

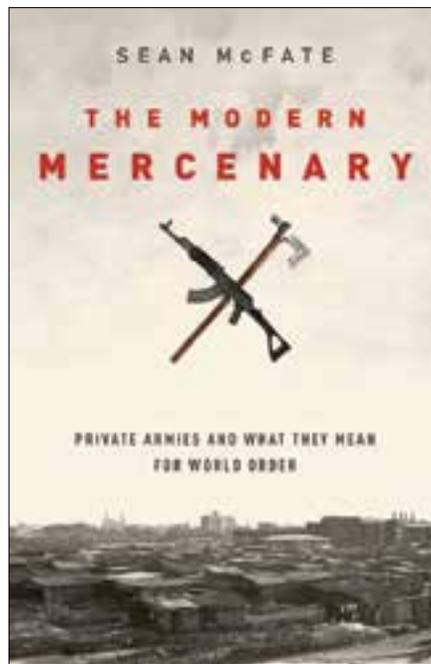
the authors of the study disregarded the heroism of the 369<sup>th</sup> and produced a document that was blatant in its racism.

The chief was advised to maintain racial segregation and to ensure that all-black fighting units were commanded by whites. The study concluded, incorrectly, that blacks believed themselves to be inferior to whites and that they were “by nature” subservient, lacking “initiative and resourcefulness” because, as stated in the report, “[t]he cranial cavity of the Negro is smaller than the white; his brain weighs 35 ounces contrasted with 45 for the white.” Most damning, however, was the illogical argument that “[i]n physical courage . . . the American Negro falls well back of the white man and possibly behind all other races.” This statement flew in the face of the numerous black soldiers who had served with honor in the Civil War, Indians Wars, and Spanish-American War and were awarded congressional medals of honor in recognition of their courage and valor. (No medals of honor were awarded during the 20<sup>th</sup> century for World War I.) The report was prepared by the entire student body and faculty at the Army War College in 1924 and 1925 with nine additional iterations appearing prior to the start of World War II; the same racist notions were included in each report. The United States in general—and the U.S. Army in particular—paid a steep price for allowing the country’s deeply entrenched racism to define—and limit—the use of a courageous, determined, and highly capable fighting force in World War II.

*Harlem’s Rattlers* is a soundly researched and documented history that all Americans—and especially military officers—should read. JFQ

---

Dr. Alan L. Gropman is Professor Emeritus in the Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resources Strategy at the National Defense University.



### The Modern Mercenary: Private Armies and What They Mean for World Order

By Sean McFate  
Oxford University Press, 2014  
235 pp. \$29.95  
ISBN: 978-0199360109

Reviewed by T.X. Hammes

At their peak, contractors comprised more than 50 percent of U.S. personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan. Furthermore, despite complaints about contractor performance, the Pentagon has stated that contractors will make up half of any future U.S. force deployments. Why? Because they work. This reality requires defense professionals to seek a deeper understanding of what contractors do and the implications for future conflict—making Sean McFate’s *The Modern Mercenary* a very timely book. In it, he not only carefully examines contractors, but also describes the changing international environment in which they will operate.

McFate does not claim his book covers all aspects of contracting. Rather, he focuses on the most controversial element: private military companies or, in

his words, “the private sector equivalent of combat arms.” As he notes, the most disturbing aspect of the Pentagon’s increasing reliance on contractors is “the decision to outsource lethal force.” He places these companies in two categories. Those that directly apply military force are “mercenaries,” while those that train others to do so are “enterprisers.” These categories represent two distinct markets. Mercenaries exist as a free market in which each individual sells his or her services directly to the buyer, offering the means of war to anyone who can afford it. Enterprisers represent a mediated market in which the company is an arbitrator between the individual and the buyer. Essentially, the company recruits and organizes personnel to fulfill specific mission/contract requirements as defined by the buyer. For good business reasons, enterprisers are more discriminating in both the clients and tasks they accept. Unfortunately, if business demands, enterprisers can easily slip to the mercenary side of the scale.

McFate does not see mercenaries and enterprisers in the same light. Using Somalia as a case study, he argues that free market mercenaries are likely to contribute to increased instability and will not improve a state’s chances of success. In contrast, enterprisers offer a state an opportunity for success. He uses Liberia as a case study where, as a DynCorp employee, he participated in raising and training the new Liberian army. However, his argument for enterprisers is weakened by the lack of success in Iraq and Afghanistan despite the presence of dozens, if not hundreds, of enterprisers.

