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Return of the Generals? Global Militarism in Africa from the Cold War to the Present

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Return of the Generals?
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Abstract

Militarism is always historically constructed and context specific and must therefore be studied at the intersection of the global and the local. This article does so by tracing the continuities and changes of global militarism in Africa from the Cold War to the present. It argues that contemporary global militarism on the continent differs from its predecessor in two crucial aspects. First, it is promoted by development actors as much as by military establishments and is more firmly embedded within discourses of development and humanitarianism. Second, contemporary militarism remains focused on political order and stability, but it is more concerned with war and direct combat. The article probes this paradox through an engagement with the concepts of security and securitization. It argues that today's militarism is suffused with the values of security and that it is precisely the logic of security and securitization that gives it its contemporary political force.

Key words: Militarism; Security; Militarization; Securitization; Africa; Development; Terrorism; International Political Sociology

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It is no coincidence that the life, death and rebirth of the study of militarism correspond roughly to the historical periods of the Cold War, its end, and the emergence of what is sometimes labeled the global war on terror. During the bipolar struggle of East versus West, military power and its penetration of social, political and cultural life was a central preoccupation of International Relations, Strategic Studies and Peace Studies alike. As the Berlin Wall crumbled, militarism faded from the scholarly lexicon, replaced by a broader focus on security that was often framed in direct opposition to the previous fixation on states and militaries. Only after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the prolonged, retaliatory wars and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, and the widespread application of military force against violent extremism was militarism rediscovered as an object worthy of study.

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But old concepts are cold comfort in a radically changed geopolitical environment. Much as there are similarities and continuities between the past and the present, the contemporary expressions of militarism and militarization appear in new guises, with subtle inflections and different justifications, doctrines, practices, friends and enemies. Aware of the inadequacies of earlier vocabularies, scholars and observers have given us militarism with adjectives – the two most prominent being 'new militarism' (Bacevich, 2013; Mann, 2003; Stavrianakis and Selby, 2013) and 'liberal militarism' (Edgerton, 1991; Basham, 2013; this issue). Both descriptions seek to capture the contemporary imbrication of military and humanitarian activities, that is, a form of militarism emerging from the marriage of military force and utopian ideologies, leading to imperial ambitions in the name of development, democratization, human rights and liberal values (Bacevich, 2013).

In keeping with the focus of this Special Issue, this article probes the current situation through an engagement with the concepts of militarism, militarization, security and securitization. By tracing a simple - and inevitably somewhat simplified - chronological story of the transformation of militarism from the Cold War to the present, I argue that although the merger of security and development, and thus the concept of security, worked to facilitate a return of militarism, its present form, values, dynamics and relationships cannot be adequately captured by simply returning to the old conceptualization of militarism and militarization, nor can the concepts of security and securitization be abandoned. Instead present-day militarism is infused with the values of security, and its political force is conditional on the prior securitization of underdevelopment and poverty. Put differently, neither militarism, nor security are static or ontologically given, but historically constructed and context specific.

This specificity is recognized by many of the classic works on militarism, arising as they do from the discipline of historical sociology and linking the emergence of different forms of militarism to particular types of social forces and historically-formed social relations between soldiers and civilians (Mann, 1988; Shaw, 1988; Mabee and Vucetic, this issue). At the same time, while militarism is always specific (and often national), it

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is also simultaneously global, intimately linked to and shaped by geopolitics, alliance-making, and dominant norms, technologies and ideologies. A key challenge in studying the forces that mold and shape contemporary militarism is accordingly to capture at one and the same time the global and the local, and their intersection in particular locations.[1] This article attempts to sketch the beginnings such an international political sociology of militarism, tracing the manner in which it has been shaped in interaction, translation and competition between local and global actors, norms and agendas.

