, weakening the Tigers’ ability to raise funds. This has proved crucial in their demise. Many Tamils became reluctant to give to the LTTE or its front groups for fear of being arrested on terrorism-related charges. Therefore, the LTTE leadership faced growing difficulties to finance its activities including the purchase of arms.\textsuperscript{773} The 2009 arrest of Selverasa Pathmanathan (KP) who ran the LTTE weapons procurement and financial networks, had disastrous outcomes for the movement’s financial system because KP revealed the whereabouts of hundreds of LTTE overseas bank accounts.\textsuperscript{774}

Radical Islamic groups (such as Hamas, Al Qaeda and the Taliban) receive donations from wealthy people in the Gulf region and Islamic charities working globally. These financial NSAs have masked funding of terrorist activity as humanitarian relief (Dawa). Some funds collected for charitable causes have eventually found their way into terrorist hands; frequently the donors are unaware of the true nature of the recipients, though Zarate notesthat the donors of al Qaeda demanded that their funds be leveraged specifically to launch


significant attacks. Radical Muslim clerics authorized terrorist funding, calling it a holy war by financial means (Al-Jihad bil-Mal). Exploiting lack of effective monitoring of funds and foundations, extreme Islamic groups have used modern banking and wireless communication as well as informal value transfer systems (the Hawala, money transfer without money movement), discreetly channeling money for operations. For example, in early 2013 Saudi Arabian authorities arrested the head of Al Haramain Islamic Foundation and other members. They were accused of using charity funds to finance Al Qaeda terrorist activity including the building of an SA-7 factory in Saudi Arabia for Al Qaeda in Iraq (in 2004 Al Haramain, the largest Saudi Islamic charity, was outlawed by the Security Council due to its support of Al Qaeda). Ongoing war with devastating humanitarian outcomes facilitates fund raising. Jabhat al Nusra and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant that wage war against the Assad regime, raise funds through the social media, especially from wealthy people in Qatar and Kuwait. They have smuggled money in cash across the Turkish-Syrian border in suitcases, using it to purchase weapons.

NSAs mobilize financial resources through criminal activities; some they execute mainly by themselves while criminal elements associate with them in executing more complicated activities. Bank robbery continues to be popular among rebel groups. The National Popular Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Philippines Communist Party (CPP), extorts politicians and business firms. Philippines authorities claimed in 2012 that the NPA extorted more than $500,000 dollars, and from early 2013 they have collected around $600,000 from local politicians during midterm elections, for “permit-to-campaign” in areas under their control. Globalization makes foreign citizens more vulnerable targets for kidnapping for ransom along with locals. In 2012, the Under Secretary at the U.S. Department of Treasury noted AQIM was likely profiting most from kidnapping for ransom, collecting tens of millions of dollars through kidnapping for ransom operations since 2008. The AQAP too has collected millions of dollars through such operations since 2009, and the

Abu Sayyaf Group has raised kidnapping for ransom to a fine art, obtaining more than $2 million dollars in ransom payments since 2008.\(^778\) The Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant is well funded but exploits the presence of Western journalists, aid workers and doctors in Syria for kidnappings for ransom.\(^779\) In 2012, a Philippine research center claimed ninety percent of ASG funding was sourced from kidnapping and extortion activities. Forging documents and money and human trafficking are additional criminal activities popular among contemporary NSAs.\(^780\)

Links between criminality and arms smuggling are as old as the history of rebellion. Rebels, terrorists and criminals have been fellow travelers in the underground, locked in what Peters calls “an increasingly symbiotic relationship.”\(^781\) Still, classic drug smugglers are driven by greed whereas militants’ criminal activity is a means to an end. From the late twentieth century, armed NSAs’ deeper involvement in the narcotics trade has become a significant development, making some of them very rich.\(^782\) According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Afghan Taliban leadership is earning upwards of $200 million annually from the drug trade. Hoffman calls it a “strategic alliance” between criminal organizations and terrorist and guerrilla organizations.\(^783\) Afghanistan is the world’s largest producer of opium; Colombia is the world’s largest producer of coca derivatives (cocaine), followed by Peru, and Myanmar is the world’s third largest producer of illicit opium. All feature powerful armed NSAs, benefitting from the drugs trade, sustaining long protracted wars. Previously, armed NSAs’ involvement in the drug trade was relatively limited; they imposed taxes and protection payments on drug field peasants and drug traffickers, operating in or through their territory. To increase their profits they have come to play a much more

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pivotal role in the narcotics industry. Nowadays, they purchase weapons to protect their economic assets and to fight government poppy-eradication teams. From the 1990s, the Colombian FARC began to deal directly with marijuana and coca farmers, trafficking their products to the Colombian drug cartels. They also protected the trade in their “liberated zones” promising to liberate and protect peasants from exploitation by the drug lords. FARC’s estimated revenues from the cocaine trade were in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Resources obtained through cocaine trafficking allowed FARC to acquire plenty of weapons, escalating their level of operations. They possessed influence over the Colombian government, obtaining, in 1999, a large territory, a “demilitarized zone,” covering forty percent of Colombia's territory. In the last decade, with strong American support, the Colombian army inflicted serious setbacks on the FARC, but they are still a live threat.

A number of scholars argue the FARC drug business has been exaggerated by the Colombian government and the United States. Yet it is virtually impossible to separate the drug trafficking from the activities of the insurgents and they acquire weapons to protect their illegal economic assets. To illustrate, the FARC have permanent camps in northern Brazil from where they traffic weapons into Colombia and cocaine into Brazil. Cragin and Hoffman note that small single-engine charter planes transport weapons from Brazil, Paraguay and Suriname into small airfields in FARC’s demilitarized zone in Colombia. Drug traffickers use these planes to smuggle drugs to North America. Furthermore, cargo planes carrying drugs from South America have been intercepted in Mali and Guinea Bissau in recent years. Traffickers transfer large parts of the drug shipments further to consumers in Europe, paying

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tax for moving via AQIM territories (AQIM uses these revenues to buy Libyan weapons). Unconfirmed reports claim the FARC is involved in this clandestine air-traffic to one of the world’s poorest and most lawless regions, trading cocaine and other drugs for weapons with West African criminal networks and AQIM. In late 2010 the executive director of the UNODC told a special session of the UN Security Council that drugs were being traded by "terrorists and anti-government forces" to fund their operations from the Andes, to Asia and the African Sahel. This phenomenon demonstrates how globalization creates new opportunities for NSAs’ arming.  

NSAs’ intensive involvement in criminal activities could strongly affect their structure and operational activity. When the Taliban ruled Afghanistan (1996-2001) they relied heavily on opium for funding. After the Taliban’s defeat in late 2001, opium played a crucial role in the movement’s resurgence in the 2000s, helping to rearm the “new Taliban.” The Afghan Taliban’s growing involvement in the drug business has taken many forms in all aspects of the process: cultivation, refinement, and transportation, though the Taliban do not control the Afghan drugs trade. The Taliban are part of multinational corporations drawing together many diverse actors with divergent long-term objectives for a common purpose: the generating of profit and the expansion of corporate power. Shaty calls them the “network of networks,” comprising local commanders, corrupt political officials and police (also in Pakistan and Iran), farmers, local and international criminal groups, terrorists and insurgents. They may have diverse motivations but they join an alliance which seeks to destabilize Afghanistan, thwarting the government’s efforts at reconstruction. The drug alliance serves the Taliban’s arming efforts, enabling them to fuel and intensify insurgency and terror in Afghanistan. Drug smuggling corridors have been used by Al Qaeda and the Taliban to transport militants and weapons to Afghan and Pakistan-based Islamist groups.

Furthermore, in 2008, the United States arrested and indicted Haji Juma Khan, leader of an international opium, morphine and heroin trafficking organization, based principally in

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the Helmand and Kandahar provinces of Afghanistan. He was financing the Taliban war against the United States and its allies in Afghanistan, in return for protection for the organization’s drug trafficking operations. Demonstrating the drugs traffickers’ contribution to the arming of NSAs, Time Magazine reported that Khan employed a fleet of cargo ships to move Afghan heroin out of the Pakistan port of Karachi. At least three of these ships returned from the UAE with plastic explosives and anti-tank mines which were secretly unloaded in Karachi and sent overland to Al Qaeda and Taliban militants. Other reports claimed Khan smuggled Iranian weapons including powerful explosives devices for the Afghan Taliban.\footnote{United States Attorney. Southern District of New York. “United States of America V. Haji Juma Khan,” 21 April 2009,\url{http://www.justice.gov/usao/nys/pressreleases/April09/khanhajijumas2indictmentpr.pdf} (accessed 4 November 2013).}

Taliban’s growing involvement in the drugs trade has organizational side effects, such as reports about mistrust and internal competition over drugs spoils among high-level Taliban officials and disputes between Taliban’s leadership in Pakistan (the Quetta Shura), controlling the drug money, and regional commanders in Afghanistan who were demanding larger revenues. The drug businesses have intensified the Taliban’s fragmentation; regional commanders allegedly behave more like members of a criminal syndicate than a political force. They run their own mobile labs and possess drugs stockpiles. Commentators argue that they are committed mostly to fighting the government eradication teams.\footnote{Capie, \textit{Small Arms}, 64; Tom Moreau. “The Taliban’s Life of Luxury,” \textit{Newsweek}, 12 June 2013,\url{http://www.newsweek.com/2013/06/12/the-taliban-s-new-role-as-afghanistans-drug-mafia.html} (accessed 28 October 2013); Tom Coghlan. “The Taliban in Helmand,” in \textit{Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field}, ed. Antonio Giustozzi (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 119-154; Shanty, \textit{Nexus}, 146-151, 157-158, 162-163; Peters, 3-4, 104-127, 159-160.}

Simpler modes of illicit trade are still popular among NSAs. From antiquity NSAs have traded the goods they harvested, hunted, produced or stole, for weapons. In recent years, rebels in East and Central Africa (LRA of Uganda, Somalian Al-Shabaab, and Janjaweed of Darfur) have raided wild nature reserves, willing to travel hundreds of miles from their sanctuaries. Better armed than regular poachers, they are hunting down hundreds of elephants and rhinos every year, trading their tusks for weapons with Arab and Asian traders. Their ancestors acted similarly on a limited scale compared to the ongoing slaughter of these animals even though the ivory trade is banned today. While in the nineteenth century ivory was exported mainly to European markets now it is popular in China, Thailand and the Gulf States following their economic growth.\footnote{Horand Knaup and Jan Pual. “Blood Ivory: Brutal Elephant Slaughter Funds African Conflicts,” \textit{Spiegel Online}, 13 September 2013, \url{http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/blood-ivory-brutal-elephant-slaughter-}}
The relationships between militants and criminals can evolve in various ways, which could impact upon the ability of militant groups to gather arms. Armed NSAs could facilitate drug traffickers’ activities within their area of influence in return for serving operational tasks. For example, for years Hezbollah has controlled drug cultivation and production sites in the Beqaa Valley and south Lebanon, from where the drugs are shipped to Israel. Hezbollah cooperates with Lebanese-Israeli drug networks, using them for operational activity. In July 2012 a network of Israeli drug smugglers was exposed. As part of its criminal activities, the network helped deliver twenty-five powerful C-4 explosive devices from Lebanon to Israel apparently for Palestinian terror cells. The explosives were hidden in the backyard of a drug dealer from Nazareth. Israeli security sources assume Hezbollah was planning to use the explosives to launch a wave of terrorist attacks in Israeli territory.

Weapons can be exchanged between armed NSAs and criminal networks. In 2012, a Lebanese national was sentenced to twelve years in prison in the United States for conspiring to supply stolen American weapons from Iraq to the FARC in return for more than one ton of cocaine. His cousin, allegedly a member of Lebanese Hezbollah, shipped the arms (rifles, machine guns, rocket propelled grenades and C-4 explosives) from Iraq, storing them in Mexico.

**NSAs Manufacture Weapons Use Explosives, IEDs and Suicide Bombing**

**Contemporary NSAs manufacture weapons**

Unlike ancient and medieval NSAs, most contemporary armed NSAs are fighting largely with weapons they have not manufactured but have acquired through outside aid and black markets. They cannot produce modern weapon systems (such as artillery, tanks and ships) due to limited technological knowledge, shortage of resources and infrastructures and security considerations (they have to be mobile and the state could target their production assets). Self-production of weapons became economically unprofitable as NSAs could easily
procure most of their armaments elsewhere, however many NSAs manufacture small arms and ammunition and explosive devices, especially when waging a longstanding war. Only a few NSAs are involved in manufacturing larger weapon systems, which involves much greater research and challenges related to production as well as security. They enjoy sanctuary or control over territory where they can safely run production facilities. These organizations feature stronger military profiles, centralized command, research and production apparatus, skillful engineers, and logistic capabilities. They employ smuggling and tactics of deceit to purchase and transport raw materials. One example is the Palestinian militant groups in the Gaza Strip, discussed in the previous chapter, which established a rocket production industry with Iranian support. The dense habitation in areas of the Gaza Strip, especially in the refugee camps, provides a sanctuary for this military industry. Hamas has used laboratories, students and staff members of the Faculty of Sciences at the Gaza Islamic University for rocket production, smuggling raw materials for rocket production from Egypt into Gaza through underground tunnels.

India’s huge territory and population serve as a cover for military infrastructures of indigenous insurgency. In September 2006 the Andhra Pradesh police seized nearly 900 empty rocket-propelled grenades in two locations along with 27 launchers in gunny-bags. These were produced by the Indian Maoist guerrillas (Naxal) in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu and were smuggled by a private transport company into Naxal hideouts in the Nallamalla forests of East India. A few months later in the same region, Indian police found a dump with 270 rockets and launchers, with equipment to assemble another one hundred rockets. Authorities claimed these weapons were produced at the same Naxal factories. In 2012, Indian authorities in Kolkata arrested the head of the Naxal technical committee who allegedly revealed in his interrogation a large scale Maoist project to produce rockets in different infrastructures across India. The Indian government argues that the Naxal are

committed to becoming self-sufficient in regards to weaponry.799 In 2005, the Maoist leadership established the Technical Research Arms Manufacturing Unit (TRAM), mandated to manufacture and supply weaponry and to acquire and skills and technology. The Maoists produce small arms, explosives, IEDs, and rockets.800

Lacking outside support, NSAs involved in more intensive warfare are facing greater challenges to maintain their force. The main and most useful weapons of the Syrian rebels are those stolen from Syrian army arsenals or units and those smuggled from Libya. Still, they manufacture improvised weapons to fill major gaps in their armories. More than any other current NSAs, the Free Syrian Army fighting the Assad regime from 2011 follows longstanding patterns of arming by rebel groups. Not only have they practised the persistent principle of field modification of arms, they also use ancient weapon systems. Syrian rebels transform former civilian factories, sheds, warehouses, and even caves into makeshift laboratories to manufacture a variety of improvised weapons from small arms, IEDs mortar shells and RPGs to short range multiple rockets launchers, cannons and armored vehicles.801 Mainly in Syria’s north, rural communities serve as prime sites for the production of weapons because of the ready availability of agricultural tools, equipment, and chemicals. Former mechanics, government engineers, carpenters and plumbers are among the workers, while boys are helping their fathers to mix explosive powder and to melt iron.802 Improvisation is a key point: they collect unexploded Syrian government bombs for ammunition production, such as in a former steel and iron factory in Aleppo which is now being used to produce mortar shells. They make rockets out of pieces of wood and lead, build armored cars using corrugated iron, and make trebuchets from planks of wood and catapults which are used to hurl fire bombs and missiles into enemy territory. Building weapons with cheap materials implies giving fighters with limited means or limited access to traditional

infantry arms, an inexpensive way to fight. Yet, a united well-armed Syrian rebel army would have more chance to overthrow the Assad regime.  

