

- a more explicit belief that Western preponderance is the key to international peace and stability; and,
- a renewed (and greater) attention to regulating "inhumane" and "uncivilized" conventional weapons.

There are, however, a few important limitations to this chapter that should be noted at the outset. First, since the main thrust of the study as a whole is to explore the cross-cultural dimensions of attempts to "globalize" or "universalize" the Western experience, this chapter spends less time exploring how the Western historical and cultural inheritance influenced the evolution of key NACD concepts, and more time detailing what these key concepts are. In this respect, it differs from other case studies in this volume in asserting, rather than demonstrating, the complex "genealogy" behind Western NACD norms and concepts. Second, since the driving force behind the *idea* of arms control was the American foreign and security policy establishment, this chapter concentrates on the American experience and the "cultural baggage" that influenced it, and often equates the "Western" position with it. Insofar as the United States is still the driving force behind NACD ideas and practices, this is not problematic, but obviously, there are significant differences in national security cultures within the "West" (Canada is different from France, for example). Third, we do not argue that the pursuit of interests is unimportant to understanding contemporary Western security and NACD policy. But instead of focusing exclusively on "objective" interests and preferences, we draw attention to the backdrop of "norms, accounts and social definitions" that have helped to define Western interests, shape perceptions of threat and inform policy prescriptions in the arms control and non-proliferation arena.<sup>4</sup> Finally, the arguments made in this chapter are offered as what one scholar has labelled "aids to a sluggish imagination"—as spurs to greater reflection on the "constructedness" and cultural-specificity of Western NACD-related perceptions and practices.<sup>5</sup>

### Core Elements of Western Security and NACD Culture

The cultural and social origins of Western security culture stretch back to the early modern era, and arguably even further. Rational deterrence theory, for example, stands as the last in a long line of attempts to systematize approaches to war and strategy. As Azar Gat clearly demonstrates, "the military thinkers of the Enlightenment maintained that the art of war was [also] susceptible to systematic formulation, based on rules and principles of universal validity."<sup>6</sup> This way of approaching policy problems was not confined to strategic studies, but has influenced virtually all realms of public policy and management. It "has become, during almost two centuries, so deeply embedded in Western consciousness

---

<sup>4</sup> Mark C. Suchman and Dana P. Eyre, "Military Procurement as Rational Myth: Notes on the Social Construction of Weapons Proliferation," *Sociological Forum*, 7:1 (1992), 148; Suchman and Eyre, "Status, Norms and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons: An Institutional Theory Approach," in Peter Katzenstein, ed, *The Culture of National Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 79-113.

<sup>5</sup> Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1967), 38.

<sup>6</sup> Azar Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 29, 25-53. See also Azar Gat, "Positivism, Romanticism and Military Theory, 1815-1870," in Azar Gat, *The Development of Military Thought: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 1-45.