It does so by focusing on Africa, a continent that has historically been central to the study of militarism and that offers ample opportunities for investigating its contemporary expressions. During the Cold War, African militaries were rarely far from the corridors of power, while today vast areas of the continent are considered the 'frontline' in the war against violent extremism, with some perceiving an 'arc of instability' stretching from the Sahel in the west to Somalia in the east (UN Security Council, 2013). The African continent is admittedly a rather big canvas for a short article, and the analysis is therefore centred on the broad contours of the forces and transformations that have shaped global militarism. At this level, some generalizations are warranted, given that most countries in the immediate post-independence period shared important colonial legacies, most notably a military that had been devoted to protecting the empire. In the present period, the article hones in on those states that are most closely affected and involved in the fight against violent extremism, although homologous dynamics are at play in many other countries. Importantly, however, rather than offering a detailed case study, the article aims to cast light on global militarism and seeks to place Africa at the heart of the study of contemporary global politics.[2] Drawing on numerous research trips, interviews, and participation in high-level continental meetings on security over several years, it shows that militarism in Africa has been produced in close interaction with the global, but that today's militarism differs from its Cold War incarnation in two crucial respects. First, its main conduits are not only the usual suspects of military establishments and ministries of

[1] Kuus (2009) calls for the study of militarism beyond the nation state, while Bernazzoli and Flint (2009) demonstrate the need for grounded studies.

[2] See Abrahamsen (2017) and Eriksson Baaz and Verweijen (this issue) on the challenges of integrating Africa into the study of international politics and security.

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defence, but development actors, discourses and practices justified in the name of development. Second, despite being couched in the language of development and security, today's militarism is more war-like than its predecessor. As such, the turn to security has paradoxically facilitated a subtle shift from order making towards war making, while retaining a central focus on state building, political order and international stability.

Militarism and Cold War Order

At the time of independence, Africa seemed an unlikely site for militarism to flourish. The continent's militaries were generally regarded as weak and insignificant. Molded to the needs of empire, they were seen as vestiges of imperial rule, an alien imposition whose task had been to defend the colonial power and accordingly had little to offer the new, independent nations (Gutteridge, 1969). Most armed forces had few African officers, and their recruits were often drawn from non-elite groups in rural and peripheral areas.[3] The gap between the continent and Vagts' (1959:13) seminal description of societies infused with military values could thus hardly have been bigger; far from ranking 'military institutions and ways above the ways of civilian life' and far from transposing a 'military mentality and modes of acting and decision into the civilian sphere', most African political leaders and citizens were torn between distrust and disregard for the men in uniform. Indeed, as Ruth First (1970:89) observed, 'of all those belonging to the Western-groomed elite, the military looked the least likely avenue to political influence'.

Within a short decade, however, militaries had made up for lost time and become prominent and often dominant features of the political landscape. During the 1960s military coups became an established route to political power, and in the 1970s more than half of all African states, and up to 65% of the continent's population, were governed by military regimes. By the 1980s civilian rule had become 'a statistical deviation' (Decalo, 1998a: 2), with politicians acutely aware of the generals' readiness to exit the barracks

[3] A reminder that militarism is divided along class, racial, ethnic and gender lines.

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and hence always governing with an eye to keeping the military happy. Given this history, Africa has provided fertile ground for the study of militarism and generated some of the classic works and enduring insights on military rule, civil-military relations, and the relationship between modernization, militaries and political order (Pye, 1962; Huntington, 1968; First, 1970; Welch, 1970; Zolberg, 1973; Decalo, 1976; Mazrui, 1976; Luckham, 1982).

My concern here is neither to explain the emergence of military rule, nor to unpack in detail the social forces and historical contexts that produced and sustained militarism on the continent.[4] Instead I point to some of the key characteristics of Cold War militarism so as to capture its specific modalities and facilitate an analysis of its subsequent transformations. Needless to say, given the prevalence of military engagement in politics in the decades from 1960s to the 1990s, generalizations are fraught with dangers, not least because the intensity of the geopolitical struggle varied from country to country and military rulers came in numerous guises, ranging from the populist revolutionary socialist to the right-wing economic conservative, not to mention the non-ideological brute. For the purpose of this analysis, however, I highlight two key aspects of Cold War militarism; its external dependence and its predominant objective of maintaining international order and stability.

First, militarization in Africa, as in all newly independent regions, was externally dependent and fueled by external actors (Barnett and Wendt, 1992; Thee, 1977). This was particularly the case in terms of the hardware that made militarization possible: At the time of independence, African states (with the exception of South Africa) lacked domestic or regional arms manufacturing industries and accordingly had to rely on imports and give-aways from former colonial masters and Cold War allies to strengthen their arsenals and renew their equipment and technologies. Military training was also provided by outside actors. Inspired by modernization theory, departing colonial powers

[4] Classic treatments are provided by First (1970) and Mazrui (1976). For a typology of military rule, see Decalo (1998b) and for a review of the literature Luckham (1994).

