Can Invasion and Occupation Solve America's Security Challenges?

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The difficult post-2003 occupation of Iraq has generated significant skepticism about the utility of military invasion and occupation as a tool for addressing the security challenges that the United States faces. Though the future of Iraq remains uncertain, there is no denying the considerable price that the US has paid for the occupation, the deadly toll that the war has taken on the Iraqi people, and the considerable opposition that the occupation has provoked around the world. Does this mean, however, that occupation should be banished from the statesman's toolbox? Under what conditions is occupation likely to succeed or fail? And what does this imply for the place that occupation might hold in a grand strategy for addressing current, emerging, and future threats to America's national security?

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This paper seeks to answer these questions. In doing so, I make three main arguments. First, the conditions under which military occupation has historically succeeded are relatively unusual and unlikely to be present in any occupations undertaken by the United States in the foreseeable future. Second, while the direct costs of occupation are relatively easy to appreciate, its indirect costs, including the opportunity costs, are harder to measure, but arguably even more damaging. Third, these first two arguments do not imply that the United States needs to banish the use of military force from its menu of options for dealing with emerging threats. It does mean, however, that the United States should be wary of any use of military force that will make post-war occupation necessary.

This paper is divided into seven sections. In the first section, I define military occupation and distinguish it from other strategies such as conquest. Second, I examine the benefits of successful occupation and the costs of failed occupation while reviewing the historical record of military occupation. Third, I identify the challenges posed by occupation. Fourth, I explain why some

occupations have succeeded whereas others have failed. Next, I focus on the lessons about occupation that can be derived from the Iraq experience. Sixth, I discuss whether occupation is likely to be an effective tool for the United States as it confronts emerging challenges to its national security. Finally, I conclude by highlighting some avenues of future research into military occupation.

What is Military Occupation?[1]

Military occupation is the temporary control of a territory by another state (or group of allied states) that makes no claim to permanent sovereign control over that territory.[2] Military occupations require a military intervention force and usually include some form of administration, either civilian or military, to govern the occupied territory. Critically, the intended duration of a military occupation must be temporary and finite. That is, an occupying power must intend at the onset of the occupation to vacate the occupied territory and return control of the territory to an indigenous government.[3] A precise date for evacuation need not be specified, but it must be the intention of the occupying power to withdraw as soon as the goals of occupation have been accomplished.

Military occupation is distinct from other related concepts such as annexation, colonialism, and intervention. Annexation denotes the permanent acquisition of territory and incorporation of that territory into the annexing state's homeland. When the United States expanded across North America in the nineteenth century, its ambitions were annexation, not temporary occupation. A defining feature of occupation is precisely that the occupying power rejects annexation as the ultimate goal.

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The critical distinction between occupation and colonialism lies in how states define their goals in the occupied territory. The intended duration of colonial ventures is much more ambiguous than the clear temporary intentions of military occupation.[4] For example, I consider the British presence in Egypt from 1882 until 1954 to be an occupation, but I categorize the British presence in India as colonialism. The British leadership had little desire for an extended stay in Egypt, yet circumstances forced Britain to abandon its initial goal of a short-lived occupation. In India, on the other hand, London demonstrated little anxiety to evacuate until the forces of Indian nationalism drove it to consider withdrawal in the aftermath of World War II. One of the distinguishing and most

challenging features of occupation is that both parties—the occupying power and the occupied population—want the occupation to end. In colonialism, the population is likely to be far more desirous of an end to colonialism than the colonial power.

As for intervention, all occupations require interventions, but not all interventions become occupations. A state may intervene in another state without occupying it. To be an occupation, the intervening power must take control of the occupied territory and act as sovereign of that territory for a significant length of time.[5] US operations in Haiti and the Dominican Republic in the early twentieth century qualify as occupations, but US operations in Grenada in 1983 and Panama in 1989 were interventions that stopped short of becoming occupations.

Costs and Benefits of Occupation

Judgments of success or failure in military occupations are based on whether the occupying power accomplished its goals and at what cost.[6] A successful occupation creates conditions under which an occupying power can withdraw without concern for the security of its interests. Occupations can only successfully end when they leave behind a stable, indigenous government, and the post-occupation state is both guaranteed of its security and non-threatening to others. Ideally, the occupied territory is actually transformed from a wartime adversary into a reliable ally. Thus, the post-World War II US occupations of Germany and Japan are viewed as successes, in large part, because of the remarkable transformation of these countries from bitter adversaries to reliable allies.[7]

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Not only must these goals be accomplished in the short-term, but they must be sustainable over the long-term. Occupying powers that expend significant national resources on an occupation only to find themselves reintervening a few years later cannot be satisfied with the outcome of the occupation. Tracking the long-term ramifications of an occupation is essential for judging success or failure, but it can also be difficult to hold an occupying power responsible for developments years or decades after the occupation has ended.