**NSAs’ use of explosives, IEDs and suicide bombing**

Homemade explosives are made in ad hoc laboratories without the required prerequisites to make explosives to the high standards and levels of stability as those manufactured in an official laboratory. Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are explosives charges that are not made in an official factory, implying for instance lower safe standards and usually less explosive energy per weight of bomb. The weapons most commonly employed by NSAs around the globe continue to be small arms and light weapons, but NSAs’ use of remote-controlled, booby-trap and suicide-activated explosive charges is perhaps the most important development in NSAs’ armament in modernity.\(^\text{804}\) As discussed in previous paragraphs, no longer could NSAs imitate a state’s weapons arsenal by themselves. IEDs enable them to reduce their military inferiority against national armies. Rebellious NSAs cannot capture territory or seize governments with explosives and bombs alone; they still need arms, yet, by using explosives in terrorist and guerrilla attacks, they can irritate regular armies and instill fear in the civilian population. Post-War World Two liberation movements used bombs too. The strategy of current NSAs is heavily dependent on IEDs, which have become more sophisticated and are now used efficiently against civilians and soldiers. Iraq is devastated by the severity of constant suicide bombings against rival ethnic groups; the Pakistani government can hardly contain the radical Islamic campaign of terror against the local population; Al Qaeda Central and its branches threaten international transportation; Hezbollah has demonstrated its capability to target Israeli interests overseas. These are but a few examples of contemporary political and security issues fuelled by armed NSAs and their use of explosives and bombs.\(^\text{805}\) Wilkinson explains that the more economically developed and

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804 Capie, Small Arms, 188.

805 Paul Wilkinson, ed. Technology and Terrorism (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 2; Capie, Small Arms, 188.
technologically sophisticated societies become, the more they inevitably present an abundance of vulnerable terrorist targets within their infrastructure, central and local government, and the industrial and business sectors. Modern technologies have created new vulnerable “key points” in all industrialized societies, including airports, airlines, railways, government offices, and embassies. They are soft targets for NSAs using IEDs and suicide bombing. \(^{806}\)

Chapter three discusses initial use of high explosives in the second half of the nineteenth century. Since the second half of the twentieth century armed NSAs have intensively used IEDs to attack military and civilian targets. The IRA has been a pioneer in the acquisition of military grade explosives (in the 1980s, Libya supplied them with the powerful semtex), and smuggling of bomb components from the United States. This greatly enhanced the IRAs’ ability to construct undetectable and highly powerful IEDs. They adapted the use of homemade weaponry and indigenous technologies, many of which became more sophisticated and powerful from the late 1970s on, such as road mines targeting passing British patrols; homemade mortar bombs and firing systems (for example the spectacular 1991 mortar attack at Downing Street, while a Cabinet meeting was in process) and numerous bombs that contained hundreds of kilograms of homemade explosives, using remote control and timing devices. The creation of these required considerable expertise. \(^{807}\)

Explosives and bombs suit NSAs’ strategy because they can be manufactured almost anywhere and come in many forms, ranging from a small pipe bomb to a sophisticated device capable of causing massive damage and loss of life. The only certain limits that can be placed on the ability to construct and deploy IEDs, apart from the laws of physics and access to a minimal amount of resources, are those of the human imagination itself. An Al Qaeda manual from the 1990s explains: “explosives are believed to be the safest weapon for the Mujahideen. [Using explosives] allows them to get away from enemy personnel and to avoid being arrested.” \(^{808}\) According to Oxley, a “bomb” is no longer a recognizable sphere or pipe, nor does it necessarily need a blasting cap or squib. Every bottle or can of hair spray or shaving cream, or even a vacuum bottle of coffee is a possible device. \(^{809}\) Explosive production is relatively simple and does not require lengthy instruction. IEDs are easy to

\(^{806}\) Wilkinson, Technology and Terroris, 188.
\(^{807}\) Oppenheimer, IRA, 141, 162-171.
deploy, relatively cheap and have repeatedly proven to be highly effective. They enable
armed NSAs with minimal technological skills to successfully attack and harm their targets
or in the case of terrorism proper, to affect the psychological state, perceptions, and behavior
of the target audiences they are trying to influence. They might use a near simultaneous series
of bombings, involving secondary and tertiary explosions that are designed to kill bystanders
and emergency personnel. 810

Compared to standard weapon systems, NSAs can easily and legally purchase raw
material for explosives. They acquire agricultural fertilizers (ammonium nitrate and urea),
acids (sulfuric acid and nitric acid), and combustible chemicals (hydrogen peroxide, gasoline,
acetone and potassium chloride) on the open market from local traders, some of whom are
members or supporters. All materials are frequently used in industry, agriculture, cosmetics
and medicine. Terrorists do not have a problem purchasing detonators, ignition equipment or
timing devices. Occasionally, they steal factory-made explosives and use mortar shells, RPG
rockets and grenades to make IEDs. Operationally, bombs enable terrorists and insurgents to
access valuable targets, without exposing their intentions or having to stay at the site of the
explosion. Explosive charges integrate within NSAs’ doctrine of being mobile, flexible,
initiative and surprising. IEDs are difficult to identify, disarm or defuse. More than other
weapon systems, NSAs’ use of explosives and IEDs is part of a cat and mouse game, move and
countermove; a process of mutual learning and adaptation. Every time security is
changed to adapt to a particular threat, the terrorist planner must come up with a new attack
plan (often involving a new type of improvised explosive device) to defeat the enhanced
security measures. 811 For example, terrorist planners such as Imad Mughniyeh’s team in
Lebanon adjusted to increased perimeter security at embassies and government buildings by
developing and deploying very large vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices. Jihadist

810 Jeffrey M. Bale. “Jihadist Cells and IED Capabilities Europe: Assessing the Present and Future Threat to the
West,” Strategic Studies Center (November 2012), http://www.google.co.nz/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&frm=
ubs%2Fdownload.cfm%3Fq%3D1134&ei=1IUsimF4yNkwW x4GgCA&usg=AFQjCNGoCQ3fUeJtyKTK1cy
y7YbFqDHDxHg(accessed 22 October 2013), 5-6, 10, 15; Bruce Hoffman. “Low-intensity Conflict: Terrorism
and Guerrilla Warfare in the Coming Decades,” in Terrorism: Roots, Impact, Responses, ed. Howard Lawrence

109hrleg35932.html(accessed 24 October 2013); Scott Stewart. “Intelligence Briefing: The Role of IEDs in
site/id?satype=13&said=12&url=%2Fb%2FIntelligence-Briefing%3A-The-Role-of-IEDs-in-
planners have responded to changes in airline security measures by adopting baby doll bombs, shoe bombs, liquid bombs and underwear bombs.\textsuperscript{812} 

The effectiveness of explosives has improved dramatically from the early 1980s when the Hezbollah launched its first suicide attacks against Israeli and western targets in Lebanon. Suicide activity is defined as an attack during which the terrorist reaches his/her objective or its vicinity carrying or wearing an explosive device which he/she is supposed to detonate to blow him/her up.\textsuperscript{813} Mainly from the early 1990s, Hezbollah was a role model for other NSAs– the Palestinian terror groups (Islamic and national), radical Islamic groups (Algerian, Egyptian and Chechen) and sectarian NSAs such as the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, and the PKK in Turkey. They all adopted the suicide weapon, executing suicide attacks to cause greater harm in comparison to other types of terrorism, to gain a psychological advantage or as a result of contest between fellow organizations. Being an extreme tactic, suicide attacks enable NSA access to highly secure targets inflicting massive damage, something they could never achieve by conventional means.\textsuperscript{814} Referring to the London bombing, Ayman Al Zawahiri, the current leader of Al Qaeda, noted one of the major strengths of suicide bombing tactics: “like its glorious predecessors in New York, Washington, and Madrid, this blessed battle has transferred the battle to the enemies' land.” Globalization facilitates terrorists’ accessibility to the heartland of their enemies. Suicide bombing terrorism has become a “strategic weapon,” due to its lethal ability to cause terrible destruction, its great public and media impact, its ability to disrupt daily life and the relative ease with which it can be funded and carried out. One of the advantages of suicide bombing is that it is difficult to deter a person who has decided to die anyway – so guarding against them is very difficult, the guard himself will certainly die if he intercepts the bomber. Armed NSAs, considering themselves the weaker side of the confrontation, represent the use of suicide bombing terrorism as the best response to governments’ military superiority. In fact, NSAs are physically militarily weaker than states but analysis of relative military strength in any conflict should take into consideration many non-physical factors as well, such as national


solidarity, culture, sustainability (including sensitivity to war casualties), morale of the fighters and the civilians, geography and intelligence capabilities, which can balance inferiority in weaponry or numbers.  

Suicide terror and guerrilla attacks are a long-established phenomenon with roots back in antiquity, the most famous users being the medieval Nizari Ismaili sect (popularly known as 'Hashshashin’) as it struggled to survive against the Sunni majority, and Al-Qaeda is not the only NSA that has been using suicide bombers. Influenced by Abdullah Azzam, the theoretician of global Jihad, radical Islamists regard suicide bombing as martyrdom (Istishhad), the ultimate form of devotion to God, and the peak of Jihad. From the late 1990s, the intensive use of suicide bombers, the large scale of devastating terror attacks using complex devices and mainly the transnational profile of Al Qaeda have made terrorism more lethal. In 2013, Al Qaeda central and global jihad organizations were responsible for the majority of 291 suicide bombings around the world (a 25 percent increase in the number of attacks compared to 230 in 2012). In his book, “Knights under the Prophet’s Banner,” Ayman Al Zawahiri explains the background and strength of the suicide bombing weapon:

The Mujahid Islamic movement must escalate its methods of strikes and tools of resisting the enemies to keep up with the tremendous increase in the number of its enemies, the quality of their weapons, their destructive powers… the need to inflict the maximum casualties against the opponent… the need to concentrate on the method of martyrdom operations as the most successful way of inflicting damage against the opponent and the least costly to the mujahideen in terms of casualties.

Al Qaeda’s suicide terror and guerrilla attacks best demonstrate NSAs’ attempts to reduce the level of military inferiority by using a weapon which is very hard to dismantle rather than acquiring standard weapons or neutralizing systems (such as anti-tank missiles). Unlike classic guerrilla doctrine, suicide terror and guerrilla attacks are not committed to preserve insurgents’ life; on the contrary – what is important is the relative payoff: how much damage has been caused in return for the martyr’s life.

Globalization has facilitated the proliferation of bombs making skills. From 1996, more than 20,000 Islamic militants from across the world have participated in military

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816 “Suicide Bombing Terrorism during the current Israeli-Palestinian Confrontation,” 30.
training, including bomb making, in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the Federally Administrative Tribal Area (FATA), as part of Osama bin Laden’s vision to create an international Jihad corps. Many have a cosmopolitan background as they have been living in a country other than the one in which they were raised. Al Qaeda has used the more trusted, skillful and western passport holders to execute spectacular suicide attacks.819

Multinational Islamic militants’ networks are spreading explosive skills across the world, facilitating collaboration in terror plots, introducing Pakistan as an important hub. Composed of skilled and motivated ideologues willing to die, these transnational Islamist networks have empowered explosives threats. More than other weapon systems, explosives skills are diffusional, as textbooks, manuals and videos are available through the internet, and more than other organizations Al Qaeda is using these special features of explosives. It is now possible for individuals all over the world to access the Internet and find information about how to obtain chemicals and other materials needed for making IEDs.820 In early 2013, Al Qaeda Central in Pakistan first published detailed online terrorist guidance in English (“the explosive course”). Allegedly written by senior explosive experts (some of whom have since been killed), using tables and diagrams, the book explains how to acquire and manufacture explosives and how to prepare a variety of IEDs (the editor notes that more books on the subject will be published).821 The AQAP also publishes an online English magazine, “Inspire” which teaches bomb manufacturing. Revolutionary guerrilla commanders of the twentieth century have written manuals, read by guerrillas across the world, but globalization greatly facilitates proliferation of homemade explosives knowledge, though as Pale explains, information about building explosive devices found on the Internet cannot normally be a substitute for obtaining hands-on bomb making training from experts, followed by frequent practice of the lessons learned. In a few cases, Pakistani-based Al


Qaeda bombs experts communicated with terrorists located at target states, guiding them in solving technical problems. The combination of deadly explosives, suicide bombers and transnational networks has enabled Islamic armed NSAs to launch spectacular terror attacks, some of which have had strategic implications.  

Analysis of spectacular terror attacks and foiled terror plans reveals how easy it is for NSAs to acquire and smuggle explosives and devices. To illustrate, on 7 July 2005 four British citizens of Pakistani and Jamaican descent launched suicide attacks on a London Underground train and a double-decker bus, killing 52 people and injuring more than 700. The 7/7 duo were recruited, trained and directed by an Al Qaeda senior operational activist, Rashid Rauf, a British citizen of Kashmiri descent living in Pakistan since 2002, involved in many terror plots, and killed in November 2008 by the Americans in Waziristan. They used a two-bedroom flat in Leeds as a bomb factory. As instructed from Pakistan, they made bombs from a unique mixture of hydrogen peroxide distilled by boiling down hair products, and an organic material – black paper. Using codes, Rauf helped them to work through the technical difficulties with the hydrogen peroxide. The detonators were made from hexamine tablets from camping stoves and a light bulb. The terrorists purchased large amounts of the chemicals in the months before the attack in a beauty supply shop and a gardening store. They spent just five hundred pounds on hydrogen peroxide. None of the vendors raised concerns about why the men wanted so much.  

