organization and its environment in order to obtain sustainable competitive advantage and long-term success." (Allen and Gerras)

The book is well organized and presented in three parts: the inward face of strategy, the outward face of strategy, and the power of integration. The "3D" in the title is the author's suggestion that strategy is best thought of and executed in three dimensions: systems, opponents, and groups. Understanding one's own system is imperative to determining the existing and needed capabilities. Examining current and potential opponents' systems as sources from which competitors generate their capabilities allows the targeting and disruption of opposing strategies. Leveraging one's own stakeholder group adds resources to prosecuting a successful strategy. For each discussion of the strategic dimensions, Harrison provides practical examples to illustrate concepts and principles in the application of his framework. Harrison's concluding section offers a refreshing twist as the framework is applied to a prominent and persistent security threat to the United States today—al Qaeda. Rather than developing a US strategy against its foe, he uses the "3D" framework to examine the al Qaeda strategy and, in doing so, provides interesting insights.

Harrison appropriately establishes disclaimers and caveats in his preface and conclusion. Perhaps the most important is, "the general framework is intended to be used suggestively rather than dogmatically." So there is a duality with the internal and external focus of strategy that requires balance—adapting the organization/enterprise to its environment as well as designing methods to shape that same environment to attain its goals and objectives.

This book is an effective primer on strategy. Harrison holds his own against several more cerebral and complex treatments of strategy and strategic thinking—he does not promise too much. Readers should be wary of any book about strategy and strategic thinking that is so compact, lest they think strategy is merely about determining ends, ways, and means. To paraphrase Clausewitz, "Everything in [strategy] is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult." Far from an easy read, *Strategic Thinking in 3D* is accessible, thought provoking, and pragmatic for a wide range of individuals who may wrestle with the challenges of an uncertain and competitive environment. The value in Harrison's work is not that it provides answers but asks the questions that drive leaders and their organizations to explore factors which may have strategic effect and substantive impact—then enables the crafting of viable strategies.

On Flexibility: Recovery from Technological and Doctrinal Surprise on the Battlefield
by Meir Finkel

Reviewed by Raphael D. Marcus, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of War Studies, King's College London.

Adapting to surprise on the battlefield has been a challenge militaries have faced since the beginning of history. In the progressively growing field of scholarly literature pertaining to military innovation and adaptation, there are few works which convey the complexity and
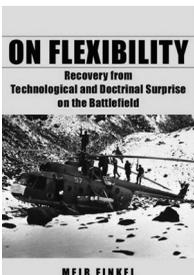
difficulty of military change as thoughtfully as *On Flexibility*. Written by Colonel Dr. Meir Finkel of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), *On Flexibility* provides an original and elegant theoretical framework for analyzing military adaptability, as well as offering practical recommendations for modern militaries to enable rapid recovery from battlefield surprise on the doctrinal, operational, and techno-tactical levels.

Finkel's main thesis is that modern militaries must maintain a flexible and adaptable doctrine and organizational culture to cope with inevitable battlefield surprise and the constantly changing operational environment. He convincingly makes his argument by elucidating seven historical case studies which pertain to doctrinal, operational, and techno-tactical aspects of warfare: four case studies exemplify successful recovery from surprise due to the flexibility of the military organization, and three case studies highlight military failure to recover from surprise due to inflexibility. These cases are drawn from select British, French, and German experiences in World War II, the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, and the Soviet campaign in Afghanistan, and highlight the degree of organizational flexibility of each military and their ability or inability to "recover from battlefield surprise.

Finkel provides succinct definitions of technological and doctrinal surprise while also outlining sensible criteria for "successful recovery" from surprise on the battlefield, which, he notes, is not confined to the techno-tactical level of war. Using a graded criteria scale, successful recovery is defined as the military's complete recovery and ability to devise a counterresponse; the next best response would be neutralizing the damage from surprise without devising a counterchallenge, followed by minimizing (but not neutralizing) damage caused by the surprise. "Failure" of recovery would be inability to minimize damage from the surprise. The theoretical framework also discusses various forms of flexibility present in military organizations: conceptual and doctrinal flexibility, organizational and technological flexibility, flexibility in command-and-control and cognition, as well as mechanisms for implementation of lessons learned.

Case studies of successful recovery are drawn from German experiences in WWII dealing with the T-34 Soviet tank and the British chaff, and the IDF during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. The case study focusing on IDF surprise to the Egyptian introduction of anti-tank weapons in the Sinai in the 1973 War is particularly compelling. The informal and improvisational organizational culture of the IDF fosters tenacity and promotes mission-command principles; armored corps commanders on the ground were able to adapt their tactics fairly rapidly (despite a lack of weapons diversity—a key enabler of flexible responsiveness). Hence, Finkel notes that IDF organizational culture and individual unit initiative was of paramount importance.

Case studies of failure to recover from surprise are drawn from the slow British recovery from bouts with German armor, the French experience with the German blitzkrieg, as well as the Soviet campaign in Afghanistan. The Soviet failure to recover from surprise in low-intensity conflict (LIC) while engaged in Afghanistan against the mujahedeen is a relevant historical study of inefficient military learning during LIC. Soviet doctrinal dogmatism and a hierarchal command-and-control structure inhibited decentralized autonomy of soldiers and prevented

Soviet recovery from the surprise of its own ineffectiveness on the Afghan battlefield.

Given the timely nature and current focus on low-intensity conflict and counterinsurgency (COIN) by many military organizations, the book could have benefitted from additional case studies of military adaptation and recovery from surprise during LIC or COIN, which for the most part (with exceptions), has been absent from the broader military innovation literature until recently. As we know, adapting "under fire" was an immense challenge that confronted United States, British, and Israeli forces in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, and elsewhere, and further case studies could have provided additional relevant lessons for Western militaries that, in the present operational environment, are doctrinally and tactically focused on COIN and "hybrid" warfare.

Given that surprise is inevitable, Finkel's solution for recovery lies in sensible and flexible force-planning and doctrine development, rapid techno-tactical adaptability, and officer education grounded in a military culture which promotes agile thinking. Col. Finkel's own experiences and expertise as Director of the IDF Ground Forces' Concept Development and Doctrine Department are evident, as he deemphasizes the ability to make accurate, "perfect" predictions based on intelligence, instead focusing on organizational and technological adaptability (while also underscoring technology's inherent limitations).

Col. Finkel's work is a compelling contribution to the existing literature on military innovation, and in his conclusion, he appropriately places his work among the major works in the subfield, "filling the gap" left by others who analyzed interwar and long-term innovation. Finkel's work also nicely complements other very recent publications by Stanford Security Studies scholars Dima Adamsky, Eitan Shamir, and James Russell that deal with topics on military culture and innovation, mission command, and "bottom-up" learning.

In sum, *On Flexibility* is an interesting and challenging book which adds to the current conceptual thinking regarding militaries' ability to recover from surprise and adapt, something that has been emphasized in various recent US and British military manuals, and will certainly continue to remain relevant in the future.