The accomplishments of an occupation must also always be considered relative to the costs—both direct and indirect—of the occupation. The direct costs include the financial costs of the troops that must be deployed for a lengthy time to keep the peace in the occupied territory and the occupation

administration that must established. Additionally, any lives that are lost as a result of resistance to the occupation are a direct cost. The indirect costs of an occupation are more difficult to measure. They include the opportunity cost of the occupation. An on-going occupation may preclude an occupying power from pursuing other national interests. Indirect costs also include any rivalry that might be generated with a third party as a result of the occupation. Finally, a state may incur an indirect reputation cost if an occupation does not go as well as hoped. In the case of Iraq, the difficult occupation has arguably done significant damage to America's image around the world. The actual consequences of an "image problem" are debatable, but the US has incurred much enmity, particularly in the Middle East, as a result of the occupation.

Measuring the costs of an occupation is usually quite difficult. Much of the financial cost of occupation is often included within military budgets in which it can be difficult to isolate the costs of the occupation alone. Even if one could find precise financial figures, it is still not clear that these would be a valuable indicator since cost is always relative. Paying an enormous sum of money to achieve a valuable end may not be perceived as costly by a population or a country's decision makers. Indirect costs are even more difficult to measure concretely. If leaders or the general public openly questioned the cost of the occupation, then this provides some indication that the occupation was perceived as expensive, even if precise financial figures or metrics of indirect costs are unavailable.

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Success or failure, then, is measured by looking at the short- and long-term accomplishments of an occupation relative to the expense of the occupation. The historical record indicates that military occupations almost always cost a considerable amount, last several years, and require thousands of troops. The critical question then is how often occupations accomplish enough to justify their costs. An occupation may cost a lot, but, if it accomplishes equally as much, then it can be considered a success. While the occupations of Germany and Japan after World War II were time consuming and costly, few would argue that the stakes did not warrant these costs. An occupation that costs a lot but does not accomplish its goals is most disappointing. The American occupation of the Philippines in the early twentieth century and the British occupation of Egypt were lengthy and costly occupations where the reward may not have justified the cost. If an occupation costs little and accomplishes little, then it may be a failure, but it is not a costly failure. Finally, the ideal, but rare, occupation costs little but accomplishes a great deal.

Coding occupations as successes or failures can be challenging. Consider the example of the US occupation of the Philippines. The occupation provided the US with a base of operations in the Pacific Ocean, but it also contributed to the emerging US rivalry with Japan.[8] Eventually, the Philippines became a democracy, but only decades after the occupation began and after the United States waged a costly counterinsurgency campaign at the turn of the twentieth century. Weighing these benefits and costs, I conclude that this occupation is best thought of as a mixed success. Occupations coded as mixed successes are occupations that offer some positive benefit but where those positive benefits are counterbalanced either by a failure to accomplish all of the occupier's goals or by significant costs, either direct or indirect.

Judging success or failure is further complicated by two additional considerations. First, occupying powers may change their means over the course of an occupation, or they may, in fact, alter the very purpose of their operation. An occupying power may initially be committed to the complete reconstruction of an occupied territory's institutions as a means to achieving security. At some point, the occupying power may aim for something more achievable but also more tenuous for the long-term. "Moving targets" like this make it difficult to judge success or failure. In these cases, the basic judgment of success or failure must still be relative to the goal of creating stability and security that is sustainable after the occupation ends. Alternatively, an occupying power may decide to alter the purpose of its operation from occupation to colonialism or annexation. When military occupations transform into colonialism or annexation, it is often because the occupying power encounters difficulties so severe that they make ending the occupation an impossibility.

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The second difficulty with judging the success or failure of an occupation is that that judgment must be made relative to a counterfactual. Even if an occupation falls short of meeting the initial goals set forth by the occupying power, the result of the occupation may still be better than the alternative. A failed occupation may be preferable to having done nothing at all. Still, even if occupation is chosen only because it appears preferable to some hypothetical alternative, great powers still should (1) anticipate the possibility of occupation before engaging in war and (2) if war is necessary, then try to create conditions that are conducive to occupation success.

Table 1 summarizes the historical record of military occupations. The summary judgments provided in the table are presented so that general patterns in the larger universe of cases can be evaluated, but

one should be careful not to read too much into these summary judgments. As I just delineated, judging occupation success and failure involves a complicated calculation of costs, benefits, and alternatives. At the most general level, however, the summary judgments are suggestive of the historical pattern of success and failure in military occupations.