Lady Justice Hallet, the coroner at the inquests, noted: “you get cross-examined by the chemist if you want to buy too many aspirin, but you can buy as much hydrogen peroxide on the market.” On the morning of the attack, the terrorists traveled to London by train, carrying the explosive charges in breathable Goretex bags for security.

NSAs acquire explosives and other ingredients for bombs using similar tactics of arms acquisition. Being inexpensive, easy to make and devilishly hard to detect, the fertilizer

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ammonium nitrate is perhaps the most favored explosive among NSAs. They acquire this and other fertilizers (UREA), exploiting the intensive agriculture use of fertilizers. NSAs like the Hezbollah enjoy state sponsorship and possess military grade explosives such as TNT and C-4. Other NSAs, such as the Maoist guerrillas of India (Naxals) and the Colombian FARC, are stealing from mining companies, hijacking trucks carrying ammonium nitrate, raiding mining facilities to plunder explosives and detonators, and exploiting illegal mining to get explosives. Thus, mines are a favorite place to steal or purchase standard explosives for terrorism. The perpetrators of the Madrid bombings (March 11, 2004) associated with native Spanish criminals, traded drugs for dynamite stolen from a mine in northern Spain (200 kg of dynamite was exchanged for 35 kg of hashish). The terrorists, mostly Moroccans living in Spain and linked to Al Qaeda, detonated ten bombs hidden in sports bags on four commuter trains at the height of the morning rush hour in Madrid, killing 191 people and wounding 1,700.

Armed NSAs’ use of specific explosives is linked to their mode of arming. On October 12, 2002 two suicide bombers of the Indonesian Jemaah Islamiya (one of them driving a car bomb) attacked nightclubs in the touristic district of Kuta on the Indonesian island of Bali, killing 202 people, mostly tourists, including 88 Australians. It was the deadliest act of terrorism in the history of Indonesia. The bombs were made of TNT, operating as a booster for the homemade explosive mixture of potassium chloride, aluminum powder and sulfur. TNT, a military-grade explosive, is harder to acquire, while the other chemicals are common in industry. Therefore, the Jemaah Islamiyah used their ties to the southern Philippines, to purchase TNT from a local mine, smuggling it into Indonesia. Hastings explains that archipelagos are laced with tiny islands ideal for hiding boats and illicit goods, and the terrorists enjoyed relative freedom of movement in Java and Bali. The terror infrastructure easily purchased (September 2002) the other ingredients for the bombs at a chemical store in East Java. Feeling secure, they sent the chemicals in unaccompanied

828 Hastings, No Man, 96-103.
baggage by regular courier service from East Java to Bali where they made the bomb and prepared the car bomb. Originally, the Jemaah Islamiyah planned to purchase five to seven tons of TNT in the Philippines for spectacular terror attacks in Singapore but were intercepted. For their next terror attacks in Indonesia (such as the suicide attacks against western hotels in Jakarta in 2003 and 2009) they used improvised explosives.\textsuperscript{829}

As with arms production, NSAs which possess a base area could operate more established explosives laboratories and IED factories in residential areas (farms, flats and mosques), and industrial areas as well as remote camps in forests and mountains. Jihadi groups such as the Abu Sayyaf Group in the Philippines, Al Shabaab in Somalia, AQIM in Algeria, and Boko Haram in Nigeria, operate such infrastructures. They use unexploded ordnance (artillery shells) and ammonium nitrate to produce mines, hand grenades, explosive belts, vests, bags, road side bombs, pipe bombs, and booby-traps. In one of these factories in Yemen, Ibrahim al Asiri, AQAP explosive mastermind, has in recent years built sophisticated bombs to attack American targets. Asiri, a Saudi national and a former chemistry student, used PETN, a plastic explosive hard to detect by security.\textsuperscript{830} On December 25, 2009 (Christmas Day) Umar Farouq Abdulmutallan, a Nigerian citizen, attempted to detonate a device hidden in his underwear on a flight from Amsterdam to Detroit but it failed to detonate properly and he was arrested.\textsuperscript{831} In 2010, AQAP smuggled two devices hidden in ink toner cartridges on planes bound from Yemen to the United States, which were intended to detonate in mid-air. PETN explosives were inserted in place of the organic material inside the toner cartridges, which explains why the X-ray equipment did not detect anything unusual. One device got as far as the UK, East Midlands airport; another reached Dubai airport. The plot was thwarted at the last minute by a tip-off from a Saudi informer inside AQAP, but the group has promised to keep trying.\textsuperscript{832} Bomb makers of Al Qaeda invest a great deal of thought and effort into designing and camouflaging of the IEDs; for example by the use of an illuminated picture frame for the IED casing or booby-trapped video tape. Owing to these efforts, terrorists have been able to penetrate security perimeters and pass undetected through rigorous security checks. Moreover, the AQAP is allegedly testing the use of a suicide

\textsuperscript{829}N. C. Asthana and Anjali Nirmal, \textit{Urban Terrorism: Myths and Realities} (Chaura Rasta: Pointer Publishers, 2009), 263.


\textsuperscript{832} “Why al-Qaeda in Yemen scares the West,” \textit{BBC}.
bomber, carrying a bomb inside his body, in what might be a new phase in NSAs’ armament.

In 2009, AQAP’s Al-Ashiri developed an IED that was inserted into the anal crevice of his brother Abdullah in an attempt to kill Saudi Arabian Deputy Interior Minister, Prince Mohammed Bin Nayef, the leader of the Saudi effort to break al Qaeda’s base in the kingdom. The bomb detonated, killing Abdullah, but not Prince Mohammed. Militants carrying weapons are one fighting system composed of separate components, while terrorists carrying bombs inside their bodies might demonstrate something new; a complete integration between man and a weapon.

NSAs could use suicide bombing tactics without explosives. The Al Qaeda attack on the United States (9/11, almost 3,000 people killed), the largest terror attack in modern times, was executed without conventional weapons or explosives, therefore having significant implications on the theory of NSAs arming. In light of NSAs’ difficulties launching a direct attack using conventional weapons on enemy soil, the 9/11 event demonstrates NSA seizing an enemy asset and turning it into a deadly weapon. It is similar, but more sophisticated and lethal, than hijacking or blowing up a plane in flight or using a vehicle to drive over pedestrians. Causing death on a grand scale was a goal in itself. Al Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon have redefined what is a weapon system. Al Qaeda spent roughly half a million dollars to destroy the World Trade Center and cripple the Pentagon, causing damage worth several trillion dollars, illustrating a major advantage of the suicide terrorists’ weaponry – it is both cheap and lethal.

The intensive use of IEDs and suicide terrorism in recent decades by many NSAs has introduced new security challenge for states and governments. Reviewing states-NSAs wars (for example, in Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, Chechnya, Sri Lanka and the war against transnational terrorism), reveals states are using a wide range of countermeasures, defensive and offensive, to prevent and foil which differs in extent, effectiveness and success. Countries have tightened security measures in airports, flights, ports, embassies and other government

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833 “Why al-Qaeda in Yemen scares the West,” BBC.
and public buildings. They have attempted to better monitor movement of people and commodities across their borders. To better combat domestic terror, some states changed their laws, granting law enforcement agencies more leverage for intelligence gathering and investigating. In some states, trade of weapons, chemicals and fertilizers is under strict regulation. To reduce and block terrorists’ and insurgents’ mobility, security forces are intensively patrolling and barricading and new outposts and roads have been constructed; a number of states even built fences. Countries strengthened and re-organized security agencies with the goal of improving readiness and cooperation. More than before governments are sharing information and cooperating on the “global war on terrorism.” While these measures and many others have enabled governments to foil many terror plans and improve security, determined suicide bombers are hard to stop, particularly in democracies. In this context, joint anti-trafficking efforts have significantly increased since the 9/11 terrorist attacks mainly on a bilateral and national basis. Multilateral initiatives by the United Nations to reduce arming of NSAs are still limited in scope and less effective.

Improving tactical and operational intelligence and development of advanced intelligence technologies are key points in the war against terror. Offensive tactics, based on accurate intelligence collected by governments, include arrest or “targeted assassinations” of terrorists of different ranks, both domestically and across the borders. Launching special operations and employing accurate fire, they dismantle terror infrastructures including headquarters and command networks, explosives labs, arms caches, arms shipments and training facilities, as well as making an effort to dry up NSAs’ financial sources. Extreme counter-terror measures might include waging conventional wars against armed NSAs sanctuaries, deploying large numbers of troops, seizing territories for long time and relocating the civilian population to isolate insurgents and terrorists. States’ armies differ in their success in defeating terror, and many governments have acknowledged complete solutions to conflict with NSAs should be reached by political means.

Summary

837 Capie, Small Arms, 199-200.
839 Amidror, Intelligence, 79-91.
This chapter reviewed two major mechanisms used by contemporary armed NSAs to decrease their military imbalance with governments and states. First, they employ an asymmetrical strategy, making and intensively using IEDs against military and civilian targets. Some armed NSAs are trying to defeat governments by attacking the home front. In particular, the suicide bombings of Jihadist terrorist groups are a powerful murderous weapon against stronger forces, integrating religious fundamentalism, transnational organization, and improvised devices. Still, suicide bombing could cause overwhelming counter effects for NSAs using terror tactics.

The second mechanism is acquisition of weapons through black arms markets, enabling NSAs to sustain wars against governments and occasionally defeat them. The weapons, mostly small arms, are the surplus from former wars or looting from destabilized countries, transported across the world by networks of smugglers and arms dealers, integrating both features of globalization and old traditions. Armed NSAs play an important role in the illicit global trade of goods, mainly narcotics, assisting to build up their force. They are integrated into arms smuggling networks that function as Federation of Systems (FOS). These entities are transnational, borderless, and flexible enjoying strong logistic and financial backup. The Arab turmoil has escalated the activity of these FOS, creating new opportunities for acquisition of weapons and smuggling. The divided international community has no chance of disrupting the smuggling FOS.

Thus, Smith and Van Creveld are focused on analyzing the weakness of the West, underestimating the military advantages of contemporary NSAs. They are too committed to the concept of a mighty army that faces great difficulties in defeating a small armed group. Some NSAs that are discussed in this chapter are well-funded, better equipped and organized than the incompetent state armies that fight them such as in Mali, Nigeria and Yemen. Many attributes of contemporary state-NSA wars reflect Smith’s model of “war amongst the people.” Western armies are involved in timeless conflicts, fighting so as not to lose their force, often in multinational groupings. Still, as this chapter reveals, this is only part of the picture because many non-western armies have fought armed NSAs and achieved absolute victory (Sri Lanka) or suffered defeat (Sudan). A more comprehensive approach is needed. NSAs can sustain “timeless” conflict as long as the borders of the state are porous and neighboring countries are lawless or supportive.\textsuperscript{840}

\textsuperscript{840} Smith, "Utility of the Force," 17.
The outcomes of state-NSA wars are affected by a variety of factors far beyond weaponry, such as international intervention, strength of government, unity of rebels and their success in mobilizing the people. The new developments in NSAs’ arming highlight the need for a comprehensive theory that would address the military buildup of present NSAs. The final chapter of the thesis offers such a theory.

Chapter Eight: A Theory of Non-States-Actors’ Arming

The thesis focuses on a research problem – that armed NSAs play an important role in domestic and international politics but neither their arming methods, nor the factors that shape these methods, are clear. Present explanations are incomplete because they address partial aspects of the problem, such as discussing arms smuggling and activities of NSAs separately. The thesis deals with the process of the buildup of NSAs’ force, the action of arms smuggling, and the interaction between NSAs and their geo-strategic environments. The outcome is a theory about NSAs’ arming, grounded in comprehensive data from the history of rebellions, though information on ancient rebels is limited. The project has value because it provides a comprehensive account of NSAs’ arming over different times, and a holistic explanation of factors facilitating and constraining smuggling activities of diverse NSAs all over the world. The theory of arming of NSAs offers generic phases and principles characterizing past and present NSAs and probably the NSAs of the near future.

This chapter’s goal is to condense the data presented in previous chapters into a small set of categories that explain how NSAs build up their force. The first part of the chapter conceptualizes methods NSAs have used to acquire weapons, and the causal background: this segment is the center of the theoretical explanation of NSAs’ arming. The chapter proceeds with a debate on the outcomes of the research in light of theories of globalization and classical models of guerrilla warfare. Finally, future trends of NSAs’ choice and acquisition of weaponry are suggested.

The thesis focuses on NSAs’ arming and smuggling operations. Guevara noted that “without arms it is of no use to speak of organizing an army and of waging armed struggle.” Still, acquiring and transporting weapons are only first steps in the process of military buildup. NSAs store the weapons they acquire in hideouts which could present difficulties for large and sensitive weapon systems. As demonstrated through the research,

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841 Guevara, Che Guevara, 134.
many weapons caches have been discovered by government forces. Acquiring new and complicated systems, rebels are obliged to recruit professional instructors otherwise the weapons would be useless. In extreme situations, smuggled weapons were not used at all either because they did not address NSAs’ operational needs or because of political-security considerations, such as fear of the state’s counter-action. Failing to acquire weapons in one way or another NSAs were likely to be defeated, but this did not always happen. The arming dimension could be neutralized by powerful external factors, such as the strength and policy of the state’s army. The history of revolts reveals that neutralization of the national army and mobilization of some military units in favor of the rebels secured the successes of the rebels even when unarmed, such as in the French Revolution of 1830, the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 and the Egyptian Revolution of 2011.

**NSAs have Built up their Military Force along Similar Paths**

Rebellious NSAs have been a persistent phenomenon from ancient times. There were always those who revolted and took up arms against central rule. Beyond weaponry, rebellious NSAs win wars because of effective and united leadership, an efficient operational approach, support of the local population, and in modern times, the world media’s sympathy. Weapons are not necessarily the most important factor but rebels need weapons to fight. Usually revolts erupt after the organizers acquire some weapons while many revolts lose their momentum, and operations are ineffective due to shortages of arms and ammunition. The history of rebellions tells the story of revolts which almost died out due to shortage of weapons, such as when American Patriots used wooden bullets against the Imperial Army and when the Irish Volunteers in the early twentieth century practised with pikes because the British blocked arms smuggling routes from Europe into Ireland. NSAs’ armament has been vital for the buildup of their force that has enabled both the employment of that force and sustainability.

