Mercenaries in Asymmetric Conflicts

In *Mercenaries in Asymmetric Conflicts*, Scott Fitzsimmons argues that small mercenary groups must maintain a superior military culture in order to successfully engage and defeat more numerous and better-equipped opponents. By developing and applying competing constructivist and neorealist theories of military performance to four asymmetric wars in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Fitzsimmons demonstrates how mercenary groups that strongly emphasize behavioural norms that encourage their personnel to think creatively, make decisions on their own, take personal initiative, communicate accurate information within the group, enhance their technical proficiency, and develop a sense of loyalty to their fellow fighters will exhibit vastly superior tactical capabilities than other mercenary groups. Fitzsimmons also shows that although the victorious mercenary groups occasionally had access to weapon systems unavailable to their opponents, the balance of material capabilities fielded by the opposing military forces had far less influence on the outcome of these asymmetric conflicts than the culturally determined tactical behaviour exhibited by their personnel.

Scott Fitzsimmons is Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow in the University of British Columbia's Department of Political Science.
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SCOTT FITZSIMMONS
University of British Columbia
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I would like to acknowledge the invaluable advice and other assistance offered by Professors Rob Huebert and Pablo Policzer of the University of Calgary’s Department of Political Science and by Professor Holger Herwig of the University of Calgary’s Centre for Military and Strategic Studies. I would also like to acknowledge the gracious financial support provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and the Killam Trusts.

I wish to thank my editors, Robert Dreesen and Ronald Cohen, for their guidance and patience in shepherding this book through the publication process at Cambridge University Press. Robert, along with the anonymous reviewers he selected, devoted a great deal of time to carefully reading my draft manuscript and offering inspired and comprehensive suggestions for improvement. The book also benefited greatly from Ronald’s considerable editorial experience and careful eye for detail, for he suggested literally hundreds of helpful improvements and corrections that together helped smooth the manuscript’s transition from doctoral dissertation to book.

This book would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of my parents, Laura and Roger Bourque and Gerry and Claudette Fitzsimmons. Finally, I owe my deepest gratitude to my brother, Dan, for doing everything from helping me track down and interview veteran mercenaries in South Africa to hunting for typos in early drafts of the manuscript.