Table 1: Success and Failure in Military Occupations, 1815-2008

Territory (Primary occupier), Date	Summary Judgment
France (United Kingdom, Russia, Prussia, Austria), 1815-1818	Success
Mexico (France), 1861-1867	Failure
Ili-China (Russia), 1871-1882	Mixed
Egypt (United Kingdom), 1882-1954	Failure
Cuba (United States), 1898-1902	Failure
Philippines (United States), 1898-1945	Mixed
Cuba (United States), 1906-1909	Failure
Haiti (United States), 1915-1934	Failure
Dominican Republic (United States), 1916-1924	Failure
Istanbul-Turkey (France, United Kingdom, Italy), 1918-1923	Failure
Germany (France, United Kingdom, United States), 1918-1930	Failure
Iraq (United Kingdom), 1918-1932	Failure
Palestine (United Kingdom), 1919-1947	Mixed
Saar (France), 1920-1935	Mixed
Italy (United Kingdom, United States), 1943-1948	Success
Eastern Austria (Soviet Union), 1945-1955	Failure
Western Austria (United Kingdom, United States, France), 1945-1955	Success
Western Germany (France, United Kingdom, United States), 1945-1952	Success
Japan (United States), 1945-1952	Success
Ryukyus-Japan (United States), 1945-1972	Success
N. Korea (Soviet Union), 1945-1948	Success
S. Korea (United States), 1945-1948	Mixed
West Bank/Gaza (Israel), 1967-Current	Failure
Cambodia (Vietnam), 1979-1989	Failure
Southern Lebanon (Israel), 1982-2000	Failure
Lebanon (Syria),1976-2005	Failure
Bosnia (NATO), 1995-Current	?
Kosovo (NATO), 1999-Current[9]	?
Afghanistan (NATO), 2001-Current	?
Iraq (United States, United Kingdom, Poland), 2003-Current	?

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An examination of the data yields two particularly notable findings. First, of the twenty-six occupations where summary judgments are possible, only seven were fully successful (27%), fourteen failed (54%), and five are classified as mixed successes (19%).[10] Second, of the seven successes, six are from the immediate post-World War II period with the lone exception being the first occupation in the data set, the allied occupation of France after the Napoleonic Wars. These two findings raise

critical questions. What explains the prevailing rate of failure among occupations? Why are the occupation successes clustered around the end of World War II?

Why Military Occupation is Difficult

Military occupation is a difficult challenge because both sides—the occupied population and the occupying power—want the occupation to end as quickly as possible, but successful occupation often takes a long time and consumes considerable resources. Occupation often occurs in the wake of violent, destructive conflict that leaves chaos and disorganization behind. Even in a case where an occupying power seeks to establish security through the relatively modest means of reinforcing existing institutions, an occupation needs to last long enough for the occupying power to rebuild and ensure that its interests have been secured. More ambitious occupations that aim to create new political, economic, and social institutions in the occupied country will take even longer and cost even more. Importantly, occupation success is not simply a product of a significant resource investment and lengthy time commitment. Lengthy occupations that failed, like the US occupation of Haiti from 1915 until 1934, make this point quite clear. Time and resources, however, allow for the building of the political, economic, and social institutions that are necessary for long-term success.

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Ironically, all sides want to see an occupation end quickly, yet achieving that desired goal in a mutually acceptable way can often be quite difficult. Unlike conquering or colonial powers, occupying powers would rather devote their resources elsewhere. And unlike irredentist populations who seek attachment to another state, occupied populations long to govern themselves. To succeed, an occupying power must, therefore, achieve two difficult tasks: (1) it must convince the occupied population to accept a lengthy occupation and (2) it must maintain its own commitment until occupation reforms have been successfully implemented:

The Occupied Population's Nationalism

The greatest impediment to successful military occupation is the nationalism of the occupied population. Nationalism refers to the desire of a population to govern itself or, put differently, to join an identifiable nation together with the governing institutions of the modern state. In the now

standard definition offered by Ernest Gellner, "Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent."[11] Occupation is likely to invigorate nationalism in as much as it deprives a national group of self-determination. Two points about nationalism are worth emphasizing.

First, more than one nationalism may be present within the boundaries of an existing state. That is, there may be several identifiable national groups within a state that long for their own self-determination. In fact, the existence of multiple nationalisms within an occupied territory is likely to make the task of occupation more difficult. In these cases, the occupying power must locate a strategy for satisfying the nationalist desires of several groups, not just one. Different national groups may compete with each other for control of the same territory, for as Gellner observes, "It follows that a territorial political unit can only become ethnically homogenous, in such cases, if it either kills, or expels, or assimilates all non-nationals."[12] To say that nationalism undermines occupation may, therefore, refer to one unified nationalism or multiple nationalisms within an occupied territory.

Second, arguments that emphasize the causal role of nationalism can be criticized unless a way of measuring nationalism is identified. That is, if nationalism is a variable, then how do we measure the intensity of that nationalism independent of any outcome, such as insurgency, that we are studying? Rather than stipulating a specific metric for nationalism, I argue, instead, that military occupation is a particular affront to any occupied population's nationalism. If any event is likely to generate a strong nationalist response, then it is likely to be the usurpation of political authority by a foreign occupying power that has just defeated the occupied population in war.

