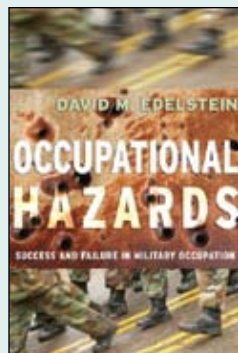


affairs. However, Berkowitz's use of this style, while making the book more accessible, may have clouded his judgment about what to include in it. Specifically, he engages in some historical storytelling of questionable relevance. In general, while the academic or practitioner in national security affairs will find enough substance in Berkowitz's recommendations to justify the short time it takes to read the book, getting past the meanderings is occasionally difficult.

Overall, one wishes for a deeper analysis of Berkowitz's core arguments and recommendations. His call for the establishment of Policy Directors within a new national security policy structure modeled on the military command structures established by the Goldwater-Nichols Act is worthy of consideration, but suffers from wishful thinking rather than providing a detailed discussion of just how it is they are supposed to "just do what is necessary" to make agencies interact more effectively (p. 222). Rather than provide such details, Berkowitz concludes with the six principles discussed above (although he would have better served his readers by outlining these principles at the start of the book, as they correlate with its general organization). Taken together, these principles by which policymakers are called upon to recognize the strengths and limitations of power and to be able to forecast changes over the short term as well as rejuvenate relevant bureaucracies bring to mind the Clinton-era National Military Strategy of *shape, respond, and prepare*, a capabilities-based approach that continues in some fashion today. In sum, we must be prepared for anything and everything. One questions whether this is a reasonable expectation, a question that is not clearly answered in this book.

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**Occupational Hazards:  
Success and Failure in Military  
Occupation**  
by David M. Edelstein  
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Reviewed by  
MARK GRIMSLEY

**L**ike most wars, the global war on terror has generated its share of simplistic pronouncements. In 2003, it was common to hear partisans of the George W. Bush administration scoff at warnings that a successful occupation of Iraq would be difficult. Why, they replied, just look at the successful post-World War II occupations of Germany and Japan. Common nowadays are assertions that the key to an easy military occupation is to damage an enemy so heavily that he knows he has been beaten, or that a successful occupation is more likely to occur if the occupier employs a conciliatory policy or if several nations cooperate in a multilateral approach. David Edelstein's *Occupational Hazards* suggests that these pronouncements and assertions are largely misguided.

Edelstein, a political scientist, examines 26 military occupations since 1815. Of these, he targets nine for extended treatment based on "variation in key independent and dependent variables, historical interest, and relevance to contemporary policy challenges" (p. 19). By *military occupation*, Edelstein means "the temporary control of a territory

by a state (or group of allied states) that makes no claim to permanent sovereignty over that territory." He uses the term in contradistinction to occupations intended to achieve colonization or annexation.

Unlike a colonial or annexationist power, the military occupier wants to get out of the occupation business—but only when a certain endstate is achieved. At a minimum, the occupied territory must no longer pose a threat to the occupying power or its interests. Ideally, it is transformed from an adversary into a reliable ally. But either way, it is a difficult task. Of the 26 occupations Edelstein examined, only 7 were fully successful, 5 were "mixed successes," and 14 (54 percent of the total sample) failed outright.

What do the successes have in common? The biggest single predictor turns out to be an external power that both the occupier and occupied view as a major threat. The external threat becomes a kind of partner to the occupier in the sense that it helps convince the occupied population that the occupier's presence is desirable or, at the very least, better than the alternative. Thus, the post-1945 occupations of Japan and Germany achieved success, in considerable measure, because their populations viewed the Soviet Union as a major external threat.

In contrast, in the post-1945 period, the Korean people did *not* view the Soviet Union as a major threat, and consequently the United States faced a difficult occupation. Liberated at last from decades of colonial administration by Japan, Koreans wanted complete independence from foreign rule. The United States did not wish to withdraw until a regime friendly to American interests was firmly in place, but it could neither establish stability nor find a strong, reliable leader to take the helm. By August 1948, when the United States formally concluded its occupation, not only had it largely failed to achieve these objectives, but a virtual civil war

had begun as well. At best, the United States had achieved only a mixed success.

The American experience in postwar Korea illustrates a dilemma all too common for the military occupier. "To successfully withdraw," Edelstein writes, "occupying powers must accomplish two tasks. First, they must return sovereignty to a legitimate, indigenous, and reliable government, and second, they must ensure that the occupied territory will be secure and nonthreatening after the occupation concludes" (p. 155). In the absence of these conditions, the occupier faces a choice between leaving too early, which invites instability and later reoccupation; or staying too long, which leads to "opposition from the occupied population and dissatisfaction from the occupying power's population" (p. 155).

In a section on the post-September 11 occupations, Edelstein judges that both Iraq and Afghanistan present the challenge of achieving success in the absence of a perceived external threat on the part of the occupied populations. At the time the book entered production, the Afghanistan occupation seemed more likely to succeed, primarily because the United States had eschewed complete control of the country and had "implicitly abandoned its goal of achieving an effective central state" (p. 155). However, Edelstein warns that this approach "has avoided large-scale resistance in the short-term, but may pose long-term dangers"—dangers that in 2009 have clearly materialized.

Edelstein portrays Iraq as a failed occupation with the United States on the horns of the classic dilemma of leaving too soon or staying too long. Many would now regard that verdict as premature, yet it is interesting to note that the turnaround in Iraq involved the emergence of an admittedly unusual external threat—al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)—that spurred the so-called Anbar Awakening and similar events in which