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and allies regarded the professionalization of the army as part of building the modern nation state and ensuring that its institutions took hold on the continent.[5] The post-independence period was accordingly accompanied by generous provision of African officer training in Western military establishments, the two most prominent being the elite academies of Sandhurst in Britain and St. Cyr in France. By 1970 so many states were governed by men with graduation papers from Western military academies that First (1970:3) dryly commented that 'Sandhurst and St. Syr had succeeded the London School of Economics and École Normale William Panty in Dakar as the training ground for Africa's leaders'.

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Thee's (1977:301) observation that great-power militarism was 'largely the root cause and the driving force behind the global spread of militarism' thus holds true also for the African continent. This not to say that African actors had no agency or influence on the development of militarism. They unquestionably did, and militarism had its own internal agents with their own distinct interests and agendas. African states, and more precisely their coercive agents, were able to access resources, pursue their diverse strategies and maintain their power within conditions created by the logic of the Cold War. Accordingly, militarism took on its own life and character in each country, reflecting its specific history and social, political and economic make-up, but in each case the geopolitics of bipolarity imbued militarism with the values of order and stability.

For Africa's Western allies, functioning militaries were not only seen as part of building the modern nation state, but they were also regarded as naturally conservative institutions that could be relied upon to temper and contain the social pressures and dislocations arising from rapidly changing societies. The military was, as Coleman and Brice (1962:359) put it, 'a modernizing and stabilizing source of organizational strength in society, a last stand-by reserve which could be called in, or could take over, to prevent subversion or a total collapse of the social order'. In different words, social disorder was

[5] Enloe (2004) regards the belief that a state without a military is scarcely modern (and barely legitimate) as a defining feature of militarism.

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tantamount to the rise of Communism, and militaries were conservative bulwarks against its spread and central to the maintenance of international stability.

For both sides in the Cold War, support for Africa's militaries and military rulers was a perilous balancing act: supplying clients with weapons, technologies and training carried the risk of destabilizing often turbulent countries and regions. Conversely, withholding support raised the spectre of losing allies to the opposing bloc. As a result, both the East and the West were equally willing to prop up military dictators who held the promise of stability, and to support military coups against those who did not - regardless of their otherwise unpalatable politics. A prime example is President Mobutu of Zaire, whose rise to power and whose three-decade-long reign was directly linked to his shrewd ability to mobilize Western fears of the instability that would result if Communism were allowed to take hold at the heart of the continent.

The primacy of order and stability gave African Cold War militarism its defining characteristics. Definitions of militarism - from those focused on ideology to those centered on quantitative measurements and deeply embedded social practices - invariably include a reference to the constant readiness for war (Eide and Thee, 1980; Kinsella, 2013). Mann (2003: 16-17), for example, defines militarism as 'a set of attitudes and social practices which regard war and the preparation for war as a normal and desirable social activity' (see also Shaw, 2003; 2013; Enloe, 1988; Åhäll, 2016). While African militarism clearly entailed an element of war preparation, especially by virtue of its connection to Cold War struggles and ideologies that normalized armed force as a solution to social and political conflicts, it was predominantly a "cold" war. With the important exceptions of South Africa, the front-line states and the bloody proxy wars in countries like Angola and Mozambique, few African countries had any external enemies or were threatened by hostile neighbours. Neither African states, nor their superpower patrons, had much interest in external war fighting or the creation of armies whose war making or war posturing could not be controlled in a volatile international climate. As a result, much as Africa's militarism was (at least initially) accompanied by relatively high

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military expenditure and expanding armies, these were rarely seriously trained for or employed in active combat.

Instead, militarism was domestically oriented. The justifications for military coups and military rule provide telling evidence: Only very rarely did the generals invoke the threat of external enemies and war as explanation for seizing or holding on to political power.[6] When African militaries referred to their duty to "defend the nation", it was against the misrule and mismanagement of corrupt politicians, against the loss of national glory and pride resulting from the greed, corruption, inefficiency, ideologies and ill-discipline of civilian leaders (Decalo, 1976; 1998; Onwudiwe, 2004). In classic militarist fashion, the virtues of discipline, order and efficiency were extolled as superior qualities intrinsic to the military, placing it above the chaos and raucousness of political life and making it a model for social and political transformation. The extent to which this glorification of military values and organization was shared by the population varied from country to country, and some times from coup to coup. Similarly, the extent to which such justifications for military rule were simply a convenient shield for ruthless self-interest is a moot point in this context; the key is that despite the extensive military presence in politics and society, order and stability - not war and the preparation for war - were the defining features of Africa's militarism in the Cold War period.