This study questions how NSAs have acquired their weaponry through the history of rebellion and examines the differences between past and present methods of arming of rebel groups. Empirical evidence reveals both continuity and changes in different time periods. In spite of dramatic political and technological changes, rebel groups in different periods have employed *similar methods* to acquire weapons. Self-production, looting and stealing, external support and arms trade were always the major methods for NSAs to acquire weapons, though the importance of each method and the type of arms changed remarkably overtime (Figure 3,
p. 293). The methods of arming have remained largely unchanged while the content, the weapons themselves and technologies, have changed.

**Self-production of weapons.** This was the most reliable method of acquiring weapons because NSAs could rely on their own efforts, but nowadays it is the hardest to achieve, especially where advanced conventional weapons systems are wanted. Rebels who manufacture their own weaponry are more independent, and capable of securing large stockpiles. In antiquity, self-production was the rule while today only NSAs that lack external support are motivated to use this method, manufacturing improvised weapons to fill major gaps in their armories. In recent decades, self-production has become increasingly vital for the arming of rebellious NSAs due to the intensive and efficient use of IEDs by contemporary NSAs. Self-production could be a cheaper method of arming, as well as safer as acquisition of components and raw materials can be made through legitimate outlets. At the same time, NSAs’ homemade conventional weapons and explosives could be less effective because NSAs have limited resources (funds and technology) and they need to improvise. Larger weapons systems like rockets are produced in immobile infrastructures that could be easy targets for the security forces of the state, mainly by aerial strikes. Furthermore, more
sophisticated weapons, such as guided missiles, cannot be manufactured in improvised workshops. From antiquity, rebel groups have recruited foreign military experts and sent operatives overseas for technological training, helping to establish weapons factories.

**Stealing and looting.** Living off the enemy is the most popular and one of the oldest methods of arming of NSAs. It is also the major manifestation of a conflict between well-armed regular armies and rebel groups with limited resources. Rebels can loot the army of the country they are fighting, stealing from their arms depots as well as buying weapons from corrupt government officials and military men. Also, soldiers who defect carry their guns with them, and friendly service men can assist rebels to acquire weapons. Struggling to arm themselves, NSAs engage the state armies mainly to capture booty. Demoralized armies were always a good source of weapons for NSAs, whether it was the Chinese imperial army fighting Vietnamese guerrillas in the fifteenth century or the Ethiopian army fighting Eritrean insurgents in the late twentieth century. In the life circle of a weapon system, it could be looted in different stages: production, distribution, storage, operation and as war surplus.

Capturing states’ weapons could be part of a special operation of an NSA with a psychological effect which is more important than the weapons themselves. In the 1940s, Mao Tse Tung called this method “self-reliance” and claimed that Washington was the weapons source of the Chinese Communist guerrillas, and that Chiang Kai shek, the leader of the Nationalists, was the transportation officer. Similar claims about Washington’s role could have been made in the last decade by the Afghan Taliban, and Sunni and Shi‘ite insurgents in Iraq. Leaking of weapons could lead to an absurd situation in which both the state’s army and the rival NSA are fighting with the former’s weapons, such as in 2004 when the U.S. military fought Iraqi Sunni insurgents in Fallujah.\(^\text{842}\)

The stealing-looting method is traditionally linked to deception, and deceit and creative planning. In 1860, Garibaldi on his way to conquer Sicily successfully managed to persuade the commander of a local arsenal on the Tuscan coast that his expedition was under secret orders from the government, and that he should provide weapons and ammunition. In 1918 Irish porters, supporters of the Irish Volunteers in a British port, took advantage of their

job and stole boxes of weapons from a U.S. ship. This method could be simple, available at no cost and guerrilla strategists argue it secures rebels’ independence. But NSAs’ weapons arsenals are not standard because they acquire any gun available. Stealing and capturing weapons is risky; there is no guarantee of gaining large booty and the method is harder to employ when the central government is strong. Usually, the larger and more complicated weapons systems are out of reach for NSAs’ smugglers, including fighter aircraft and naval units.

Support of a friendly state. State support is the most effective mechanism to make a rebellious NSA a lethal military force. Regarded by scholars as “gray market” operations, state sponsorship occurs when states are motivated by political and ideological reasons to supply standard weapons to NSAs. The English supplied weapons to the Spanish guerrillas who fought the French in the early nineteenth century, during the Cold War the Soviets provided massive support to rebel groups around the world and from 2012 Saudi Arabia and Qatar have supplied weapons to Syrian rebels. Often, the shipments are covertly sent without asking for payment, and with better logistic capacity states could provide large quantities of weapons to NSAs. States might also take care of the transportation of the arms shipments. In recent decades the largest captured arms shipments to NSAs were linked to states’ support, such as the 1986 weapons shipment from Cuba to Communist rebels in Chile, the 2004 weapons shipment from China to northeast Indian insurgents and Iranian shipments to the Palestinians. Possession of new weapon systems by NSAs usually stemmed from state sponsorship, involving mortars, rockets, cannons and most importantly anti-aircraft and anti-tank missiles. States’ support of NSAs has been part of general patronage and sponsorship includes other aspects such as training of rebels, aid in operational planning, and funding.

The supporter of an NSA could be a neighboring country, regional power, super power, former NSA that had become an independent state and other NSAs. Of great importance in modern are states devoted, mainly for ideological reasons, to supply weapons to many NSAs and facilitate the transportation of NSAs’ weapons for example, Cuba during the Cold War, Sudan and Afghanistan in the 1990s and contemporary Iran. Helping an NSA to recover from war losses best demonstrates the advantage of state sponsorship, such as a year after the 2006 Hezbollah-Israel War Iran refilled Hezbollah rockets arsenal, after they

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were destroyed by the Israeli Air Force. NSAs use countries bordering the target state mired in war for illicit arms trade, front companies and arms caches.

External support can be a game changer within state-NSA’s conflict featuring strategic outcomes. The Vietminh defeated the French in 1953 and gained independence after receiving heavy weapons from China and the U.S.S.R. Hezbollah became the strongest military force in Lebanon after receiving huge amounts of Iranian weapons. A state could change the profile of its involvement in supporting a rebel group as a result of political-strategic developments. For example, since the end of the civil war, Cambodia, the country which was once on the receiving end, emerged in the 1990s as the biggest supplier of surplus small arms to South Asia and in recent years has operated as a transit state for Chinese weapons being smuggled to Indian insurgent groups.

The analysis of NSAs according to the level of outside support reveals different patterns. Being an extension of the Iranian regime, Hezbollah stands at one end of the scale, followed by NSAs who regularly acquire military support from a state but are more independent, such as Indian rebel groups supported by China and Pakistan. Other armed NSAs acquire weapons from different sources including friendly states. Many NSAs use neighboring countries as transit states and even logistic centers rather than as weapons suppliers. The opposite end contains self-sufficient NSAs which rarely acquire weapons from foreign states, for example, Maoist guerrillas in Nepal or Pakistani Taliban and Al Qaeda branches in North Africa and Yemen.

In order to secure support NSAs might need to adopt the agenda of their backers, and many states prefer to attack their foes with a proxy NSA. Therefore, although resources and sanctuary may be valuable, by accepting outside aid rebel groups lose some of their organizational autonomy. Encouraged by their own interests, governments can switch sides between rival NSAs and states, abandoning their former allies. In addition, when the host government of an NSA decides to close its borders, the target government has a better chance of defeating the rebellious NSA – this, for example, happened to the Kurdish rebels in Iraq in the mid-1970s after they were abandoned by the Shah of Iran. Lack of external support could be a major constraint on insurgents’ operational capabilities and might lengthen their campaign or bring their struggle to a disastrous end.

**Using the arms trade.** This is an old pattern of NSAs’ arming that has been integrated within trade exchanges in human civilization. From antiquity to the present time, rebels have traded
weapons for goods or cash. They are old customers of black arms markets, referring to the illicit covert selling of weapons to NSAs by private entities, violating laws of established governments and international embargos. Contemporary black arms trade follows the old markets in exchange relations, some of the locations and even transportation routes. Other than that, differences are huge, in scale, intensity and modus operandi. Past rebels purchased arms in workshops, town markets and through merchants’ caravans. The present trade in arms is less committed to localities due to modern transportation. The black arms trade involves smugglers, arms dealers, arms traffickers, money changers, adventurers, rebels, and corrupt officials. Unlike state sponsorship, the illicit arms trade is always accessible for NSAs because their business partners are interested mainly in profit. Therefore, arms traffickers could simultaneously serve the state and an NSA which fight each other. States have less capacity to monitor this black arms trade that involves privateers rather than foreign governments and takes place across their borders. Still, procuring, buying, transporting and storing weapons cost a lot of money. Logistic operations could be complicated and highly risky as some states have remarkable counterinsurgency capabilities. Criminal smugglers are willing to trade with rival sides and are less reliable.\textsuperscript{844}

The arms trade method combines both old traditions and new developments. Armed NSAs, such as Aceh rebels in northern Sumatra and Somaliland rebel groups, have a long history of resisting central government, incorporated with the regional maritime arms trade network. The trade is more than an arming instrument, it is a cultural institution. For other NSAs, the arms trade facilitated strategic changes, empowering their operational readiness. In the late 1950s and through the 1960s, Marxist and Maoist armed groups in South America had been struggling to acquire weapons by looting and from some Cuban supplies. In the 1980s, the narcotics business enabled some of them to trade in arms, greatly enhancing their military skills.

The four methods of arming have worked \textit{timelessly}. To illustrate this point, the Jewish Maccabees who revolted against the Seleucid Empire in the second century B.C. fought with simple artifacts found in the environment, improvised weapons they manufactured and heavier weapons looted in battles. They recruited well-armed Jewish cavalry who served in one neighboring kingdom and were assisted by another. More than two thousand years later, the Free Syrian Army has been fighting the Assad regime mainly with

\textsuperscript{844}Klare, “International,” 21.
weapons looted from the Syrian Army, improvised artillery and explosives charges they have manufactured with available materials, as well as some foreign military support. The ancient Jewish and the modern Syrian rebels use completely different weapons and military technologies but share similar techniques to build up their force.

The four methods of arming are the core of this project. They can be illustrated by numerous episodes of NSAs’ arming, from antiquity to this day. Self-production, stealing and looting are domestic methods, while state sponsorship and the illicit arms trade are externally oriented. The separation into four methods of arming is an artificial construct for the purpose of analysis. In reality they are strongly interwoven. For indigenous production of weapons NSAs might need external support and to steal a state’s technology in order to manufacture weapons. For example, without Iranian help, the Hamas probably could not produce medium range rockets in the Gaza Strip. Stolen weapons from the state army and military industry are being injected into the black market and purchased by NSAs. Black arms trade crosses friendly and unfriendly countries to reach NSAs, and both the arms trade and state sponsorship are involved in trafficking weapons from external sources and are often carried out by private smugglers. Governments supply weapons to NSAs via arms traders and black arms markets and fund NSAs’ procurement activity. The combination between government military support and illicit trade is an old phenomenon. From the late twentieth century this combination has escalated, creating heterogeneous networked arming systems which will be discussed later. The four methods of arming have similar features. For example, to some extent they all use concealment, camouflage and deception, because rebels need to secure their goods.

Why over thousands of years have different types of arming been employed? The answer probably goes beyond the military aspect, rooted in the very basic social structures and political institutions that have dominated human civilizations. Weapons smuggling is an integral part of the imbalance of relations between ruler and citizens, elite and marginalized groups, and states and non-state actors. Often NSAs possess smaller and more limited material resources in relation to those available to the state. Weapons smuggling and alliance with a third party help reduce the imbalance. This logistic activity is the basis for the NSA’s military buildup, derived from its own operational perception and intended to enable the implementation of force and carrying out an operational mission.
Coding of arming activity by NSAs enables the thesis to suggest a set of propositions about similarities in the arming of rebellious NSAs. Insurgents of different eras including the present time, began their struggle with weapons they found in the environment; they even used the same artifacts (stones, clubs, machetes, and axes), followed by capturing the weapons of their foes and making field modifications. The Great Jewish Revolt against Rome began in 66 A.D. with limited weapons, including slings and the bows and arrows people used for hunting. Medieval peasants rose up against their landlords with agricultural tools and at the outset of the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli Defense Forces in the West Bank and Gaza in 1987, rioters used mainly stones. Other revolts, insurgencies and terror campaigns started with just a few guns, given as a gift or smuggled from the army by activists under service. Leaders and commanders of NSAs regarded limited weaponry not only as a constraint but as an opportunity to mobilize the people and preach self-sacrifice. For example, Ayman al Zawahiri:

> It is always possible to attack an American or a Jew, to kill him with a bullet or a knife, a simple device, or a blow with an iron rod. Setting fire to their property with a Molotov cocktail is not difficult. With the means available, small groups can spread terror among Americans and Jews.\(^{845}\)

Initial engagements between rebels and rulers usually highlighted the superior force of the latter. Rebels managed to decrease this imbalance due to the diffusion of weapons and military technology. During the nineteenth century the British did not face problems seizing Afghanistan. Soon the Pashtun tribes inflicted defeats on the powerful imperial army (1838-43, 1878-80), among other reasons because they were well-armed. They possessed handmade rifles manufactured in local bazaars and purchased high quality weapons such as swords and iron cannons across the border in Iran and Pakistan. In 1979, the same land was conquered by the powerful Red Army which was welcomed by the central government in Kabul. Gradually, local Mujahedeen inflicted heavy losses on the Russians, getting enormous weapons shipments, including anti-aircraft missiles, from the United States. In 1989 the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan.

Until recent decades, almost every new weapon system and type of military technology was initially used by state-armies, but eventually fell into the hands of NSAs, who sometimes even manufactured the weapons, whether it was a siege machine in antiquity, firearms in early Modern Times, or mortars, rockets and tanks today. Mercenaries, auxiliary

\(^{845}\) Mansfield, *His Own Words*, 198.
units, warfare tradition, great power rivalry and arms trade – have all been mechanisms of arms diffusion, serving NSAs’ arming efforts. They are *trans-time dimensions* because the historical review records their influence in different time periods. The dominant principle is that because of a state’s interests and constraints such as occasional limited manpower, weapons and military technology have been leaking from the state to NSAs via different methods. For instance, German tribes served in the Roman Army as mercenaries in late antiquity. In the Middle-Ages, the Slavs and Turks fought for Byzantium. The Jewish Brigade consisted of Jewish volunteers who served in the British Army in World War Two. In 2011, sub-Saharan African tribes served as mercenaries in Gaddafi’s army. All those NSAs were introduced to new weapons and combat tactics by the state agents. Back in their home countries, these ex-mercenaries and volunteers shared their weapons and military skills with local NSAs that were involved in uprising and insurgency. The theory of arming of NSAs emphasizes the great similarity between rebels of different time periods.

