

Why this selection of cases?

There were three main considerations which guided us in selecting the cases to be investigated.

- Sources accessibility was the first and most important condition.
- The second requirement was to have a set of cases well suited for the purpose of comparative analysis.
- Finally, the cases that we selected illustrate an interesting and historically fairly new phenomenon, namely the ability for a great power *A* to transform a temporary military occupation of a country *B* into a lasting controlling influence over *B*.

Let us explain these points in more detail.

Accessibility of sources

Why, for instance, did we study the occupation of Western Germany by Western Allies rather than (or along with) the occupation of East Germany by the Soviet Union? The reason is very simple: because I know English but do not know Russian. For the three Western zones of occupation all military archives are in English (or in French, a language that I also know of course). Needless to say, most¹ Russian military archives regarding the occupation of the GDR (German Democratic Republic), Poland or other Eastern European countries would be in Russian. This would have been an insurmountable obstacle.

Language was not the only criterion as far as accessibility was concerned. For instance, why did we not (so far) study the French occupation zone in West Germany? The answer is to be found in another accessibility condition namely the availability of online catalogs of the national archives. In 2005, when we began to plan this study, there was no catalog of French military archives available on the Internet. In contrast the online catalog of NARA (National Archives and Records Administration i.e. the American National Archives) became available around this date; even though it contained fairly few files at the beginning there was the expectation that year after year it would include a greater percentage of the files.

Apart from the question of sources, there was another reason for concentrating on

¹We say “most” rather than “all” because Mr Vladimir Putin who has spent part of his career in the GDR speaks German very fluently in spite of the fact that he is not of German ancestry. So it seems that Russian was not the only language of communication used among the occupation personnel.

West Germany. Few people in Western Europe and in the United States would dispute that the GDR was a kind of puppet state of the Soviet Union². On the contrary, Western medias took great care to make Western Germany appear as an independent country at least after the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany in May 1949. This makes the question of whether or not that claim was in agreement with historical evidence an issue of interest.

A range of cases well suited for comparative analysis

The accessibility of sources was a prerequisite, but in order to make this study useful for comparative analysis we had to select our cases adequately. What meaning should be given to the term “adequately”? As always in comparative analysis our set of cases was meant to give us a better understanding of a **specific phenomenon**. For the analysis to work, this phenomenon had to be defined as sharply as possible. In our case, the phenomenon that we want to study can be described in the following way:

What happens when the armed forces of a country A are brought into contact with the civilian population of a country B?

In other words, in the language of physics our objective is to study the A-B interactions at micro-sociological level.

Obviously, the outcome of such a situation is shaped by several factors:

- The respective size of the two groups.
- The balance of power between the two groups. For instance, the civilian population B may belong to a defeated country like Germany or Japan or to an Allied country like Australia or Iceland.
- Whether or not the troops A are able to speak the language of population B.
- The tradition and agenda of the armed forces may play a role. For instance, American and French troops may not have the same traditions or objectives.
- In addition to the troops of country A there may also be a group of civilians of the same country. Thus, in Algeria the Muslim population was confronted to French troops as well as to French civilian colons. Such a circumstance introduces an additional complication.

This list of factors is certainly not exhaustive which, by the way, shows that even for a fairly well defined phenomenon there are many (too many!) parameters and circumstances.

²In a general way that kind of feeling is probably more influenced by the general tone of the media than by an objective examination of facts. For instance, there is a general agreement on the fact that Manchukuo was a puppet state of Japan but few people would use that term when speaking of the Philippines or Turkey in the years immediately after World War II in spite of the fact that these countries were heavily dependent on the United States. The same remark applies to the governments of Afghanistan and Iraq during the time when these countries were occupied by foreign troops

So our strategy was to reduce the number of free parameters as much as possible. For that purpose we discarded occupation episodes of the Algerian kind; secondly, we concentrated exclusively on American and British troops; thirdly, we discarded the cases in which there was open warfare in addition to the military occupation; such was the case in South Korea after July 1950 or of Vietnam after, say, 1965.

After that selection process has been carried out we wish to focus on the impact of two of the remaining parameters, namely the respective size of the two groups and their balance of power. In order to study the influence of these factors in good conditions we want to have situations in which their order of magnitude is very different³. This is the reason which motivated the selection of Iceland for indeed, in terms of number of troops with respect to population, Iceland was at a level about 100 times higher than Japan. In the same line of thought we preferred to select Australia rather than for instance Italy because in terms of balance of power Australia was in a much better position than Italy. The case of Hawaii is clearly of special interest because it is a case of domestic occupation. From that perspective it bears a resemblance with the occupation of the southern states of the Confederation after the Civil War in the United States.

Lasting controlling influence

Before 1945 military occupation of a defeated country lasted until the conclusion of a peace treaty, in practice hardly longer than 2 or 3 years. This can be illustrated by many cases.

- After Waterloo (1815) some parts of France were occupied by Russian, Prussian, Austrian troops but this occupation ended after the conclusion of the Vienna peace treaty.
- After its defeat in the war of 1870-1871 some parts of France were occupied by Prussian and Austrian troops but they were withdrawn as soon as France managed to pay a five-billion francs war indemnity.
- After Russia's defeat in the War of 1905 against Japan, Russia lost Port Arthur (now Lushunkou), Dalian and one half of the island of Sakhalin, but there was no war indemnity and no temporary occupation of parts of Russia by Japanese troops.
- After Germany's defeat in World War I the Rhineland was occupied by American, Belgian, British and French troops. According to the Versailles Treaty this occupation was planned to last until payment by Germany of its war indemnity. The US Army withdrew in January 1923 while the last French forces departed in June 1930. The temporary occupation of the Ruhr by French and Belgian troops in 1923-

³Similarly, if we want to study the influence of the length of a pendulum on its period of oscillation, it would be unwise to experiment with pendulums whose lengths are very similar, say 54, 56, 58 and 60 centimeters for the corresponding periods would be very close. On the contrary, with lengths of 5, 50 and 200 centimeters one would immediately see that the period increases with the length of the pendulum.