Security against Militarism

At the end of the Cold War the study of militarism faded from the discipline of International Relations, even if its practices, as many feminists observed, continued unabated (Enloe, 2007; Mama and Okazawa-Rey 2014; Åhäll, 2016). Within the study of international affairs, however, militarism as an organizing concept was replaced by security, and militarization by securitization. This transformation, Stavrianakis and Selby (2013:10) argue, also entailed a shift in the object of critique 'away from a core concern with the excessive influence of arms, and military institutions and ideologies, on

[6] Onwudiwe (2004:24) includes a table of justifications for military coups, and tellingly there is no mention of national security, defence or the threat of war.

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domestic and international politics, to a broader concern with the practice and legitimatization of exceptional "security" measures, regardless of whether these be the work of the military, or instead of the intelligence services, domestic law enforcement agencies, the media, or any number of state, private sector and international "securitizing actors"'. From this perspective, the problematic of security displaced the critique of military power and violence and 'detracted critical attention from the problems of militarism and militarization' (Stavrianakis and Selby, 2013:11).

There is much to commend this interpretation, and it is undoubtedly the case that the turn to security entailed a concern with a much broader range of threats and issues than those relating to military power and violence. At the same time, the concept of security encapsulated a powerful critique of militarization, militarism and the excessive preoccupation with the state and regime security within IR and the sub-discipline of Strategic Studies (Krause and Williams, 1997). Against this state centrism, "critical security" perspectives argued for a reconceptualization of the referent object of security away from the state towards the individual and society. As was frequently pointed out, the state - and by implication the military - was in many parts of the world a provider of insecurity rather than security, and national security should not therefore be equated with the security and wellbeing of individuals and populations within the nation (Buzan, 1991). In other words, within the logic of "security" militaries are no longer simply providers of security; they also have to be restrained in the name of security.

These critiques, and their adoption and transformations into both development and security policy in the post-Cold War era, are of crucial relevance for understanding today's global militarism and its marriage to humanitarian values and development. [7] Freed from the constraints of bipolarity, Western states abandoned their long-term, often

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[7] Development and security were also linked during the Cold War, but with important differences. In the past, development assistance was given to allies to demonstrate the superiority of liberal democracy over Communism, and could be regarded as an ideological weapon. Development assistance and military assistance, however, were separated and the logic of security did not permeate development thinking in same manner as today. See Ekbladh (2010).

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authoritarian allies and demanded multi-party elections and free market economics in return for continued development assistance, while aid from the former Eastern bloc dried up in the face of mounting domestic challenges. At the same time, without the stabilizing effects of bipolarity, many long-term dictatorships (like that of President Mobutu in Zaire and Siad Barre in Somalia) crumbled and the number of conflicts and civil wars peaked in the 1990s (Straus, 2012). In this context, the relationship between development and security was reinterpreted and gradually poverty and underdevelopment came to be seen as a main cause of conflict and insecurity (Duffield, 2000). By emphasizing the link between poverty and insecurity, and thus securitizing underdevelopment, issues previously considered to fall within the realm of development were now reframed as security issues, requiring security measures and interventions (Abrahamsen, 2005). Summed up in the catch-phrase “there can be no development without security and no security without development”, development and security came to be seen as the two sides of the same coin (see Stern and Öjendal, 2010). The remit of development was thus stretched to embrace previously excluded issues and a whole series of new security-focused initiatives became staple features of development practice.

The status of the military and other security institutions within these discourses and practices is polyvalent and ambivalent, containing a curious blend of simultaneous disdain and respect. On the one hand, the military is perceived as an obstacle to human security, its personnel and culture relics of an authoritarian, violent and oppressive past. On the other hand, because security is a precondition for development, military actors acquire a newfound importance and prestige – if only they can be adequately transformed along democratic and developmental lines.