Self-production and looting of weapons predominantly characterize poor NSAs while large scale arms trade is more often linked to well-funded NSAs. Funding the acquisition and production of NSAs’ arms was always major challenge for NSAs. One of the basic weaknesses of rebel groups compared to rulers or governments is limited financial resources. NSAs that controlled natural resources or were well-funded by foreign countries and migrant diaspora had a great advantage. They could purchase weapons independently, improving operational skills and escalating their military activity. Poor NSAs without external support have struggled to sustain wars and occasionally ended up in turmoil.

The role set of rebellious NSAs show similarities regardless of time differences. Most notable are their relations with criminal groups and individuals. By the state’s and the rulers’ laws, insurgents and rebels have been called criminals, and links between criminality and arms smuggling are as old as the history of rebellion. Rebels, terrorists and criminals have been fellow travelers in the underworld, occasionally switching identities. For example, NSAs could become more involved in the dealing of illicit goods rather than the political struggle (FARC and elements of the Taliban) while criminal gangs could become involved in terror and insurgency (Mumbai-base organized crime involves in Islamic terror in India). Still, criminals are driven by greed whereas in most cases militants’ criminal activity is a means to a political or ideological end. What has changed over the years is the pattern of these exchanges. Previously, rebels traded commodities for illegal weapons and outlaws smuggled weapons for them. In modern times, they still make these exchanges in currency,
and some of the rebel groups have developed their own logistic apparatus. The exchange relationship between NSAs and criminal gangs has become more longstanding, complex and diverse. NSAs sell weapons to criminal gangs and the latter help them in forging documents, money laundering and transactions. NSAs provide protection to drug dealers in return for money and operational services. In the twenty-first century, NSAs and criminal syndicates are partners in the global narcotics business, mobilizing tremendous incomes that are used to procure weapons.  

**Mechanism of Changes and Developments Shaping NSAs’ Arming Activity**

The thesis suggested that the arming of NSAs in the pre-globalization era depended on the sources they could find in their close environment and region, primarily self-production and looting and stealing, while in the global era NSAs have more options to get weapons. This proposition is strongly proved through the historical review: while using the same methods to acquire weapons over the history of rebellion, the dynamic of the arming process of NSAs has changed significantly overtime (Figure3, p. 293). A combination of technological, political, social and cultural factors has influenced the buildup of the force of NSAs. Because of these factors the emphasis of NSAs’ arming has shifted among the four methods – self-production, stealing and looting, state sponsorship and illicit arms trade – in different periods.

In antiquity rebels fought mostly with weapons they captured, produced or inherited and were taught to use from childhood. External support was less common and involved large expeditions from an ally or patron-state. Looting the rival state’s arms depots became more prominent among the rebels of late antiquity and the Middle Ages due to the weakening and collapse of great empires and kingdoms, such as West Rome and Byzantium. Self-production of weapons was still the most dominant arming method for medieval NSAs.

The rise of international trade made possible by routes such as the Silk Road Route that connected Europe and China, improved NSAs’ access to arms, but it was a minor channel, serving mainly medieval ruling elites. From the early modern period the military balance between states and NSAs shifted against the latter, because government armies and military industry controlled the production of firearms, followed by heavier and more complicated weapon systems (artillery). NSAs of the nineteenth century faced larger regular armies, which were well trained and equipped. Powerful bows of NSAs could no longer

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compete with improved firearms of the Europeans. Mass production of ammunition, necessary for lengthy conflicts, posed new challenges for NSAs with limited resources. The weakness in weaponry of most native peoples in Asia, America and Africa facilitated the colonization of their continents.

The colonization of the Americans, Africa and Asia resulted in the growing importance of external support and arms trade for NSAs, though still less dominant than self-production and leaking. European rulers began for the first time to view arms transfers as a potentially significant instrument in continental power politics. Rebel groups benefitted from the European drive to influence alliances and the outcome of battles by sending weapons and troops, within and outside Europe. The more weapons colonial powers sent from Europe to their military forces in the colonies and the more trade in arms that evolved between European merchants and native people, the greater chances rebellious NSAs had to get some of these arms supplies via black-market trade or plundering.

In the first half of the twentieth century NSAs’ arming challenges increased with the introduction of more sophisticated weapon systems – tanks, submarines, aircraft carriers, and fighter aircraft. NSAs could no longer imitate the state military arsenal by themselves, and self-production of weapons became almost impossible. The leaking method was less valuable for rebels in light of further strengthening of the nation-state which marked its borders, enforced a monopoly over military force, secured maritime sovereignty, and regulated the arms trade. Even if NSAs could acquire some of these weapons they were not able to maintain or use them. For victory, rebellious NSAs had to change their arming strategies. They could secure external support, from direct military involvement of a patron to a covert supply of arms and ammunition only. Superpower intervention, because of their great logistic capability and access to advanced weapon systems, could dramatically improve NSAs’ force.

In the second half of the twentieth century state sponsorship was NSAs’ most efficient mechanism to acquire weapons and improve military capabilities. During the Cold War both the Soviet Union and the United States competed in mobilizing third party allies, states as well as NSAs, providing them with weapons and other essential logistic support. The Americans and the Soviets supported rebel groups across the world directly or through proxies. The superpowers’ support of rebel groups was entirely a government operation or a combination of government and private elements, seeking to disguise the formers’
involvement. This combination demonstrated a transition from state sponsorship channel to arming NSAs through the black arms trade.

The end of the Cold War resulted in a decline in state sponsorship. As revealed in chapter six, in the early 1980s, almost fifty state-NSA wars featured external military support, decreasing to eighteen in late 2013. States were still deeply involved in arming NSAs using proxies, arms dealers and criminal groups to support NSAs, but rebels had to find new sources of weapons. Iran and Syria’s massive military support of Hezbollah is an exception. As of early 2014, the arms trade is the most dominant arming method of NSAs. Contemporary NSAs acquire most of their weaponry through black arms markets. The most important are located in Southeast Asia, Yemen and East Africa, the Balkans, Libya and the United States. In countries with weak governments and corrupt administration, mainly in Africa and Asia, NSAs capture weapons leaked from military stockpiles or taken in combats.

What stands behind the dynamic of NSAs’ arming methods, and why do NSAs employ different methods of arming in different eras as the above paragraphs reveal? The answer is rooted in four categories: the type of NSA and their operational approaches, the emergence of new weapon systems, the political regime, and social and cultural aspects. These elements explain the variance in NSA arming patterns; if they shift, they stimulate changes both within NSAs and in the external environment, creating opportunities and constraints. In dealing with contemporary NSAs, many of the change-stimulators have been influenced by processes of globalization.

The type of NSA and its operational approach. Rebellious NSAs are a big and diverse category as a result of different geo-strategic conditions and local traditions. The organization, structure, and the command and control apparatus of an NSA are causal conditions that influence NSAs’ arming methods. Extreme contrast existed, for instance, between the well-organized and funded American Patriots who fought Britain, and the Dutch who sustained eighty years of independent war against the Hapsburgs, mobilizing considerable quantities of firearms and other arms, as against poor communities of former slaves in Latin America who barely acquired gunpowder. Also, Greek rebels of the early-nineteenth century who almost lost their war of independence against the Turks due to poor leadership and internal division, and who was eventually rescued by great European powers.

A strong link exists between the organizational skills of rebellious NSAs and their operational readiness in light of limited resources. For example, the late nineteenth century
saw the emergence of the modern political party seeking social power. Revolutionary political parties such as Russia’s Bolshevik Party, the Chinese Communist Party and the more contemporary communist parties in Nepal and India have all been involved in subversion against central governments, building an efficient military arm. Fighting stronger regimes and professional armies, they operated with limited weaponry and financial resources. Many of the revolutionary parties seized power or sustained longstanding wars because of their remarkable organizational and mobilization skills, compensating for their lack of basic armaments. Waging guerrilla war, they made the best of the limited weapons they possessed. Some of the communist movements gained external support but mostly they had to live off their foes.

NSAs’ military doctrine affects their arming needs and vice versa. NSAs that use mainly terror require less ammunition than NSAs that are committed to guerrilla warfare. In the early 1990s, without organizational backup and with just a few operatives but great planning and technological skills, Ramzi Yusuf’s terror network was responsible for the first attack on the World Trade Center and was very close to executing more spectacular terror attacks around the globe. On the other hand, fighting against regular armies, NSAs seeking to “liberate” land, being able to repulse counter attacks, and eventually seizing power, require heavier weapons systems, such as armored vehicles and artillery and larger quantities of ammunition. Consequently, the more military-style NSAs depend on external arms sources. To illustrate this point, the al Qaeda Central organization specialized in lethal terror strikes, using mainly explosives and in the 9/11 attacks no firearms were used. In recent years, the decentralization of al Qaeda has resulted in the establishment of local branches in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and North Africa. Aiming to seize land and establish an “Islamic Emirate,” these branches use conventional weapons, acquired through black arms markets and looting. The operational doctrine of rebel groups influences the method of arming.847

The organization of an NSA is coordinated with the firepower it requires. Contemporary NSAs exist between two poles: at the one end military-like organizations, such as Hezbollah and Hamas, possessing centralized leadership, controlling territory and armed with heavy weapons systems such as rockets, surface-to-surface missiles and anti-ship missiles, usually received from a state sponsor; at the other end, low-level organized NSAs

that use cold weapons, homemade bombs, waging what Abu Mus‘ab al-Suri called “individual jihad.” Homegrown isolated Jihadist cells in the West illustrate this tactic as well as popular, but poorly organized protest movements, using stones and Molotov cocktails. In between, are NSAs such as the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban, Abu Sayyaf Group and the Indian Naxal, who wage guerrilla and terror warfare, using small arms and IEDs. Abd al Aziz al-Muqrin, al Qaeda’s guerrilla theoretician called these NSAs urban and mountain guerrilla.848

NSAs’ operational doctrine does not stand by itself, but stems from enemy strategy and tactics. The level of force a government uses to suppress a revolt and insurgency is linked to the strategy and operational approach adopted by the rebels, influencing their armament. Unarmed popular protest being violently abused by security forces (shooting live ammunition at protesters) might be radicalized, using stones and small arms. Further oppression encourages protestors to use firepower, such as at the outset of Syria’s civil war. Intensive use of tanks by government forces encourages rebels to acquire anti-tank weapons systems. However, when the security forces of a state, particularly the army, avoid engaging the people, they facilitate the removal of the unguarded regime, such as the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979 and the revolution in Egypt in 2011.

The emergence of new weapons. Over the history of rebellion NSAs adopted and modified weapon systems which they manufactured or acquired from external sources. These weapons influenced their arming methods and operational doctrine. At the same time, NSAs’ operational approach dictates the weapons they require and influences their arming activity. Featuring special advantages, such as long range, high mobility and security of the users, some weapons systems greatly improved the buildup of the force of NSAs and operational readiness. Such weapons systems reduced the military imbalance between NSAs and states and were strategically important. On the other hand, states adopted NSAs’ weapons and occasionally coopted NSAs. For example, the medieval Welsh by using the indigenous longbow with its exceptional firepower, mobility and longer range than other bows of that time, waged successful guerrilla warfare against the much stronger Anglo-Norman rule during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They demonstrated integration between a deadly instrument and military doctrine creating a lethal fighting system that inflicted heavy losses on the Norman knights. The English kings recruited Welsh bowmen and used them in the

848 Cigar. Al Qa‘ida, 112, 123.
One Hundred Years War against the French. Another example is the appearance of
gunpowder during the late Middle Ages and early modernity which resulted in the distinction
between arms and ammunition. Unlike spears, swords, maces and axes, rifles, pistols and
cannons, accompanied later by more complicated weapons system, required ammunition to
be used. At first manufacturing ammunition for these weapons was no more complicated than
manufacturing ammunition for bows, slings or ballistae, almost anyone could do it. But, as the
technology developed it gradually came to require expertise, machinery and raw materials
not available to everyone. The employment of ammunition-based weapons greatly challenged
poor rebel groups that needed to secure ammunition supplies. For NSAs possessing large
stockpiles, ammunition means sustainability, the capacity to wage prolonged war. Running
out of supplies, NSAs reduce their level of operations.

IEDs have demonstrated that the appearance of a new weapon system could change
the way NSAs fight and obtain arms. The weapons most used by NSAs worldwide are small
arms. But NSAs’ use of remote-controlled, booby-trap and suicide-activated explosive
charges is perhaps the most important development in NSAs’ arming in modernity. From the
second half of the nineteenth century, NSAs’ growing use of high explosives and improvised
explosive devices has had revolutionary effects on their operational ability and arming
methods. The strategy of current NSAs is heavily dependent on IEDs, which have become
more sophisticated and are now used efficiently against civilians and soldiers. Explosives and
bombs suit NSAs’ strategy of waging a war of attrition both in the frontline against the
denmmy and in the heart of his territory, because they can be manufactured almost anywhere
and come in many forms, ranging from a small pipe bomb to a sophisticated device capable
of causing massive damage and loss of life. Integrated in terror or guerrilla tactics, homemade
explosives have dramatically enhanced NSAs’ ability to challenge powerful states and attrite
regular forces and mainly civilian populations while reducing their own exposure to enemy
attacks.

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed another demonstration of the
strong link between military technology and NSAs’ operational capacity. NSAs benefitted
from the development of portable “fire-and-forget” missiles and light portable automatic
weapons with a high rate of fire. These weapons systems could reduce the power balance
between regular armies and terror and guerrilla NSAs, enabling the latter to bring down
helicopters and fighter aircraft and to penetrate tanks’ armor – major symbols of the state’s
military superiority. In recent decades NSAs have spent a lot of effort trying to acquire these
costly weapons, usually obtaining them via allied governments and black arms markets. Armed with RPGs, militants in Chechnya, Lebanon, Egypt, Afghanistan, Somalia and Iraq managed to face much stronger regular forces. The growing use of anti-tank and anti-air missiles by armed NSAs’ illustrates asymmetric strategy. Rebels seek to neutralize weapons they cannot acquire by using other weapon systems that are cheaper, available and efficient.¹⁴⁹

A number of scholars regard present NSAs, many of them allegedly poor irregular forces, as ones which are rarely in a position to obtain and operate major weapons systems and for the most part use small arms and light weapons. They argue that supply of heavy weapons belongs to government-to-government sales.¹⁵⁰ Yet numerous NSAs are well-funded and equipped with modern weapons and employ regular forces. The thesis highlights Iran’s supply of medium and long range rockets and missiles to the Lebanese Hezbollah and Palestinian militant groups who also produce rockets. More than other conventional weapons, rockets have affected NSA’ military strategy and the power balance between them and the state.