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Some critics dismiss nationalism-based "grievance" explanations by arguing that nationalism is present in much of the world, yet conflict is far more infrequent. Instead, these critics point to "greed" explanations and argue that conflict is a product of greedy motives and the capability to carry out insurgent campaigns.[13] The assumption underlying this argument is that nationalism is essentially a constant, and change cannot be explained with a constant. In reality, however, nationalism is not a constant, and military occupation represents a particular affront to the nationalist instinct for self-determination.

Occupation is so difficult largely because it invites both greed and grievance as motives for violence. In the aftermath of conflict, different groups may seek to gain control of the state and its resources out of greed. Post-war chaos creates condition conducive to insurgency. Thus, groups may have both the motive and the capability to seize power. At the same time, the usurpation of sovereignty by a foreign power creates an acute grievance for nationalist groups. This combination of both greed and grievance is a dangerous one for occupying powers and explains, in part, why military occupation has proven so difficult.

If nationalism is invigorated by occupation, then the question becomes how can occupying powers best manage that nationalism. How can they both reduce the grievances raised by invasion and occupation and limit the capabilities of their opponents to undertake insurgency? As Michael Hechter has argued, "Nationalism based on individual interests should wax and wane with personal circumstances. Therefore, it ought to be susceptible to shifts in state policy that accommodate nationalist demands or redress grievances. It also ought to be vulnerable to cooptation."[14]

To succeed, military occupiers must convince an occupied population to forestall its demands for sovereignty and tolerate—not necessarily welcome, but tolerate—the occupation.[15] Achieving this success is likely to be difficult as the occupying power is often a military conqueror that the occupied population is predisposed to reject. Even if an occupying power might initially be welcomed, that welcome is likely to obsolesce as the occupation continues and self-determination is continuously postponed.

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If, however, an occupying power can convince the occupied population that it is better off tolerating an occupation, then the occupier will gain the time and support it needs to implement its desired reforms. With these reforms successfully implemented, the occupying power can withdraw confident that its long-term interests are secure. If, on the other hand, the occupied population concludes that it would rather be governing itself, then the occupied population will resist the occupation and make the accomplishment of occupation goals more difficult.[16] Long-term success will become elusive as the occupied population is likely to harbor resentment for having suffered through foreign occupation.

Nationalist desires for self-governance in opposition to occupation may manifest themselves in violent resistance, such as insurgency, or other forms of protest, such as labor strikes. Importantly, widespread, violent resistance against an occupation does not itself indicate that an occupation necessarily has failed, but violent resistance makes it more difficult for an occupying power to achieve its goals. Resistance impedes an occupying power's efforts to reconstruct the occupied territory in the manner that it desires and makes it less likely that the occupying power will be able to secure its interests for the long-term. For the unsuccessful occupying power, a destructive feedback loop ensues. The tasks of occupation are made difficult by resistance, but the less the occupying accomplishes, the more likely even further resistance becomes. Once ensconced in this vicious cycle, occupying powers find it difficult to emerge successfully.[17]

The Occupying Power's Impatience

The challenge of occupation is not only to assuage the nationalist desires of the occupied population, but also for the occupier to sustain its commitment to the occupation. If occupation requires significant time and resources to succeed, then the occupying power must be determined to see the occupation succeed and be willing to devote sufficient resources to make that happen. Like any country, however, an occupying power has limited national resources and numerous demands on those resources. Especially in democracies, political leaders need to justify the expenditure of national resources on the occupation of a foreign country. If an occupying power faces violent resistance in the early stages of occupation, then it will become even more difficult for the government of the occupying power to garner the resources to sustain the occupation. As a further complication, occupation is often undertaken not because a victorious power necessarily wants to occupy another country, but rather because it feels compelled to occupy that country to ensure that the resources expended on defeating the country are not wasted. The occupying power is, thus, likely to feel pressures to reduce the resources available for an occupation, which only reduces the probability of success.

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The Dilemma of Withdrawal

The final reason occupation is difficult is the challenge of deciding when to end an occupation. Occupations that end too soon may leave instability in their wake, but occupations that go on too

long invite resistance against the occupying power. To succeed, occupying powers must establish the conditions that allow them to withdraw with sufficient confidence that their interests will not be threatened after withdrawal. This requires returning sovereignty to a stable, reliable indigenous government and ensuring that the occupied territory will be both secure and non-threatening after the occupation concludes. The challenge is to create these conditions before the resentment of the occupied population interferes with the achievement of the goals of the occupation.

