was born and driven from the executive, and Tony Blair himself – thus
adding more empirical evidence for recent assertions of a ‘presidential’
style of decision-making under New Labour. Dover’s is thus a thorough
test of LI, and produces vital corrections to the approach.

Yet, to others more sceptical of LI’s merits, its invocation will detract
from the usefulness and interest of the work. The theoretical remarks in
the book are unlikely to revitalize the debate over Europeanization in EU
studies, where scholars realized a long time ago that an inability to agree on
what the concept means prevents it from assuming genuine importance as
a social scientific concept. More importantly, as Dorman noted, British aca-
demia is by and large ignoring issues of defence, and thus the time devoted
to theory could have been more fruitfully spent on details about the run-up
and consequences of St Malo, and the present state of European/British
defence. As it is, the book is rather narrowly focused on the particulars
of the decision-making surrounding St Malo, while leaving aside crucial
issues of the possible domestic, European and international influences lead-
ing towards a genuinely
European
defence policy in Britain and in the EU.

Tensions within the choice of an LI framework become obvious when
Dover considers Europeanization in the arms trade. This is the most valuable
chapter of the book, and would appear not to have formed part of the doctoral
dissertation from which the book derives – it is noticeably better written and
edited. Here Europeanization is not being driven solely by national govern-
ments; their monopoly is in fact being eroded by ‘a trade driven cross-pillar
approach’, which Dover labels a ‘supra nationalist attack on core national
sovereignty’ (p. 117). One is left with the feeling, however, that the potential
for changes being forced on member states from the EU institutions in the
arms trade would not appear so ‘paradoxical’ had the assumptions of LI not
been imported in the first place. Nevertheless, although the persuasiveness
of the argument largely rests on the reader’s views on LI, the book remains
a valuable empirical contribution to British defence studies.

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Simon Chesterman and Chia Lehnardt (eds), From Mercenaries to Markets:
The Rise and Regulation of Private Military Companies (Oxford: Oxford

This edited collection of original works explores the growing influence of
private military and security companies (PMCs and PSCs), i.e. commer-
cial firms that offer various military services ranging from training and
advice to combat in the domain of violence where states have a traditional
monopoly. The book focuses on the conceptual definition and scope of
activities of these companies, as well as on the mechanisms to regulate the
The contributors use multiple cases to illustrate the variation in the types of companies, regulatory frameworks and security environments in which these companies operate. The argument is organised around four core topics of PMC governance: concerns, challenges, norms and markets.

The first part deals with conceptual and definitional aspects of PMCs. The authors draw a distinction between traditional mercenaries, i.e. individuals who sell their services and who have been outlawed by international law, and the private companies who sell services as a part of corporate offering. There is little regulation of the industry and sometimes the lines between mercenaries and private corporations are blurred. The failure of the international community to intervene successfully on multiple instances in civil conflicts has led to the growing demand for private corporations offering such services. This has increased international attention to PMCs and, although the idea of security privatisation has generally been endorsed in the West, there are multiple problems associated with their regulation. Anna Leander draws attention to the fact that private companies often become involved in politics through lobbying or other means and, therefore, they need further regulation due to the ‘democratic deficit’ in military hierarchy and the growing influence of these companies in the civil–military relations (pp. 56–60).

The contributors discuss the importance of several different levels of regulations for PMCs: international law, state responsibility, contract-based regulation and self-regulation. The relatively loose interpretation and applicability of the norms of international law often leaves these companies unaware of their legal status. Sometimes states implicitly or explicitly deny responsibilities when hiring private companies and use them as tools for their policies. On other occasions ‘PMCs do not merely implement policy or concrete decisions, but shape them’ (p. 156). Louise Doswald-Beck argues that under the doctrine of state responsibility states which hire these companies are responsible for violations committed by them because the transfer of functions includes transfer of responsibility as well (p. 138). Laura Dickinson draws examples from the privatisation of other sectors, such as prison-management, healthcare, welfare and education, where contracts have been drafted to ‘explicitly extend relevant norms of public international law to private contractors’ (p. 218). She makes the case that contract-based regulation can be applied to PMCs. This approach has the advantage of enhanced oversight and enforcement backed up by ‘sufficient numbers of trained and experienced governmental contract monitors’ (p. 224). The authors agree that a one-size-fits-all approach would be inappropriate and support regulation introduced ‘at different levels simultaneously’ that will consist of ‘both national and international components’ (p. 239). Andrew Bearpark and Sabina Schultz list the advantages of self-regulation, because ‘consumers favor companies that have established themselves as good corporate citizens’ (p. 250).

Chesterman and Lehnhardt make the case in favour of ‘a governance regime that strikes a balance between commercial and public interests, between voluntary and imposed regulation’, but admit that their work
fails to explain how control of private military activity should be exercised (p. 256). Actually, it seems that there is a bigger problem – the book does not draw the necessary distinction between theoretical analysis of the phenomenon of PMCs and policy recommendation for the advancement of the industry. James Cockayne, for example, suggests the principal–agent model where states are the principals and the private companies are the agents of the relationship. He warns that ‘principals can become dependent on their agents’ if relations between states and the private companies are not carefully structured. This theory could serve as a framework around which the contending arguments could be presented in the book. By the same token, the fourfold system of licensing and certification of the PMCs, discussed by Kevin O’Brien, is a mechanism to regulate the markets that can be presented within the principal–agent framework. The lack of a comprehensive framework of analysis also weakens the presentation of the cases: while the authors cite evidence from Africa (Sierra Leone, Angola and Equatorial Guinea) and Iraq, the book fails to draw a sharp distinction between cases of good versus bad regulations and practices for outsourcing security towards private companies.

In conclusion, despite some weaknesses, this edited volume is a solid work that shapes the debate in the emerging literature on private military companies. It suggests exciting scholarly space for future theoretical and empirical research and is a must-read for those who are interested in international security, conflict, law and institutions.

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