Rockets are long-range artillery fire, reliable, simple to operate, low cost and have massive fire power especially when using multiple rocket launchers. Mostly, NSAs do not possess air capability but NSAs’ rocket fire makes state borders and air defences meaningless. Rockets are an inaccurate artillery system, but persistent rocketfire, even on a small-scale, against civilian population centers disrupts daily routines, inflicting a negative psychological effect. It serves the strategy of winning by not losing. Since Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005, militants have fired more than 11,000 rockets into Israel. Today almost the whole of the Israeli population is under rocket threat from the Gaza Strip, Sinai and Lebanon. Israel has successfully developed and used anti-rocket missile systems, but rockets could still be an effective mechanism for NSAs to establish a balance of deterrence against a state. Differing from other NSAs, both Hezbollah and Hamas operational approaches focus on an artillery campaign against Israel. Unlike other NSAs they control territory and employ regular forces. Still, NSAs possessing heavier weapon systems like rockets become less mobile and more vulnerable. They are compelled to develop logistic skills to smuggle rockets over long distances, which can be very risky. Adding GPS guidance to these rockets,
a level of sophistication just around the corner for the more advanced NSAs, will provide them ability almost equivalent to the advanced armies of the major states, drastically reducing these armies’ advantage in aerial firepower.  

The political framework. The thesis reveals that changes in political regimes have influenced NSAs’ efforts at armament; they are the most important causal conditions of NSAs’ arming. In antiquity it was much easier to take arms and revolt against rulers, but the punishment for those who failed would have been more lethal. In the pre-state world people faced fewer lawful limitations to carry a weapon, and men were expected to carry a weapon in many cultures. Usually empires did not disarm defeated communities and they could keep their armies and fleets, being committed to provide the conqueror with troops in times of war.

The rise of the nation state in modern times made rebels’ task to acquire weapons a harder one. States enforced a monopoly over military force, imposed border control, secured maritime sovereignty, and regulated the arms trade. They signed international agreements seeking to counteract the illegal sales of arms. From the NSAs’ perspective, it is much harder today to mobilize external support to fight legitimate governments than fighting foreign invaders. At the same time, the establishment of multiethnic and multicultural states, while their borders neglect demographic division, facilitated sectarian wars and consequently the proliferation of weapons. From another angle, governments are using every means to manipulate their own laws and international commitments, supplying weapons to NSAs which are fighting their rivals, mainly neighboring countries. Terrorists and insurgents have become expert at acquiring weapons through legal means, by utilizing loopholes in existing laws and regulations.

Often, efforts of NSAs to acquire weapons manifested a global process rather than being disconnected cases. European colonialism demonstrated how great powers used their military superiority to seize the Americas, followed by Africa, Asia and Oceania. Still, colonialism facilitated the proliferation of firearms among natives’ NSAs through the expansion of global trade, building arms factories in the new colonies, recruiting native soldiers and in some cases rebellious NSAs exploited competition between colonial powers. The global arms trade was an instrument to secure colonial rule but eventually it provided native NSAs with better armament to resist colonialism. Similar mechanisms worked during

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the Cold War. In a bipolar international system when regimes of global intervention took hold, both the Soviet Union and the United States stood opposed to each other as nation-states, as ideologies, and as economic and political systems. They were competing globally in ‘collecting’ rival third party allies, states as well as NSAs, and provided them with weapons and other essential logistic and operational support. The superpowers exploited rebel groups because they could weaken the rival superpower's hold on a particular region. At the same time, the United States and the Soviet Union transported huge amounts of advanced weapons systems to war zones such as Afghanistan, Angola and El Salvador. Many of these shipments were supplied free of charge to NSAs, fighting colonial powers or governments. NSAs’ arming has been subjected to dramatic changes as a result of political developments.

Religious-based regimes are devoted to support affiliated NSAs. In the 1990s, the Islamic governments of Sudan and Afghan Taliban focused on supporting terrorist and insurgent groups mainly for ideological reasons, having facilitated the arming of NSAs. The Islamic republic of Iran is an extreme manifestation of this pattern, changing not only the scope of the support but also re-defining state sponsorship of an NSA. Many countries have supported NSAs, some intensively, but Iran-Hezbollah relations are more comprehensive and multidimensional than the regular state-proxy model. Based on shared religious ideology Hezbollah is a special case of a rebel group which has become an extension of a foreign state – Iran – and that operates as an NSA in its own country – Lebanon. The arming of Hezbollah by Iran is perhaps the core of this integration, including the supply of a huge amount of weapon systems and the building of Hezbollah’s remarkable strategic artillery apparatus. Mostly important, Iran employs an elite military organization, the Quds Force, with a special branch in Lebanon and Syria. The Quds Force is responsible for converting Hezbollah into a military organization of significant capabilities, the most skilled military NSA in the world. Tehran’s commitment to strengthen Hezbollah and the latter’s total subordination to the Iranian supreme leader are an important development in the history of rebel groups.

Another political factor that influences the arming of NSAs is regime strength. From antiquity, diffusion of political power, and disintegration of kingdoms and empires, led to the looting of governments’ depots by NSAs who faced no real obstacles smuggling weapons. The same rule applied both when Byzantium was declining in the second half of the eleventh century and much later after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. Seizing the regime’s arsenals was an important stage in revolutions escalating the collapse, such as in the French Revolution of 1789 and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.
NSAs engaging stronger governments that command professional and disciplined security forces have to acquire weapons from external sources and to conduct complicated and risky smuggling operations. In this context, the relationship between neighboring countries is extremely important to understand NSAs’ ability to smuggle weapons. One of the major conclusions of this thesis is that regardless of globalization, denial of outside support from neighboring counties is a precondition of successful counterinsurgency. Porous borders encourage arms smuggling whereas secured borders as a result of inter-state security cooperation could lead to defeating NSAs.

A number of principles modified the military buildup of NSAs regardless of time period. For example, throughout history empires and superpowers armed NSAs, using them for security tasks like fighting enemies and protecting their masters’ properties. At a later stage, these groups might turn their weapons against their patrons as a result of geo-strategic changes. Alexander the Great recruited and armed Jewish archers; later in the Maccabees Revolt (167-160 B.C.) Jewish archers fought against Alexander’s weakening heirs, the Seleucids. In the 1980s, the United States and Pakistan armed Mujahedeen in Afghanistan to fight the Soviets. From the late 1990s, Islamic militants became a major international terror threat (Al Qaeda), followed by an increasing domestic challenge to Pakistan’s government (Pakistani Taliban). When governments militarize NSAs they might plant the seeds of a future revolt.

Also, the surplus of weapons from former wars has been used to arm rebels of the next wars, which is connected to recycling of weapons via the arms trade. The research confirms Klare’s argument that an increase in supply of small arms especially, encourages NSAs who are at war to expand or prolong their operations and for potential belligerents to commence fighting. General Simon Bolivar revolted against and eventually defeated Spanish rule in South America (1811-1826), because, among other things, he transported large quantities of war-surplus arms and other supplies which Britain was only too happy to sell off after the Napoleonic Wars. The vast quantities of weapons left over from the Cold War were recycled into the global arms traffic through a variety of channels including illicit black-market dealers and state support. Addressing the problem of proliferation of weapons, the U.N. has been initiating in former war zones such as Cambodia and El Salvador,
decommissioning and collecting programs to remove small arms from open circulation with partial success. 852

Social, cultural and religious aspects. The coding of NSAs arming through history reveals social and cultural factors explaining NSAs’ arming efforts. Warfare tradition and culture of arms possession and trade have been important mechanisms that assisted NSAs revolting against powerful regimes. Giap, for example, explained that “during its many thousands of years old history, the Vietnamese people have always been able to maintain heroic tradition of struggle against foreign aggression.” The history of rebellion provides extensive evidence. The Pashtun tribes of Afghanistan and Pakistan, local peoples of the Caucasus, and Māori people of New Zealand have all demonstrated a highly developed fighting capacity and a tradition of resistance to central governments and foreign intruders. In different time periods, they performed remarkably well against regular and professional armies of empires and superpowers, because they inherited the art of manufacturing weapons, the skill to rapidly absorb new weapons, integrating terrain and special features of a weapons system, such as rifles with accurate aiming, into a lethal fighting system. 853

To illustrate this argument, the LTTE had a close nexus with the sea and controlled a major part of Sri Lanka’s coast. The organization's naval power was the basis for its sturdy stance against the Sri Lankan army for some thirty years. Sri Lanka is an island nation and the Tamils have a long tradition of fishing, maritime trade and smuggling. The LTTE operated a merchant fleet tasked with secretly transporting arms from around the globe to Sri Lanka. Earlier, Irish porters working in Great Britain’s ports, smuggled weapons into Ireland by sea for the Irish Volunteers. For many centuries the Bedouin tribes of northeast Africa and the Sinai Peninsula traded in goods from Yemen and the Horn of Africa. In the last decade, they have been using the same tracks and social networks to smuggle weapons into Egypt and Gaza.

Religion could affect NSAs’ operational approach and arming. Radical Shia and Sunni clerics have legitimized suicide terrorism, arguing it is the weapon of the weak people who “lack the technology and lethal weapons available to the U.S. and European counties.” 854 Religion plays a key role here. The Iranian Revolution and the rise of the Salafi-Jihadi school

853 Giap, People’s War,11.
of thought encouraged suicide terrorism, calling it martyrdom, “the ultimate form of devotion to God,” “a goal itself.” Being an extreme tactic, suicide attacks enable NSAs access to highly secure targets inflicting massive damage, something they could never achieve by conventional means. Suicide terrorism is a unique integration between religious-based operations and a weapon (terrorists wearing an explosives belt or vest, driving a car bomb or a truck bomb).

Another social factor is that NSAs have been linked to different types of social groups operating overseas, using their cross-border logistic skills for arms smuggling. The interaction between NSAs and foreign diaspora is not monolithic and has its own dynamic. Residing in Western Europe, the Ottoman Empire and North Africa, Jewish merchants of the Middle Ages and modern world, many of whom were immigrants, used international connections to facilitate trade including in arms serving both states and NSAs. They demonstrated NSAs operating as a network. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Irish-Americans established the highly operational organization, Clan-ne-Guel, which specialized in smuggling weapons from the United States and Europe into Ireland including American guns that were superior to the British weapons. During the Irish Civil War (1921-1923) following the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, a splinter-group of Clan-ne-Guel was committed to military support of the anti-treaty republican movement. This emigrant organization became a subversive NSA against the Free State government, attempting to smuggle weapons into Ireland. In another type of overseas NSA, Lenin was assisted by a multi-national network of socialist activists across Europe in smuggling weapons into Russia before the revolution. Thus, foreign immigrants were involved in the arming of NSAs in different ways as a result of political developments both in the old homeland and their new countries.

The Arming of rebellious NSAs in a Globalized World

Drawing on the available literature, the thesis suggests that the arming of NSAs in the pre-globalization era was based on relatively simple systems in terms of the number of role players, division of labor and geographical deployment, whereas arming of NSAs in the globalization era involves more complex systems including many more participants, a division of labor that is more differentiated and larger geographical dispersion. Testing of these propositions uncovers much evidence of important changes caused by globalization, modifying the arming process of NSAs. But relatively complex arms smuggling
systems operated in the pre-globalization era too. The major argument is that globalization empowers three integrated legs of the illicit trade in arms—proliferation and circulation of weapons to war zones of NSAs; the logistic apparatus of smugglers including the use of containers; and NSAs' involvement in the illicit trade, mainly in narcotics. Globalization has improved rebel groups' access to weapons and some NSAs are better armed than the armies they are fighting. Even without state support many NSAs with some financial resources manage to sustain longstanding conflicts, inflicting heavy casualties on governments. Politically, in light of globalization effects, authoritarian regimes face greater challenges in monopolizing power.

The growing illicit arms trade presents a challenge to the territorial state system. Still, states-NSAs' engagements affirm that the world system is powerfully governed by nation-states, because often states are the ones that both strengthen and weaken NSAs. Strong governments with skillful security agencies and secure borders can contain the effects of globalization, and governments too are being assisted by modern technologies and better counter-smuggling activity. The thesis argues that globalization has been a significant facilitator in the buildup of NSAs' forces.

Past and present trades in arms serving NSAs share similar patterns: both play a small role compared to the legal arms trade. Arms markets are located in the same regions as centuries ago. Rebels have traditionally traded goods with weapons and smugglers are using the same routes as their ancestors. Privatization processes have always served rebels' smuggling interests; previously they rented ships and today they rent aircraft. Ancient and medieval rebels acquired weapons in the small world they were living in whereas the present-day rebels can get them from the other side of the world. Ancient and medieval rebels, if they lived near iron mines, were able to manufacture fine swords and present NSAs find it cheaper and more efficient to import firearms rather than self-produce them. Ancient and medieval arms trade was mostly local and regional, constrained by distances. Medieval merchants departed the traditional workshops, becoming independent and mobile players who could associate with rebels. In the early modern world the arms trade became inter-continental, and following the Industrial Revolution the nineteenth century witnessed a breakthrough in the scope and complexity of the arms trade. A global arms trade system which operated largely on a commercial logic was effectively beyond the control of governments, selling weapons to rebellious NSAs. The global arms trade has grown from the late twentieth century, undermining distance because weapons could be transported all over the world. Logistics
became a great business within the arms trade because of larger shipments and longer distances. Unlike previous times, merchants are not involved in the smuggling operations which are the subject of professional smugglers and arms traffickers. Using modern technologies, highly skilled NSAs can now arrange and monitor inter-continental smuggling operations from overseas rather than waiting for the merchant’s caravan.

Modern technologies have facilitated NSAs’ arming activities, offering more opportunities to arm themselves, but they have become more reliant on external sources. From the early nineteenth century, rebellious NSAs have been running a growing part of their arming activity across borders, first in neighboring countries then using foreign diaspora and today by sending permanent representatives overseas. Today, most NSAs’ arming activities can be planned far away from the war zone. Globalization is responsible for this dramatic development. It is a powerful intervening element in state-NSA conflict, helping rebel groups to reduce military inferiority. Patron states and arms dealers are using modern transportation, containerized shipping and cargo jets, facilitating movement of large quantities of modern weapons for rebel groups around the world. Similar to the general trade system, weapons smuggling networks integrate maritime and inland transport, creating an effective system, such as in Southeast Asia. Digital and wireless communications enable arms smugglers and logistic officers to coordinate complex smuggling operations in isolated regions. Globalization enables NSAs to conduct arms shopping journeys around the world and to negotiate on-line deals without visiting the arms dealer.