Why Some Military Occupations Succeed Whereas Others Fail

Importantly, not all occupations fail. Some occupations, like the US in Germany and Japan after World War II, do succeed. What explains the variation in occupation outcome?

I contend that one critical condition, the threat environment of the occupied territory, does more to shape the likelihood of occupation success or failure than any other factor. When a third-party external threat to the occupied territory is present and is perceived as such by the occupied population and the occupying power, then an occupation is more likely to succeed. An occupied population is more likely to accept an occupation when the occupying power can offer it protection that the population believes it needs, and an occupying power is more likely to commit to a geopolitically-valuable territory that is threatened by some other state. The absence of such an external threat or the presence of an internal threat to the coherence of the occupied territory (an unfavorable threat environment), on the other hand, is likely to increase resistance to the occupation and, thus, increase the likelihood that the occupation will fail.

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The strategies of occupation that states pursue interact with the threat environment to produce occupation outcomes. Occupying powers have three types of strategies available to them: accommodation, inducement, and coercion. Accommodation is a strategy of engaging and co-opting political elites within the occupied society who can control the nationalist instincts of the population. A strategy of inducement attempts to gain the acquiescence of the occupied population by offering material benefits to the population. Finally, coercion employs military and police force in order to defeat any nationalist opposition to the occupation.

The initial threat environment of an occupation affects the strategic choices that occupying powers make and, through a process of feedback, subsequently affects the occupied population's perceptions of the threat environment. An initially unfavorable threat environment increases resistance and forces occupying powers to rely on coercion, which, in turn, only exacerbates the unfavorable threat environment. An initially favorable threat environment allows states mostly to refrain from coercion and, instead, accommodate and induce the occupied population, which, in turn, reinforces a favorable threat environment and allows for progress toward the conditions that allow an occupation to end successfully. All three of these strategies can succeed, but coercion is often more challenging as it may only convince an occupied population that the occupying power is, in fact, the greatest threat to its nationalist goals.

As for withdrawal, successful occupying powers must meet two conditions before they withdraw. First, they must return sovereignty to an independent, indigenous, and reliable government. Simultaneously, they must ensure that the occupied territory is secure from threats both internal and external, but also non-threatening to its neighbors. This second condition can be met either through an alliance relationship or through support for the development and maintenance of an indigenous military. Occupying powers that have enjoyed a favorable threat environment are more likely to meet these conditions as cooperation facilitates the creation of stable, reliable, and secure institutions and an external threat increases the common security interests of the occupied territory and the occupying power. Unsuccessful occupying powers are likely to confront the "occupation dilemma." The occupation dilemma occurs when unsuccessful occupying powers face a choice between either ending an occupation too soon or prolonging a costly and unsuccessful occupation. Occupying powers that face an unfavorable threat environment and that have been forced to rely on coercion are less likely to meet the conditions for successful withdrawal and, thus, more likely to confront the occupation dilemma.

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What Have We Learned from Iraq?

Consistent with the argument made above and contrary to the expectations of some, the United States was met with great opposition shortly after it invaded Iraq. The US enjoyed a short-lived honeymoon period immediately after it invaded, but that ended quickly with the outbreak of an insurgency by the summer of 2003. Clearly, the insurgency was multifaceted, but one element of it

was a nationalist insurgency against the presence of US forces in Iraq. More precisely, the United States was confronted with multiple nationalist insurgencies from both Shia and Sunni Arab elements within Iraqi society. A single state need not have only one nationalist group operating within it, and Iraq is an example of the compounded difficulty of occupying a country that has its own internal divisions. For many Iraqis, with the notable exception of the Kurdish population in the northern part of the country, the United States represented a greater threat to their self-determination than any other perceived threat to the country. Though Iran and al-Qaeda may have been seen as a significant threat by some, the perception was not shared by enough of the population such that the population as a whole would support a US occupation.

By 2008, the situation in Iraq appeared to be improving with the number of casualties, both Iraqi and American, shrinking and stability returning to parts of the country that had previously been the most violent. What changed over the course of the occupation that precipitated this shift in Iraq such that the violence declined? Four factors contributed. First, the introduction of American troops in the form of the "surge" and implementation of more effective counterinsurgency tactics successfully eliminated much of the opposition to the United States. Al-Qaeda in Iraq was effectively chased out of the country, and nationalist Shia leaders such as Moqtada al-Sadr were quieted. Second, al-Qaeda's aggressive tactics managed to turn any Iraqi allies they had against them. In an important shift, for many Sunni Arabs, al-Qaeda emerged as a greater perceived threat than the United States. The logic here is consistent with the argument about relative threat perceptions presented above. As US Major General Rick Lynch observed, "[The Sunni moderates] say, 'We hate you because you are occupiers, but we hate Al Qaeda even worse, and we hate the Persians even more."[18] Third, persistent Iranian meddling in Iran provoked many Iraqis into alliance with the United States. Ironically, the United States may actually owe Iran some credit for its success during the surge period. As Iran, Iraq's longtime rival, continued to incite instability in Iraq, some Iraqis began to welcome the presence of the United States against this perceived threat. Fourth and finally, the majority Shia population's nationalism was somewhat placated by the Shia domination of the Iraqi government. President Nuri al-Maliki managed to maintain his control over the Iraqi government, preventing either his Shia rivals or the Sunni Arab population from gaining substantial power.