1925 was a separate occupation⁴.

Before 1945 the only cases which resulted in permanent military occupation by foreign troops were the recurrent defeats of China in its wars against western countries and Japan. The First Opium War (1839-1842) conducted by British naval forces started the series and ended with the establishment of 5 so-called treaty ports (at Amoy, Canton, Fuchow, Ningpo and Shanghai) where British forces, as well as French and US forces soon later, were authorized to keep troops to maintain order. In the following years over 80 treaty ports were established. China fell more and more under the control of foreign powers with dire consequences for its people. In 1842, China's population was over 400 million, of whom less than 1% were opium users. By 1881 the country's population was less than 370 million, of which as many as a third made regular use of opium (Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary).

The decades after 1945 were marked by the emergence of a "soft model" of the kind of foreign control that had been in place in China. This soft model shared many of the characteristics of the foregoing model. Let us mention some of them⁵.

- (1) *A* has military bases in *B*.
- (2) The armed forces (army, navy and air forces) of *B* are equipped and trained by *A*.
- (3) Many corporations of *A* are active in *B* especially in sectors such as the restoration industry, banks and the real estate industry.
- (4) There are special trade agreements between *A* and *B* which often turn out to be more favorable to *A* than to *B*.
- (5) Many students of *B* visit *A* for one or several years to get a university degree there.

In several countries this model came into being in the wake of the military occupation which followed World War II. Examples of *B* countries which come to mind immediately are: Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines. In all these countries there has been a process of nation-building and state-building which more or less followed the guiding lines set by the occupying country. In contrast to what happened in other parts of the world (for instance in South America) right-wing governments have been in power in all these countries almost continuously during the past 60 years.

More recent cases of *B* countries are Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Iraq, Kosovo.

In what respects is the present-day model "softer" than the one imposed in China?

⁴The Wikipedia article entitled "Occupation of the Ruhr" shows a picture of gymnasts from the Ruhr at the Munich 1923 Gymnastic fest. One woman participant holds a shield which summarizes fairly well the feelings raised by this occupation. It says: "Wir wollen niemals Knechte sein" that is to say "We will never accept to be subjugated".

⁵As above the occupying power will be designated by *A* whereas the occupied country will be denoted by *B*.

The system of foreign concessions and the control exercised by foreign powers arose strong patriotic feelings in the Chinese population especially in the cities and resulted in boycotts of foreign products and waves of demonstrations directed against foreigners. Nothing of the sort is supposed to happen in the soft model. As a matter of fact, this model is presented as a partnership even though one partner has a dominant position. For instance, there are frequent joint military exercises involving the armed forces of *A* and *B*. When *B* buys military equipment produced by *A* there is sometimes an arrangement which leaves a part of the manufacturing process to *B*. In other words, in some aspects the interaction between *A* and *B* may indeed be a win-win cooperation as is often claimed. However, observation suggests that in the long-run the loss of political autonomy has adverse consequences for *B*. One example is the inability to implement reforms viewed as unfavorable by the *A* power. This situation can be illustrated by the examples of Japan and South Korea.

On 29 December 2011, the Pentagon press secretary declared that “US forces in Japan are indispensable to the defense of Japan and to the maintenance of peace and security across the region.” However, on its territory Japan has much more US bases than would be necessary to guarantee its security. Most of them are destined to support US interventions in the Western Pacific as was the case during the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Because Okinawa has a particularly high concentration of bases, it is quite understandable that the population tries to obtain the removal of some of them. The relocation of a unit of Marines to Guam was planned in 2006 but even such a modest move was conditioned on the creation of a new facility in Okinawa to which the local population and the governor of Okinawa are fiercely opposed. At the time of writing (January 2012) the situation seems frozen and the inability of successive Japanese governments to make any progress showcases their weakness. The issue led to the demise of the government of Yukio Hatoyama in June 2010 after only 8 months in power and has already weakened the position of Prime Minister Noda after only 4 months in power.

In June 2007 during the presidency of Roh Moo-hyeon⁶ the South Korean government decided to build a new naval base on the southern coast of Jeju island which is itself located south of the Korean peninsula. The base will be able to house 20 warships and submarines. Although it will also be open to US warships it seems that the \$ 1 billion dollar construction cost will be supported by South Korea. The government claims that the base is vital for the national security of South Korea. However, as it will be only 600 km away from Beijing it is understandable that the

⁶Although president Roh was elected in 2002 on a program of closer cooperation with North Korea, he turned out to be a staunch ally of the United States. In 2003 he sent Korean troops to Iraq and visited President Bush in Washington. In February 2006 he announced negotiation of a free trade agreement with the United States. He was succeeded by Lee Myung-bak in February 2008 and committed suicide on 23 May 2009.

Chinese government sees such a new naval base as a threat. In short, US-Korea military cooperation will heighten tension in the region without providing any obvious benefit to South Korea.

In the following accounts of occupation episodes it will be seen that the foundations for close ties between the secret services, military forces, media companies, business organizations of country *A* and their counterparts in country *B* were established in the years following 1945.

References

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