This ambiguity is evident in Security Sector Reform (SSR), an entirely new invention within the armoury of development. Emerging in the 1990s, SSR sought to transform militaries by subjecting them to democratic, civilian control and instilling respect for human rights among officers and soldiers alike. As Clare Short, the UK Secretary of State for International Development, argued at the launch of SSR: ‘Too often, the developing world is blighted by security sectors which are secretive, repressive,

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undemocratic and inappropriately structured. They soak up resources that would be better used elsewhere, with too much going towards arms expenditure, at the expense of essential public services' (Short, 1999). In this way, the merger of development and security emboldened development donors that had never before touched the issue of military spending not only to demand cuts in defence budgets, but also to insist that militaries be retrained – and restrained – in the name and interest of human security.

At the same time, the development/security nexus accorded a new importance to diverse security actors. Because development now required security, militaries and other security institutions became key beneficiaries of development assistance and their activities – when reformed in accordance with the precepts of human security – were reconceptualized as indispensable to development and poverty reduction. Moreover, not only did the armed forces and the police become favoured recipients of development, but the actors deemed best positioned to deliver this assistance were their counterparts in donor states. Militaries and security establishments in the North eagerly embraced their new roles within this broadened security/development agenda as a means of maintaining their relevance in a rapidly changing geopolitical environment that emphasized human security, humanitarian intervention and peacekeeping rather than defence and warfare. As a result, military and police personnel from countless countries descended on Africa to train and reform its security institutions, while private security companies re-branded themselves as sub-contractors of the numerous SSR programmes funded by bilateral and multilateral development organizations.[8] In this way, development issues have not only become security issues, and vice-versa, but security actors have also come to occupy a more prominent place and voice within development both as recipients and as implementers of development assistance. This ambivalence of security institutions within the security/development agenda, that is, their simultaneous status as objects of reform and agents of change, as potential wreckers of development but also the guarantors of that very same process, has been heightened after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

[8] For insightful illustrations, see Frowd and Sandor (this issue) and Parashar (this issue).

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Militarism and Development/Security

Militarism has been on the rise in many parts of the world since 9/11 (Bacevitch, 2013; Mann, 2003; Shaw, 2013; Stern and Stavrianakis, this issue), and Africa is no exception. In quantitative terms, the data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) tell a clear story: Military hardware, including tanks, missiles and artillery, is flowing into Africa faster than into any other region. African arms imports grew by 45% from 2005 to 2014, and two out of three African countries substantially increased their military spending over the last decade. Continental military expenditure grew by 65% over the same period, and in 2013 alone military spending rose by 8.3% - a rate of growth outpacing all other parts of the world (*The Economist,* 2014; www.sipri.org).

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Although many African countries have joined the ranks of weapons manufacturers and exporters, most are still dependent on imports and give-aways to maintain their military prowess.[9] Contemporary militarization, like that of the Cold War, thus remains fueled by international actors, but following the merger of development and security a range of development and humanitarian actors have joined the usual agents of war, working side by side with militaries, ministries of defence and security contractors - all invoking development as a justification for military and security assistance. As Bacevich (2013: 25) puts it, various kinds of 'do-gooders' are often the most enthusiastic supporters of today's militarism, seeking to 'harness military power to their efforts to do good'.

The link between such efforts to do good and contemporary militarism is mediated by a concept of security that signifies "human security" and not simply "national security", or the integrity of the state. In this respect, development discourse and practice stand in a tension-filled, yet central, relationship to militarism. The various development initiatives grouped under the label of SSR, for example, were designed in part precisely to restrain militaries and tame their excessive use of force against civilians. They belong to a family of interventions intended to build capable, legal-rational Weberian states with a

[9] The main weapons exporters to Africa are Russia, France, China, USA and Ukraine, in that order (SIPRI).

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monopoly of the use of force, which entails reorienting public security forces away from political involvement, domestic oppression and towards more efficient, professional and accountable performances of their legitimate security functions. As such, many of these training and capacity-building projects share a Cold War focus on order and stability, and their outcomes are often unspectacular, having as much to do with mundane, bureaucratic security practices and state building as with militarism per se (see Frowd and Sandor, this issue).