In one of the most interesting aspects of this intriguing work, McFate applies the concept of neo-medievalism—the belief that the world is becoming increasingly non-state-centric and multipolar—to describe the emerging global security environment. While states will remain major players, overlapping authorities and allegiances will have major impacts on how and why wars are fought and who fights them.

In this environment, McFate states, “the private military industry has a bright future. This multi-billion-dollar industry

will not simply evaporate once the United States withdraws from overseas deployments such as Afghanistan. In fact, the opposite will occur: contractors will help fill the security vacuum left by US forces. . . . Already, private military companies of all stripes are seeking new opportunities in conflict zones in Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.” He notes four trends that are driving this global expansion. First, private companies are resilient and strive to grow. They will be assisted in that growth by the next two trends: globalization and indigenization. Globalization is driving military contracting to seek overseas markets. At the same time, the numerous third country nationals who were hired by U.S. firms in Iraq and Afghanistan will take their new business and technical skills home and indigenize the market. Finally, the market will bifurcate into two major categories: mediated and free-market segments.

McFate’s meticulously researched and well-presented work concludes that “private military actors worsen security in a free market such as Somalia but increase it in a mediated market such as Liberia and under the right market conditions could even prove a powerful tool for the United Nations and others.” This reviewer found McFate’s two categories useful, but they understate the complexities of modern military contracting. The reader must understand that McFate is really describing a spectrum from pure individual mercenary to major corporate enterpriser.

McFate concludes by cautioning that the:

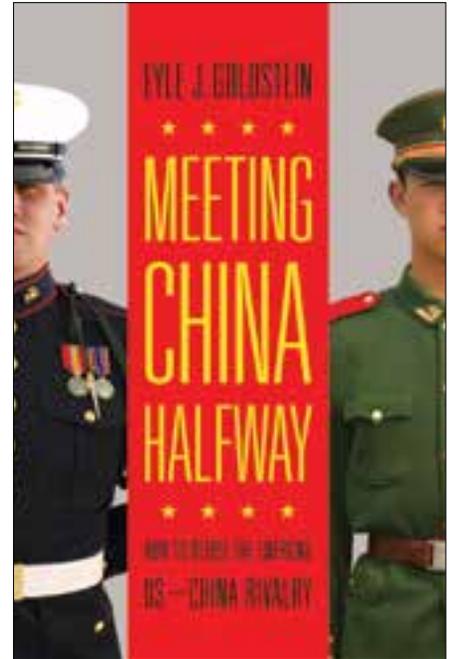
*United States has limited regulation of and oversight over the private military industry despite employing it widely. This creates opportunities for abuse by contractors as firms subtly steer client decisions in favor of profit over policy goals, altering strategic outcomes in the process. The objectives of [private military companies] and their clients will differ, just as those of the condottieri and the provveditori did in the Middle Ages.*

If he is right about the growth of military contracting—and current Defense

Department policy indicates he is—any U.S. forces deployed overseas must expect to work with, and perhaps fight against, armed contractors. It is a subject that requires our professional attention, and *The Modern Mercenary* is a great place to start. JFQ

---

Dr. T.X. Hammes is a Distinguished Research Fellow in the Center for Strategic Research, Institute for National Strategic Studies, at the National Defense University.



## Meeting China Halfway: How to Defuse the Emerging U.S.-China Rivalry

By Lyle J. Goldstein  
Georgetown University Press, 2015  
400 pp. \$29.95  
ISBN: 978-1626161603

Reviewed by Christopher Nelson

China is on the minds of many today. In fact, an informal term has been coined for the group of scholars and defense officials who spend most of their waking hours thinking, talking, and writing about China. They are so-called China Watchers. In no other foreign policy realm is a similar term used with such frequency. This alone should give everyone pause. Watching for what, exactly?

With “watchers” there comes readers. There is an unending stream of books and magazine articles on China. Of course, this is both frustrating and promising. It is frustrating because there are too many books to choose from; many of us simply do not have the time to read, let alone to think about many of these issues. It is promising because with more minds turned to the challenges and opportunities of a rising China,