Free trade encourages NSAs and their business partners to use tactics of deception regarding both the final destination and content of shipments while governments and international cargo carriers are reluctant to– or cannot – monitor the legitimacy of shipments of goods. Rebels have always used deception to secure shipping of weapons, for instance using free trade ports since the early nineteenth century. Globalization facilitates the employment of more complicated techniques. Growing labor differentiation in shipping operations which are geographically dispersed serves NSAs’ plans, such as when a ship is owned by a one company, registered in a second country, operated by a different company, using international crew who allegedly do not know the true nature of the cargo. Also, the privatization of arms industries serves NSAs because the industries are motivated mainly by profit and don’t care about the customer’s identity.
Confirming the thesis’ posposition of more complex smuggling systems in the global era, the black arms trade is the *best manifestation* of the influence of globalization, dealing with a worldwide diffusion of weapons across national borders, often beyond the control of national states. The thesis highlights at least five major arms trade networks in Southeast Asia, Yemen and East Africa, the Balkans, North Africa and the United States. They are spread over a large part of the world, trafficking weapons across porous land and maritime borders, consequently fueling dozens of wars between states and NSAs. The networks are a loose association of multinational rebels, terrorists, smugglers, brokers, arms dealers, criminals, money changers, politicians and army officers, all cooperating for profit.

Therefore, the intensive black arms trade has resulted in the circulation of arms which is an old phenomenon that since the end of the Cold War has become global through the expansion of transatlantic and online trade. In a global world, disarmament and demobilization in a former war zone easily become a driving force of other conflicts elsewhere. To illustrate this point, Somali militants are fighting with Iranian and North Korean arms smuggled from Libya and Colombian rebels used American weapons left in Vietnam and supplied to the Marxist guerrillas in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

The smuggling networks feature division of roles between states: suppliers, consumers, transit states, collecting points, and distribution hubs. In light of strategic developments such as war and peace, the division is dynamic and states as well as NSAs change their roles. Recipients of arms become exporters and vice versa; NSAs become independent states which are being fragmented. The networks overlap, for example Chinese weapons are being funneled to arms market in Yemen and the Horn of Africa; rebel groups in Syria are linked to the black arms markets both in the Balkans and North Africa.

The more complex systems of weapons smuggling in the global era also demonstrate a growing mixture of identities. Insurgents are deeply involved in the narcotics trade and government officials are serving rebels’ interests. Differences between legal and illegal trade and between gray and black markets are unclear. Governments are involved in the proliferation and circulation of weapons consumed by NSAs more than before. Security agencies are using black arms markets to arm NSAs who fight proxy wars. NSAs trade weapons with other NSAs, manifesting a process of commercialization of their struggle. It is no longer only a force buildup mechanism but a source of income.
Vital for the illicit arms trade are international arms brokers and traffickers who arrange purchase and transfer of weapons around the world, enjoying close links to senior army officers and politicians both in arms-producing states without proper export control and states in war. Ignoring international embargos, they associate with rebellious NSAs, helping them to secure a supply of advanced weapon systems. The arms brokers are global nomads, the product of globalization because they integrate transnational activity, modern transportation, privatization of the arms trade, and intensive state-NSA conflicts. They have been operating in different regions, employing transnational business networks, demonstrating globalization. In the eighteenth century American Patriots used privateers to smuggle weapons across the Atlantic into North America, but contemporary arms dealers possess greater logistic assets usually owned by states and larger business networks. Like traditional nomads, arms brokers and smugglers seek mobility, it is the core of their survival. Occasionally they use the same logistic tools, camels and mules, but unlike old nomads the new nomads share global networks and possess greater logistic capacity. Globalization undermined the value of traditional trade communities such as Jewish merchants. In the past, Jews’ cosmopolitan profile and international trade connections were unique, serving some armed NSAs. With global communication and transportation, these skills are in less demand.

Globalization escalates the integration between the arms trade of NSAs and other illicit trade. NSAs share in criminal syndicates’ production and exporting of illicit goods, mainly drugs, and the mechanism of globalization. It is part of their core existence rather than an income. Hamas runs smuggling activities via the underground tunnels of Gaza and they are a significant segment of the local economy. The FARC are deeply involved in maintaining the drugs business out of Colombia. The drugs trade has made rebel groups wealthy, capable of funding the purchase of weapons for longstanding conflicts.

Describing the illicit arms trade as only a global phenomenon simplifies the subject, and Ritzer’s bipolar terms, *glocalization* and *grobalization*, could better explain the complexity. The illicit arms trade is deeply linked to dominant local elements. Hubs of smuggling networks are located in countries with old black arms markets and strong traditions of gun possession and homemade weapons, such as Yemen, Pakistan, the United States and the Philippines. The black arms markets operate mainly in countries featuring spiraling political violence, incursion and hostile relations with neighboring countries. Global proliferation of weapons has fuelled these conflicts rather than created them. State-NSA conflicts are the integration of the “local” and the “global” including the sphere of weaponry.
Pashtun tribes’ arms arsenal is based on traditional gun manufacturing, located in the same villages as in the nineteenth century, and nowadays replicating modern Russian and American guns. Many radical Islamic groups fighting the “infidels” demonstrate some global homogenization (globalization) because they share Salafi ideology, practise operational and logistic cooperation, and employ suicide terror. Some of the Salafi groups even submitted themselves to al Qaeda Central in Pakistan. For instance, Al Shabaab in Somalia, Ansar Bait al Muqadas in Egypt and Jubhat al Nusra in Syria are involved in local state-NSA conflicts that have been radicalized and have become more transnational, waging suicide terrorism domestically and in neighboring countries, and mobilizing foreign nationals, some of whom are suicide bombers. Other rebellious NSAs, such as the Naxal of India and the Popular Liberation Army in the Philippines, share Marxist and Maoist ideas with fellow movements in foreign countries, but they sustain a strong national character, only interacting with global networks of arms smuggling.

Globalization’s effect on state-NSA conflict and the arming question should not be overestimated. NSAs were involved in complex heterogeneous international smuggling networks hundreds of years ago, using complicated deception tactics. Arms smuggling of NSAs remains a physical matter as it used to be in the past. Contemporary rebels and insurgents face the challenge of acquiring weapons and physically moving those, sometimes over long distances like their ancestors. Global information and communication technologies pose difficult challenges to nation-states which are defined in terms of territorial boundaries, but weapons are not a virtual issue; they still need to cross borders in one way or another. Smuggling are deeply linked to territory and lack the ability of trans-world simultaneity. As Scholte notes, the world is not borderless and territory is still relevant. Air-shipping undermines territory but cargo is subject to flight certificates and so weapons are smuggled mainly on land and water. Salehyan correctly argues that NSAs might find recruits and support from diaspora communities and state patrons further abroad, but the ability to launch and sustain combat operations will critically depend on nearness to the target state.855

Mobile phone communication is seen as shifting place-based social relations to decentralized networks. Global smuggling networks rely heavily on wireless communication and feature a decentralized profile, but they are linked to localities and many are strategically centralized with clear command and control systems. Technology has boosted human

855Salehyan, Rebels, 37; Hanson, 24/7, 212.
mobility even through rough terrain. To this day, however, topography has great significance, as the NSA goes underground, by sea and across undeveloped areas on land to hide and defend its smuggling activity, whereas the terrain presents it with limitations and constraints. Regardless of globalization, the business of NSAs’ arming is still *subordinated to both time and space* and cannot be executed at distance. Therefore, understanding the past and present arms smuggling of NSAs is deeply connected to the geographic profile of the theater of operation. NSAs’ arming analysis is basically *geo-strategic*; rebels seeking to acquire weapons first consider the geographic conditions of their environment: the implication of being in a landlocked area or an island, the topography of the borders, the security situation along the borders, the relations between the rebels and neighboring countries and the smuggling routes they might use. These causal conditions are crucial whether internet and mobile phone services are available or not and whether an NSA is transnational or regional.

An analysis of Hezbollah’s powerful weapons arsenal should focus on Syria’s role as a friendly transit state between Iran and Lebanon and the porous Lebanese border. Syria’s strategic importance to both Iran and Hezbollah explains why they are extremely committed to backing the Assad regime. Living in an island-state, an NSA has a greater challenge to acquire weapons than in a country bordering other countries. At the same time, maritime borders are the hardest to block, and an NSA fighting a country with a long coastline and possessing logistic skills has a great advantage. The LTTE’s naval fleet that smuggled weapons from around the world into Sri Lanka is a good example. Colombia borders five states and has a long coastline. The FARC could easily smuggle weapons on land or via the sea into their sanctuaries in southern Colombia, and if one border was well-secured they could use another. Geography facilitates the smuggling system of the FARC. In light of growing interception capabilities by the states’ security services, the underground world is maybe the last secure channel for NSAs to smuggle weapons safely. Being blocked on land and on sea by Israel and partly by Egypt, the Hamas movement took advantage of the terrain in North Sinai, digging hundreds of tunnels across the border with Egypt and smuggling a huge amount of weapons into the Gaza Strip. Geo-strategic considerations of NSAs, some of which have not changed for centuries, *overshadow* the outcomes of globalization.

Arms smuggling networks go through porous borders manifesting weak governments, failed states and certain geographic profiles, but this is not a “borderless world” in a global society as radical advocates of globalization argue. Many states failed to secure their borders against arms smuggling though they possessed powerful regular armies, but borders are far
from being a diminishing function and in some cases neighboring countries jointly improve the security along their borders, reducing the smuggling problem, as in the cases of India-Bangladesh, Thailand-Malaysia and Israel-Egypt. In this context, today’s states are better equipped to respond and counter the arms smuggling problem. Operational intelligence and modern military technologies enable states to intercept arms shipments at an early stage and target arms brokers across the borders. The personal nature of mobile phones serves counter-smuggling efforts.

The final part of the globalization segment deals with the concepts of Systems of systems (SOS) and of Federation of Systems (FOS) which are useful theoretical toll for explaining the sophistication and strength of contemporary smuggling networks. The study finds that complex smuggling networks operated in the pre-global world, demonstrating organizational diversity and geographic distribution, such as in Indochina in the mid-nineteenth century and the arming of the American Revolution in the late eighteenth century. But modern technology has taken smuggling of weapons to a new level. The growing integration between government and non-government players in the illicit arms trade has created complicated structures. For example, the arms smuggling activity of Hamas focused on transporting high quality weapons systems, especially rockets, from Iran into Gaza through various geographical arenas and transport routes. The smuggling of Iranian weapons into Gaza demonstrates SOS because a combination of states and NSAs jointly executed smuggling operations. The smuggling controllers, sitting in Hamas' headquarters in Syria, the members of the Hamas military wing who received the weapons, the operators of the Rafah tunnels and smuggling activities, Bedouin smugglers and weapons traffickers in southern Sinai, members of the IRGC's Quds Force in Iran, Syria and Lebanon and arms dealers in Sudan and Yemen— are all components who differ in their background, but share a common goal, knowingly or unknowingly – to smuggle arms to the Hamas in the Gaza Strip. This factor, as well as their ability to cooperate, is vital components in the system's formation and its ability to survive. Each of these elements had a separate well defined role and there was little mobility between them. For instance, cases of Iranian military officials trafficking weapons to the Gaza Strip themselves are unheard of, probably for reasons of security. Hamas’ smuggling system, dispersed over a large territory, featured a heterogeneous national, cultural, and political system. Modern communication secured connectivity between the system components. They were independent of one another and useful in their own right,
loosely connected, cooperating for economic and political interests. For instance, Sudanese and Egyptian gunrunners smuggled work-seekers and narcotics independently.

The growing instability in the Middle East in recent years demonstrates the evolutionary dimension of the SOS. Their structure and purpose have been modified in light of strategic changes. Iran temporarily stopped sending weapons to Hamas due to Hamas’ support of the Syrian rebels – renewing its support only after the Hamas repented when it lost the support of the deposed Moslem Brotherhood regime in Egypt. Bedouin tribes in Sinai who used to smuggle weapons for Palestinian groups in Gaza became weapons’ customers, waging war against the Egyptian government after the removal of the Moslem Brotherhood rule. Terror infrastructures in Gaza who used to be assisted by arms dealers and smugglers in Sinai are now assisting Jihadigroups in Egypt. The Egyptian army is struggling to defeat Ansar Bait al Muqadas and other local Jihadi NSAs because Sinai is a large weapons and explosives arsenal, making it very easy for the Jihadists to revolt. The Federation of Systems dominant in northeast Africa has proved to be flexible, changing some of its components and labor division, using the advantages of globalization.

Links between black arms markets demonstrates a higher level of system complexity, a FOS. The thesis reveals that illicit arms trades in East Asia, Yemen and the Horn of Africa and North Africa are connected because Chinese weapons are delivered or smuggled to East Africa, finding their way to arms markets in Sudan and Eritrea moving on to NSAs in Egypt and Gaza that are using Libyan arms markets. The latter serve rebel groups in Sudan and Nigeria too. Compared to the arming system of Hamas and Jihadist groups in Egypt, the federation of black arms markets features a bigger system with a very limited amount of centralized control and authority. Using Krygiel terminology, these markets are much more heterogeneous along trans-national dimensions, demonstrating much greater geographic dispersion because they are located in different continents. Each arms market operates independently possessing its own sources of goods and client NSAs; therefore they are characterized by significant autonomy. The FOS of the black arms markets features some degree of competition due to numerous arms traders while Iran has been Hamas’ sole source of advanced weapons systems. Finally, the FOS is based on shared economic interests more than the SOS of Hamas arming that has featured tighter control because Hamas and the Iranian Quds Force are centralized military organizations.

Adapting a system perspective of the global arms trade has significant implications for counterinsurgency and counter terror campaigns. Blocking the smuggling of weapons by SOS and POS is more challenging than in the past because the smuggling networks have remarkable funding and logistic capabilities. They are flexible, ready to exploit new sources of weapons and use new smuggling routes. The black arms markets are not isolated but connected to each other and that makes them sustainable. A divided international community cannot cope with the proliferation of weapons among NSAs because some states are part of the smuggling systems and the international community lacks enforcing tools against them. Western leaders prefer to deal with regional crises such as civil wars and atrocities in Arab and African countries using a policy of containment instead of massive direct intervention. Therefore UN resolutions about monitoring the global arms trade are ineffective.