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The Iraq case, therefore, appears to support the argument made above. As the relative threat perceptions of the Iraqi people have shifted through the course of the US presence, the Iraqi people have become more willing to tolerate the presence of the United States there. Importantly, this does not mean that the Iraqi people are happy with the extended US presence, but in international politics, being safe is sometimes better than being happy. The question, of course, is how sustainable these gains are, especially as the United States considers withdrawing its forces from Iraq. Iraq continues to face considerable political challenges, and unless these challenges are adequately addressed, the fragile balance in Iraq could begin to decay. Most importantly, the Sunni Arab population longs for political power, and if they are denied that power, they could turn again as they turned on al-Qaeda during the "Sunni Awakening." Threat perceptions can, in fact, be fluid, especially in a complex multiparty conflict like the one in Iraq.

Military Occupation and the Future of US National Security

Both history and theory suggest that military occupation succeeds only under the unusual circumstance when some third party threat is perceived as a greater threat than the occupying power itself. Is this circumstance likely to be present in future conceivable scenarios in which the United States might resort to military force and occupation? In this section, I argue that occupation is unlikely to be an effective tool of statecraft for the United States in the future. In most conceivable future US military occupations, the occupied population is likely to see the United States as a greater threat to its self-determination than any third party. Thus, nationalism is likely to impel the population to reject the occupation at significant cost to the United States. Further, the developing global economic crisis might make the population of the United States even less willing to undertake the sustained and expensive occupation of foreign countries. Here, I consider three categories of future threats to the United States and examine the utility of occupation as a solution to each.

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First, is military occupation likely to be an effective solution to the problem of transnational "jihadi" terrorism? Military occupation might be useful in circumstances under which a terrorist group has either taken control of a state or is threatening that state from across its borders. If the terrorist group is viewed by most of the population as a greater threat than the United States, then occupation might be an effective strategy. The population may be grateful that the US would be willing to expend its national resources to remove from power a regime that is sponsoring terrorism.

This is especially likely to be true if the terrorist group in power has little legitimate claim to the nationalist sentiments of the population. Alternatively, military occupation might succeed if it aids a sovereign state in fending off a threat from a terrorist group across its borders. If the government of the threatened state is incapable of protecting itself, then the population may welcome the assistance of a US occupying force. In both of these cases, military occupation may indirectly aid in the destruction of terrorist groups that threaten the United States and its interests.

In most other circumstances, however, military occupation is unlikely to be an effective tool for confronting transnational terrorism. Non-state terrorist groups are more difficult to coerce through military occupation when they do not actually control territory or population. Controlling amorphous, nimble terrorist groups through occupation is likely to be a frustrating operation. To do so may require the occupation of territory inhabited by populations who do not see themselves as aligned with the terrorist groups. These populations are likely to grow dissatisfied and resentful if they are being occupied on account of another group's actions. Controversially, Robert Pape has suggested that such occupation is only likely to generate more terrorism.[19] The US might be able to co-opt such populations, but this will require the wise deployment of economic and political resources. Politically, such an occupation is unlikely to play well abroad as others will voice their displeasure at an American occupation of an innocent population's territory. Thus, military occupation is unlikely to be an effective tool for confronting transnational terrorism. Only when the terrorist group controls territory against the population's wishes or poses a threat to the territory from across a border is a US occupation perhaps going to be welcome.

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What about military occupation as a response to states that may be developing nuclear weapons? Perhaps the United States could invade and occupy those countries thereby alleviating the proliferation threat. Military invasion could, in theory, eliminate a state's capability to produce nuclear weapons in the short-term. In the process of invading the country, any facilities or material used for the production of weapons of mass destruction could be destroyed, if found. Unfortunately, while such an invasion may eliminate the threat in the short-term, it is only likely to generate animosity in the longer term. As the occupied population grows weary of being occupied, they are likely to reject the occupation. Further, once the occupying power withdraws, they are perhaps likely to conclude that the best way to prevent future US military interventions is, in fact, to resume the production of weapons of mass destruction. An unintended consequence of invading one WMD-

producing state could be that it acts as a spur for other countries contemplating the development of WMD. The best way to deter the United States from employing its massive conventional capabilities may be through a deterrent threat posed by weapons of mass destruction.