That said, after the attacks of 9/11, donors have increasingly prioritized the "harder", technical aspects of SSR and the imperative to "train and equip" has come to dominate over more developmental and political ambitions to limit defence spending and ensure democratic oversight, accountability and respect for human rights (Scheye, 2010). Reforming military institutions, cultures and practices is not only a long and difficult process, but such changes are also frequently resisted because they contradict the interests of recipient governments and elites (Scheye, 2010). The ambivalent status of military actors within the development/security nexus as both obstacles and guarantors of security has thus become more apparent and difficult to reconcile, and efforts to restrain have lost ground to demands for capacity to defend, leading close observers to speak of the militarization of SSR (Albrecht and Stepputat, 2015).

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Direct support for African militaries and counter-terrorism strategies has also expanded rapidly in recent years. The US Africa Command (AFRICOM) is by far the most striking of these new partnership and forms of cooperation. Authorized by President Bush in 2005, AFRICOM's activities and reach now span the continent. About 4000 troops are stationed at its base in Djibouti, which serves as a continental hub for counter-terrorism training and operations. More than 15 different regular military exercises and Theatre Security Cooperation programmes take place under the command's auspices, and the US has established so-called co-operative security locations where equipment and supplies are stored for military emergencies in 10 countries (Turse, 2015; Schmitt, 2017). Increasingly the US strategy relies on Special Forces rather than conventional troops, with Navy SEALs and other special operators working with African allies on specific

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missions, such as targeted killings of Al-Shabaab fighters in Somalia and training Nigerian commandos in the fight against Boko Haram. While no other international actor can match the unprecedented military footprint of the United States, many, including France, the UK, China and the EU, have massively increased their military engagement on the continent.

The main benefactors of both development/security assistance and military cooperation are those states most directly involved in the active fight against violent extremism. Prime examples are Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia. The latter two have sent troops to fight Islamic militants in Somalia, and both have engaged in bombings and direct combat within Somali territory. Uganda is the main contributor to the AU peacekeeping mission in Somalia, and has received more troops training from the US in the last decade than any other country in sub-Saharan Africa except Burundi, another key troop contributor. The Sahel states are also increasingly trained and equipped to combat extremist groups in the region, with countries like Mali, Chad, Niger and Burkina Faso benefitting from substantial military and security assistance, including through the Trans-Saharan Counter Terrorism Partnership and the annual Flintlock exercise involving African, US and allied counter-terrorism forces.

Paradoxically then, despite being embedded within narratives of development and humanitarianism, today's global militarism is in many ways more oriented towards war and active combat than the militarism of the Cold War.The logic of bipolarity dictated an overriding interest in order and stability, and strong militaries were tasked primarily with domestic order making. Political order, state building and containment of local conflicts remain key objectives, but contemporary assistance is also centrally focused on defeating violent extremist groups that are perceived as threats to domestic and international stability. This requires African militaries to be combat ready and prepared to fight, in defence of development, both within and beyond their own borders.

Untangling this paradox requires an engagement with the concepts of security and securitization, and approaching today's global militarism from the perspective of its

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African articulation shows that it is crucially linked to the prior securitization of underdevelopment. The gradual merger of development and security has transformed poverty from an issue concerning primarily the wellbeing of the poor to an issue concerning international stability (Abrahamsen, 2005). This is a social and political process, performed by donor and recipient states alike. In donor states the securitization of underdevelopment and weak, fragile states facilitated the fusion of development and security assistance, so that increasing portions of development budgets can now be allocated to security activities.[10] Contemporary development policies thus state unambiguously and unashamedly that development assistance must not only reduce poverty, but also serve the national security interest of donors. President Obama, for example, proudly announced that ‘My national security strategy recognizes development not only as a moral imperative, but as a strategic and economic imperative’ (The White House, 2010). Similarly, the UK’s aid strategy is entitled ‘Tackling Global Challenges in the National Interest’ (DFID, 2015: 3), emphasizing that development assistance must be ‘squarely in the UK’s national interest’ .

In recipient states the securitization of underdevelopment and poverty is often actively encouraged and promoted in the interest of attracting external security assistance. Not only do many states and their military institutions speak the language of violence arising from poverty, they are also eager to present domestic insurgent groups not only as threats to their own security, but to international stability (see Fisher and Anderson, 2015; Hansen, 2013; Jourde, 2007). Indeed, at high-level continental meetings about conflict and security it is often striking how little distinguishes the securitization discourses of African leaders and policy-makers from those of Western actors.