**Military Thought in light of NSAs’ Arming**

This final segment of the thesis discusses several theoretical propositions about state-NSA conflicts, known as a-symmetric war, in light of other existing knowledge. The comprehensive analysis of NSAs’ arming enables the thesis to debate the nature of war. Some scholars argue the nature of war has changed because states are fighting mainly NSAs and the rival sides engage in small wars. They regard NSAs as decentralized, formless networks, waging local terror and guerrilla warfare, arming with light weapons, fighting amongst the people and therefore hard to target. The nation state is allegedly fighting for its supremacy. Its security forces often lack utility, and instead of trying to defeat NSAs by military means they should mobilize the will of the people. The current thesis rejects this view. NSAs were always present, challenging governments’ rule, waging both irregular and regular wars. There is nothing new with a-symmetric wars; medieval peasants fighting with bows and arrows against mounted cavalry manifested a-symmetry too.\(^\text{857}\) Though Abu-Mus‘ab al Suri advocated for a decentralized individual Jihad it remains a minor part of the global terror which is directed through centralized organizations. Present NSAs are a heterogeneous category, featuring different structures, military doctrines, tactics and armament profiles. Referring to NSAs as a monolithic group is misleading. Small wars and a-symmetric wars are not the same thing and contemporary NSAs fighting conventional wars differ from classical insurgents and terrorists. They wage symmetric and high-intensity warfare against states, such as the war between ISIS and the Iraqi army. Some NSAs, such as

\(^{857}\) Schweitzer and Oreg, 240-243; Harkabi, War, 125.
Hamas and Hezbollah, build their force before or after wars rather than during campaigns, undermining the human dimension which is the center of small wars. 858

Theoretical writing on the a-symmetric wars usually emphasizes the military imbalance between states and NSAs which are weaker. The thesis reveals that in reality this is not always the case, including the arming dimension. The U.S. Army is much better armed than the Afghan Taliban and the Iraqi insurgents. But the Afghan Army and the Iraqi Army are facing great difficulties fighting local NSAs and the Nigerian Army is engaging the powerful Boko Haram. Mali’s military failed to engage the AQIM without French support. In many ongoing conflicts NSAs are equipped with heavy and modern weapons systems – sometimes superior to the states’ military forces. Van Creveld and Smith highlight the lightly armed NSAs, but new processes have emerged and not all insurgents are fighting with knives and rifles. Committed to their concept of huge military imbalance between states and NSAs, Smith and Van Creveld marginalize the fact that armed groups have exploited globalization to build up their force and execute sophisticated operations. The current study suggests the importance of exploring actual arming conditions of each NSA instead of drawing line at 1945 as Smith and Van Creveld do.

NSAs can secure weapons supplies via a state sponsor and mainly the black arms trade. The turmoil in the Middle East has escalated these methods. In Libya, Yemen, Syria, and Iraq armed NSAs have seized large parts of the country, threatening to remove the central governments that have failed to repulse them. In contrast to the concept of Van Creveld and Smith, these NSAs occupy the second or the third stage of Mao’s model of insurgency. Moreover, the Lebanese Hezbollah and Palestinian Hamas are running a state within a state, exploiting the weakness of the Lebanese government and the Palestinian Authority. These NSAs have no problems in operating training camps, facilitating smuggling of weapons and build weapons storages in areas under their control. The better armed NSAs are usually the more military-type organizations, featuring a hierarchical structure, headquarters, training camps, arms depots and uniforms. Even in the nineteenth century military scholars forecasted this trend, arguing that the proliferation of modern weapons via global trade greatly strengthens the “savages” against “civilized powers.” 859 Giap’s old argument that “an army [of a rebel group] fighting for a cause can with appropriate strategy and tactics… conquer a

858 Smith, 301-304, 327-331; Schweitzer and Oreg, 240-243; Harkabi, War, 125.
modern army of aggressive imperialism,” is not valid in numerous contemporary conflicts between states and well-armed and funded NSAs. The Vietminh and later the Viet Cong possessed modern weapons too, but today NSAs’ arming is a more important factor than before.\textsuperscript{860}

Contemporary NSAs have a great advantage over past NSAs because they can attack soft targets in the heart of the rival government, sending suicide bombers or shelling residential areas from a distance using civilians as a human shield. They undermine the sovereignty of states that face greater constraints than before in fighting NSAs, due to growing awareness of fatalities among bystanders and their own forces. In the nineteenth century, the Irish Volunteers attacked strategic targets in London too but that was an exception. Today, quite a few well-funded NSAs, featuring highly operational skills and cross-border connections can launch a worldwide campaign against a state, focusing on civilian targets. The Chechens fought the Russians both in Grozny and in Moscow; Hezbollah fought Israel in South Lebanon, North Israel and in many foreign countries. NSAs are not necessarily weaker than states and any power comparison should take into consideration a variety of factors, such as national morale, internal cohesion and international support. In the same manner, a state’s capacity to counter rebellious NSAs should not be underestimated. Advanced military technologies and surveillance skills have offered governments better tools to counter NSAs and their arming efforts. States could attack NSAs’ interests overseas, targeting their sanctuaries and inflicting heavy damages.

Al Qaeda strategists read and might be influenced by Mao’s guerrilla doctrine. Also, scholars use classical guerrilla texts to explain on-going state-NSA conflicts. The implication however could be problematic. Suicide terrorism and martyrdom attacks of Jihadist NSAs should not be confused with the Maoist’s guerrilla doctrine. Their religious-based strategy contrasts the core of Mao thought. Devoted to their ideology, Jihadists bombers do not attempt “to preserve the force,” as classical insurgents do. On the contrary – what is important for them is the relative pay-off: how much damage has been caused in return for the martyr's life. Revolutionary strategists like Guevara noted that guerrilla “is a means – means to an end… one must use the concept of guerrilla warfare in the limited sense of a

\textsuperscript{860} Giap, People’s War, 28.
method of struggle in order to gain that end,” while some Jihadist as well as Hezbollah leaders emphasized the endless resistance against Israel and the United States.  

Mao and Giap emphasized the popular profile of fighting against a stronger enemy, calling it a “people’s war.” Giap noted the goal is “to educate, mobilize, organize and arm the whole people in order that they might take part in the resistance.” Guerrilla units are composed of the people. But, many of the Salafi-Jihadi groups are closed elite groups, targeting their own people. In Nigeria, Iraq, Pakistan, Egypt and other states, Jihadist NSAs have been massacring civilians and security forces, claiming they are “infidels.” Former AQAP’s commander, Al Muqrin, states: “To anyone who is an enemy of God and his Prophet we say, we have come to slaughter you.” It is doubtful they are keen to “win the will of the people.” Both the activity of well-armed Jihadist NSAs and the writing of al Qaeda’s military strategists reveal a different picture to that which some scholars portray. Jihadi NSAs have a clear strategy that some mistakenly call “irrational,” to establish an Islamic caliphate. While Mao and Giap’s doctrines are embedded with national-cultural influences, Jihadist scholars advocate for a supranational Islamic community. Abu Mus‘ab al Suri criticized al Qaeda for serving “regional aims” rather than the agenda of global Jihad. However, in Mali, Somalia, Yemen, Syria and Iraq, Jihadi NSAs have become more localized, attempting to seize land and establish some type of Islamic government. They use suicide terror as well as guerrilla and regular warfare to implement a strategic goal of forming a new world system.

Contemporary NSAs depart from Mao’s doctrine in another respect. Mao acknowledged that the supply of weapons and ammunition is most difficult but shortage of arms was an operational advantage since it promoted the militarization of the people and the conduct of guerrilla warfare which Mao saw as the key to victory. Giap, like Mao, regarded self-reliance as a prominent feature of the resistance and a manifestation of the spirit of the Communist party rather than being a constraint. Jihadist strategists have called for endless conflict with the United States and Israel, but unlike the Vietminh and the Red Army they enjoy easy access to weapons supplies. Departing from a strategy of self-reliance, they are becoming more militarized rather than attempting to militarize the people.
Mao and Lenin emphasized the historical-cultural context of a guerrilla movement, rejecting “abstract generalizations” on international guerrilla warfare. But the circulation of weapons among different war zones, the operation of trans-Atlantic smuggling networks, the distribution of explosive skills via the internet and mobile phones all demonstrate strong transnational links. The arming of different NSAs makes them more homogenous, tactically and operationally, such as the growing use of IEDs in guerrilla and terror campaigns across the world and the adoption of suicide terrorism by a growing number of Salafi-Jihadi’s NSAs.865

Analyzing NSAs’ arming systems, the thesis outlines the continuing importance of Mao’s perception of the role of the “base areas,” serving as strategic backup for the guerrilla forces. NSAs’ sanctuaries are vital for the buildup of their force, particularly when they possess heavy weapons systems. NSAs use sanctuaries for arms manufacturing, storage, testing and training sites. Connecting to supply lines of weapons, they are located in remote areas of the target state and across the borders in neighboring countries. NSAs’ sanctuaries highlight the subordination of state-NSA conflicts to inter-state relations. Governments’ ability to mobilize security cooperation of a neighboring country is the key to securing borders and blocking smuggling routes.

Theoretically, Mao argued that being logistically self-reliant the guerrilla is independent of provision lines that could be attacked by the enemy, but many of today’s NSAs act differently. The more weapons NSAs obtain from external sources, the greater they are dependent on supply lines. Mao argued that rebels get most of their weapons at the front sending them back to the rear, while contemporary NSAs acquire most of their ammunition through cross-border sanctuaries. Weapons smuggling networks are the supply lines of rebellious NSAs; mostly they are safe from being blocked because of lack of unity in the international community, mistrust among neighboring countries and due to geographic conditions. In recent decades, rarely was an NSA’s operational capability maintained after its supply lines were intercepted. For example, the Sri Lankan army defeated the powerful LTTE, among other reasons, because it destroyed the LTTE’s cargo fleet. Securing porous borders is the key to crippling rebellious NSAs. In previous times military strategists

865Mao, On Guerilla Warfare, 48-50.
encouraged commanders to wage incendiary attacks against the enemy’s storehouses and supply lines. This advice is relevant to present state-NSA’s conflicts.\textsuperscript{866}

The Al Qaeda organization and other Jihadist groups re-defined weapons systems in two ways: the 9/11 attacks demonstrated an NSA seizing an enemy asset and turning it into a deadly weapon. Causing death on a grand scale was a goal in itself. Suicide bombing manifests integration between the warrior and his weapon, making them a deadly tool. As Hoffman notes, the intensive use of suicide bombers, the large scale of devastating terror attacks using complex devices and the transnational profile of Al Qaeda have made terrorism more lethal. Abu Mus‘ab al Suri regarded decentralized and leaderless terror cells as a key for the victory of the Moslem World over the West. But, the history of revolts demonstrates that Al Suri’s individual doctrine is not realistic. Engaging powerful foes, Jihadist NSAs cannot facilitate their strategy without centralized organization. Thus, in contrast to Abu Mus‘ab al Suri’s analysis, ISIS, the leading Jihadi group of the present time is seizing territory in Syria and Iraq through “open front,” after forming regular force, aiming to establish an Islamic state.\textsuperscript{867}

State-NSA conflicts are a permanent component of the international world system; therefore, rebel groups will always require arms and ammunition using mainly the black arms trade. A growing number of NSAs might acquire rockets and missiles, but usually NSAs will continue to be weak in weaponry compared to states, lacking the skills and logistic requirements to maintain and operate heavier weapons systems like fighter aircraft and battle ships. New technologies, listed in the next paragraphs, might help NSAs to attack governments’ interests, but in the near future rebel groups will focus on acquisition and transportation of weapons as before.

- In 2012 in the United States, rifle parts were printed for the first time using three dimension technologies(3D). Scientists forecast that in the future people might fabricate weapons when and where they need them. When available in mass production, the 3D printing technology could remarkably facilitate NSAs’ arming efforts with fewer security risks, creating a serious problem of


\textsuperscript{867} Harkabi, \textit{War}, 192-193.
weapons control for governments. For the time being, weapons are physical artifacts and trafficking will remain a challenge for rebellious NSAs.868

- NSAs might escalate the use of cyber terrorism against states. A single terrorist in a remote location could potentially inflict tremendous damage on a state, attacking critical infrastructure, demonstrating a lethal global weapon. Armed NSAs, such as Hamas and Hezbollah, have conducted simple to moderate cyber-attacks, including Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS), defacement of government Internet sites and attacks on servers, data banks, and computer systems of government and private companies. Hiring highly skilled hackers or assisted by friendly states possessing extreme cyber weapons, NSAs might initiate destructive attacks against core operational systems of critical infrastructures, such as water, electricity, and public transportation. At present, NSAs lack the advanced technologies and operational intelligence needed for these kinds of attacks, which anyway could not guarantee a regime change.869

- NSAs that are committed to terror might intensify the use of modern transportation, aircraft and trains, to execute spectacular attacks. They could target sensitive infrastructures such as gas and nuclear installations, causing mass fatalities.

Summary

The thesis concludes that conflicts involving rulers and governments versus rebel groups have been a persistent aspect of the world’s politics. Rebels have always faced the challenge to build military force including acquisition of arms, although arming was not necessarily the most important factor that shaped the outcomes of their struggle. Over the history of rebellion, rebel groups used the same methods to obtain weapons: self-production, stealing and looting, state sponsorship and illicit arms trade. A set of factors, political, social, cultural, technological and organizational, both facilitated and constrained NSAs’ ability to practise

the four methods of arming. As a result the dynamic of the arming process of NSAs has changed significantly over time.

One of the major changes in the history of rebel groups is that from the nineteenth century, they have employed mainly external sources to acquire weapons rather than self-production because the technology of modern weapons is more difficult to improvise. Another dramatic development, dating from the second half of the twentieth century is the intensive use of IEDs by armed NSAs, enabling them to reduce the power imbalance against the state. Present NSAs could easily acquire and ship weapons systems over long distances using the mechanisms of globalization. Therefore they could sustain long lasting wars against much stronger foes. Still, arms smuggling remains a time-place-based challenge for NSAs, while governments improve their counter-smuggling skills. Consequently, in the near future NSAs’ efforts to obtain weapons will dominate their conflicts against states.

In light of the evidence presented here, this thesis does not accept that a single theoretical model can fully explain how every NSA might seek to arm themselves. The complex history of warfare and rebellion should encourage scholars of NSAs to explore the distinctive circumstances of each NSA, including their geo-strategic position, financial resources, social-cultural background, and operational approach.
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