Finally, what about a more conventional threat posed by a great power such as a rising China or a resurgent Russia? In both of those specific cases, military occupation is unlikely to be feasible. Both are enormous countries, which even the militarily superior United States could not contemplate occupying. The presence of these great powers could, however, have an effect on the ability of the United States to act militarily in and around Russia and China. To the extent that smaller countries in those regions view Russia and China as a greater threat than the United States, they may, in fact, grow to welcome an American military presence. There is, however, a fundamental difference between a simple balancing alliance and an actual military occupation.

In all of the above cases, military occupation is likely to generate not only the high direct costs of occupation, but also indirect costs. The resources necessary to occupy a foreign country make it more difficult for the occupying power to pursue other foreign policy interests. The developing global financial crisis may force the United States to be more selective in how it uses its resources abroad, and occupation is likely to consume an unwelcome amount of blood and treasure. Further, by occupying a foreign country, the United States inserts itself into regions of the world where its presence may generate enmity not only in the occupied territory, but also more generally in the region. An occupation must offer substantial and near certain rewards to warrant these direct and indirect costs, but as argued above, in most cases, military occupations have failed to achieve their ex ante goals. There is little reason to think that the potential targets of US occupation either currently or in the future will produce a more positive result.

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In short, if one considers the three primary threats to the United States in the foreseeable future—transnational terrorism, WMD proliferation, and the rise of peer competitors—military occupation appears to be an unattractive response to any of these threats. This does not mean, however, that the United States must abandon the use of military force altogether, nor even occupation. The occupations of western Germany and Japan after World War II were remarkably successful, and under the right conditions, occupation can be an effective tool. More generally, though, intervention is not the same thing as occupation, and there may be effective ways in which the

United States can use its unprecedented military assets to further its national interests without incurring the costs of occupation. When the United States sees threats to its interests, including the safety and security of its allies, the use of military force may, in fact, be the most effective way of eliminating those threats. In using military force, though, the United States should contemplate strategies that allow it to achieve its interests without incurring the costs, both direct and indirect, of military occupation. More specifically, there are four considerations that should enter into US considerations of the use of force and possible military occupation in the future.

First, the United States must set reasonable war aims. That is, if the United States limits its ambitions to the control and containment of a threat, then it may be able to do so without taking on the tasks of military occupation. If regime change is unnecessary to protect American interests, then the US should refrain from the maximal goals of regime change and attempt to achieve more modest ambitions. For example, the US may be able to use more limited forms of military force to address the threat of nuclear proliferation.

Second, US leaders must understand the structural constraints that make occupation difficult. The primary reason occupation is often so difficult is the nationalism of the occupied population. If the population sees a US occupation as the primary threat to that nationalism, then the US is likely to face staunch resistance. Even the best efforts of the US to convince the population otherwise are unlikely to succeed.

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Third, if the US is going to occupy another country, then it is incumbent upon the US to be prepared for the difficult tasks of occupation. Most importantly, the US military must be adequately trained in counterinsurgency techniques, and US political leaders must engage in efforts to manipulate the occupied population's perceptions of the threats it faces. Though difficult, the efforts of US leaders to convince occupied populations that some other threat is greater than the US itself may ultimately pay some dividends. US leaders must also work to convince the American population that any military occupation warrants the significant investment of national resources that will be necessary for it to succeed.

Fourth, when occupations are not succeeding, the US must be prepared to withdraw from an intervention rather than prolong it unnecessarily. Of course, identifying the "point of no return" is

inherently difficult, but there are few cases in history where an occupation gone wrong has been completely reversed. Sustaining an occupation in an effort to recapture sunk costs is likely to be a further waster of national resources. Occupation is a difficult endeavor, and if it is not going well, then the United States might be best advised to leave sooner rather than later.

Might US allies fare any better at the tasks of occupation than the US has? The argument presented above suggests it is unlikely. Any allies that are actually nearer to the target of occupation may only elicit more of a nationalist response. One cannot imagine an Israeli occupation of Lebanon going any better than a US occupation of Lebanon. European powers may be perceived by some as more adept at managing post-conflict situations, but that will not necessarily change the dynamics of occupation unless, of course, European states are perhaps perceived as less of a threat. In short, occupation is difficult not just for the United States, but in fact, for any countries contemplating using military force in that way.

Conclusion

The above analysis suggests that military occupation is most often not a very effective tool for accomplishing national goals. This argument suggests a number of future avenues for research. First, if military occupation is an ineffective tool, what might be some more effective strategies? The problem of weak and failed states has been identified as a critical issue in international politics. If military occupation cannot manage these problem states, then what might be some other strategies for doing so? Second, we need continued research into the appropriate grand strategy for the United States to pursue. How can the US most effectively use its predominant military resources without necessarily undertaking the difficult task of occupation? The call above for the US to use power in ways that does not necessitate occupation may be easier said than done. How can military force effectively be used in ways that does not simultaneously destroy capacity in the target state? Third, and perhaps most broadly, we need additional research on the place of nationalism in the modern state system. My analysis suggests that nationalism is a fundamental impediment to military occupation, but surely the role of nationalism has varied over time. Is nationalism today the same impediment that it was a century ago? Do military occupiers have tools at their disposal to better manage modern nationalism, or in fact, is nationalism a more vexing problem today than it has ever been?

