

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:

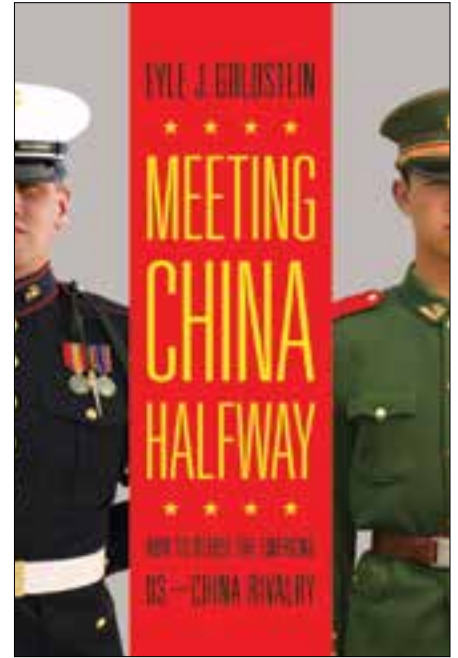
*United States has limited regulation of and oversight over the private military industry despite employing it widely. This creates opportunities for abuse by contractors as firms subtly steer client decisions in favor of profit over policy goals, altering strategic outcomes in the process. The objectives 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

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## 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,

statistically one hopes, good ideas and solutions will surface.

Policy books on China generally fall into one of two categories. First, there is the realist camp, which is occupied by authors and officials who believe the United States should engage China on issues of mutual concern (for example, humanitarian assistance/disaster relief and antipiracy operations), yet at the same time ensure the U.S. military, particularly the U.S. Navy, is prepared, armed, and equipped to defeat Chinese aggression if necessary. At the heart of the realist opinion is the belief that humanity is inherently competitive and nonbenevolent and that conciliatory gestures will only weaken one's national security. Aaron Friedberg's book *The Contest for Supremacy* falls somewhere in this description. The second type of policy book comes from the liberal internationalism crowd. This view stresses that problems are better resolved in an international forum: a system composed of states in which diplomacy reigns supreme and where bargains and compromise are the ultimate goals. Hugh White's book *The China Choice: Why We Should Share Power* fits this description.

Lyle J. Goldstein, then, in his ambitious new book *Meeting China Halfway* continues where White leaves off. Goldstein, a professor at the Chinese Maritime Studies Institute at the U.S. Naval War College, and a fluent Chinese speaker and reader, takes White's argument for sharing power with China and expands on it, arguing that the United States needs to develop "cooperation spirals." With these spirals, Goldstein asserts, "trust and confidence are built over time through incremental and reciprocal steps that gradually lead to larger and more significant compromises." Goldstein then proceeds to take a host of issues that concern the United States and China—Taiwan, the economy, the environment, the developing world, the Persian Spring, the Korean Peninsula, Southeast Asia, and finally, India—and then applies a cooperation spiral to each. This adds up to a healthy amount of policy prescriptions. By the end of the book Goldstein has provided, for the United States alone, at

least 50 policy recommendations tied to cooperation spirals.

Take, for example, the current U.S.-China hot topic issue: the South China Sea. In the chapter titled "The New 'Fulda Gap,'" Goldstein acknowledges that the South China Sea is the region with the "greatest arena of contention." He then offers 10 policy recommendations—5 for the U.S. and 5 for China—to stabilize the region. He begins with the United States allowing the Chinese to participate in Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training exercises. Following this, the Chinese could propose a joint counterpiracy patrol in the Strait of Malacca. Next, the United States should propose a Southeast Asia coast guard forum, and then the Chinese should open the Hainan naval complex to visits from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Goldstein also recommends that the United States should reduce its surveillance flights in parts of the South China Sea, and then China should clarify its island claims. Finally, he works his way up to the last of 10 policy prescriptions: the Chinese should end their military cooperation with the Philippines and Indonesia, and the United States should then end its military cooperation with Vietnam. His book illustrates this back-and-forth quite nicely by using a graphic in each chapter showing the cooperation spiral using arrows and text in English and in Chinese.

Goldstein anticipates the criticism that his book will generate. Namely he knows that there are plenty of critics who will label his idea of cooperation spirals appeasement. These critics, of course, are coming from the more hawkish corners of the U.S. Government, including the military. Yet a more pressing criticism is that if U.S. and Chinese interests are so opposed then any conciliatory efforts are meaningless. Even if China and the United States accepted some provisions of Goldstein's cooperation spiral, this would not ensure greater security; it would only mean that both nations have found some common ground on issues that are at the periphery. The crux of the matter still remains: The United States desires a region that behaves and abides

by one set of rules, but China, on the other hand, desires a region that abides by another.

Goldstein has written a book that is ambitious and is one of few China policy books arguing for a conciliatory way forward in this tense and possibly deadly game of brinkmanship. Regardless if you agree with Goldstein's arguments or prescriptions, any China Watcher will get something out of his close reading of Chinese and English policy and military documents. To his credit, Goldstein notes that there are voices in China that are not monolithic and xenophobic. To believe in an inevitable fight between the United States and China is fatalistic. Rather, one should read Goldstein's work with both an open mind and healthy skepticism. JFQ

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