The securitization of underdevelopment, in other words, is the condition of possibility for a global militarism justified in the name of human security and development. This is not to say that military and security assistance to fight violent extremism is unjustified or

[10] The OECD’s Development Assistance Committee has twice (in 2005 and 2016) changed the rules for what qualifies as Official Development Assistance (ODA) in order to allow more security-related activities to be reported as development spending.

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politically and morally wrong, nor that it cannot play a developmental role. Military values are not static, nor are the military's means and justifications of conflict resolution. Today's militarism is suffused with security and the values of development, and since the end of the Cold War the military and other security actors have adopted (and transformed) the discourses and practices of human security and development. [11] It is precisely this engagement with and endorsement of security that enables military actors and solutions to occupy such a central place within contemporary politics and society, both as recipients and implementers of development assistance. Development actors, in turn, have helped produce a normative space where military force can be invoked in defence of civilian and humanitarian ends, and often work side by side with military actors. AFRICOM, for example, has a Senior Development Advisor from USAID assigned to its staff. As a result, military functions can be conducted in the name of security and development rather than with reference to war and martial values, and military force emerges as part of a larger civilian development enterprise.

Herein lies perhaps the greatest danger of today's militarism. By fusing development to defence of the national interest, it risks not simply diverting resources away from poverty reduction towards military and security sectors. It also risks strengthening the power and influence of military and security establishments vis-à-vis other sectors of society, including civilian leaders and politicians, by virtue of their centrality to issues of development and security. Alternatively, we might see new forms of alliances emerging between political leaders and militaries, where the latter's influence is increasingly evident in social and political affairs and where political dissent can be suppressed in the name of security and stability - by troops that are better trained and better equipped thanks to generous foreign assistance. The gradual erosion of democracy and the prominence of military officers in public and political life in many of the top recipients of foreign security assistance, including Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya and Chad, might be a first indication that such changes are underway. Unlike during the Cold War, the

[11] One outcome, for example, is a more gender neutral army that is inclusive of women. According to Clarke (2008), however, the culture of masculinity has not been challenged by SSR.

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military coup might thus no longer be a required route to political power, which can instead be exercised through alliances, incorporation and gentle reminders. While external actors may fuel this militarism, and simultaneously be wary of its consequences, the primacy of international security and stability means that they are unlikely to call too loudly for democracy and freedom. On this point, at least, today's global militarism differs little from that of the Cold War.

Conclusion

With the end of the Cold War and the return of democracy in the early 1990s, the study of militarism in IR ground to a halt. As this Special Issue demonstrates, it is now back, although as this article suggests, today's global militarism is not untouched by the interregnum. Instead its key features cannot be captured without reference to security and securitization, the concepts that for a brief period displaced and overshadowed it.

While there are no clear breaks or radical ruptures between the militarism of the past and that of the present, militarism is always historically constructed and context specific, shaped by the confluence of global and local actors, norms, ideologies and technologies. By analyzing the shifting modalities of global militarism and its articulation on the African continent, this article shows that much as militarism remains fueled by external sources and retains a strong focus on political order and stability, its contemporary imbrication with security and development gives it a distinct character and force.

Paradoxically, transformations that initially entailed a critique of militarization and militarism have ended up according a new importance to security actors and laying the groundwork for new expressions of militarization and militarism. The securitization of underdevelopment and poverty served to break down the anti-militarism of development, paving the way for the inclusion of military actors as both recipients and implementers of development assistance. At the same time, the logic and understanding of security has been gradually adopted by military and other security actors, often in their own institutional interests. Nevertheless, security actors now speak the language of human

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security and perform their activities, including warfare, in the name of security and development, while development discourse has helped normalize and legitimate the view of armed force as a path to development, peace and order. It is precisely this logic and the ability to mobilize the dreams and hopes of development in justification of military activities that has enabled diverse security actors to augment their role and influence in contemporary society and politics, and their position cannot be understood without reference to their endorsement and embeddedness within discourses and practices of security and development. Accordingly, we cannot abandon the study of security and securitization in favour of a focus on militarism and militarization alone. Instead the two must proceed apace, because contemporary global militarism is suffused with security and securitization and it is precisely the logic of security and securitization that gives it its contemporary political force.

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