

The Business of War: Military Enterprise and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe

By David Parrott

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This is a major new approach to the military revolution and the relationship between warfare and the power of the state in early modern Europe. Whereas previous accounts have emphasised the growth of state-run armies during this period, David Parrott argues instead that the delegation of military responsibility to sophisticated and extensive networks of private enterprise reached unprecedented levels. This included not only the hiring of troops but their equipping, the supply of food and munitions, and the financing of their operations. The book reveals the extraordinary prevalence and capability of private networks of commanders, suppliers, merchants and financiers who managed the conduct of war on land and at sea, challenging the traditional assumption that reliance on mercenaries and the private sector results in corrupt and inefficient military force. In so doing, the book provides essential historical context to contemporary debates about the role of the private sector in warfare.

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About the Author
David Parrott is a Fellow and Lecturer at New College, University of Oxford. His previous books include Richelieu's Army: War, Government and Society in France, 1624-1642 (Cambridge, 2001).

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