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In sum, the historical record suggests healthy skepticism about military occupation as a tool of statecraft. Even more, the threats that the US is likely to face in the future may be particularly poorly suited for military occupation. Occupation is a poor strategy to deal with non-state terrorist threats. Occupation to confront WMD proliferation may only spur more proliferation. And occupation in the face of rising peer competitors is prohibitively expensive and unlikely to succeed in any case.

The key for the United States going forward is to carefully identify national interests and calibrate military responses that safeguard those interests. Occupation and regime change is not necessary to accomplish many of America's goals, even if the use of military force might be. One need not resort to the most extreme of measures to accomplish modest, but important, goals. Identifying those goals and choosing the appropriate means for achieving those goals is, after all, what statesmen are paid to do.

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[1] Much of the following discussion draws from David M. Edelstein, Occupational Hazards: Success and Failure in Military Occupation (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2008).

[2] International legal scholar Eyal Benvinisti defines occupation as, "the effective control of a power (be it one or more states or an international organization, such as the United Nations) over a territory to which that power has no sovereign title, without the volition of the sovereign of that territory." Eyal Benvenisti, The International Law of Occupation (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 4.

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[3] An occupying power need not occupy an entire country. Certain occupations, such as the allied occupation of Istanbul after World War I, have only involved the occupation of a city or region.

[4] Though not always true, colonial ventures are also often more focused on resource extraction than military occupations.

[5] I require a duration of at least one year in order to qualify as an occupation.

[6] For a discussion of the difficulty of assessing the success or failure of any particular policy, see David A. Baldwin, Economic Statecraft (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), 115-134. See also Daniel Byman and Matthew Waxman, The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 33-37.

[7] In both of these occupations, a primary concern was preventing Germany and Japan from reemerging as threats to their regions. On Germany, see John Gimbel, The American Occupation of Germany, 1945-1949 (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1968), 150-151. On Japan, see Eiji Takemae, Inside GHQ: The Allied Occupation of Japan and Its Legacy (New York: Continuum, 2002), 203. Ultimately, the Japanese constitution included the famous Article IX, which strictly limits the purposes for which Japan can have a military.

[8] On the initial role of the Philippines in the emerging Japanese-American rivalry leading up to World War II, see Walter LaFeber, The Clash: A History of US-Japan Relations (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 60-62. Japan initially supported US, as opposed to German, annexation of the Philippines, but, by the 1930's, Tokyo had its own desire to acquire the Philippines.

[9] The occupation of Kosovo has included a UN component—UNMIK—as well as a NATO component—KFOR. In this table, I refer to the KFOR component.

[10] Mixed successes are cases where the occupying power accomplished short-term goals but not long-term goals or where certain benefits were achieved but at high costs. In short, cases where a simple declaration of success or failure is unjustified.

[11] Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1983), 1.

[12] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 2.

[13] See especially James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," American Political Science Review 97, no. 3 (February 2003): 75-90. See also Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," Oxford Economic Papers 56, no. 4 (October 2004): 563-595 and Stathis Kalyvas, "'New' and 'Old' Civil War: A Valid Distinction?" World Politics 54, no. 1 (October 2001): 99-118.

[14] Michael Hechter, Containing Nationalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 31.

[15] The phrase "demand for sovereignty" comes from Michael Hechter. See Hechter, Containing Nationalism,113-33. On the evolution of the international norm of self-determination, see Michael Hechter and Elizabeth Borland, "National Self-Determination: The Emergence of an International Norm," in Social Norms, eds. Michael Hechter and Karl-Dieter Opp (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2001), 186-233..

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[16] The capability to wage the insurgency is an obvious, but essential, permissive condition for an insurgency in the face of occupation.

[17] The theory offered here is a macro-level account of nationalist resistance to military occupation. At the expense of some parsimony, one might add explanatory power by incorporating other micro-level accounts of resistance. See Stathis Kalyvas, The Logic of Violence in Civil Wars (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006) and Kalyvas, "The Ontology of 'Political Violence': Action and Identity in Civil Wars," Perspective on Politics 1, no. 3 (September 2003): 475-94.

[18] Quoted in John F. Burns and Alissa J. Rubin, "US Arming Sunnis in Iraq to Battle Old Qaeda Allies," New York Times, June 11, 2007.

[19] Robert Pape, Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism (New York: Random House, 2005).