Conceptualizing Foreign Rule: A Relational Approach to Understanding Coercively-Imposed International Hierarchy

Benjamin Denison
Department of Political Science
University of Notre Dame
2060 Jenkins Nanovic Halls
Notre Dame, IN 46556
Bdenison@nd.edu

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Abstract

I argue that a new conceptualization of foreign rule should serve as a unifying concept to aid our understanding of relationships of coercively-imposed international hierarchy. Throughout various literatures, military occupations, foreign regime change, statebuilding, peacebuilding, and stability operations are frequently treated as unique concepts, based largely on unit-level characteristics. Scholars examine the conditions that lead to success in each these sub-concept, but rarely branch to examine commonalities across concepts. This leads to inaccurate case comparisons, mistaken policy recommendations, and the loss of local populations in discussions of foreign rule. I argue that the relational approach implicit once treating these concepts as forms of international hierarchy shows commonalities among each and the problems of separating each concept as a unique concept to study, rather than as a variation of the same phenomena. Treating each as unique has allowed valuable knowledge of the determinants of success and failure in foreign rule and establishing political order to disappear as scholars and states seek to define their operations as new and unique. Overall, I argue foreign rule encourages more sound inferences about the effects and problems of coercively-imposed international hierarchy to be drawn.

Introduction

In recent years, a robust literature on hierarchy in international relations has grown focused on various features of international hierarchy and hierarchical orders. While this literature has made large gains in understanding various logics of international hierarchy, the focus has largely centered on non-coercively imposed forms of hierarchy, instead preferring to look at how power differentials, contracting relationships, and broader international structure guide hierarchical orders.[1] This makes good sense as international relations scholars have often focused on forms of coercively-imposed hierarchy without naming it as such, producing a wide variety of literatures that examine how foreign actors use armed force to compel actions in other territories. Understanding the nuanced effect of how sovereign inequality leads to unique political outcomes has been a much needed refocus ushered in by the international hierarchy literature. This has highlighted previously overlook aspects of international relations and understanding international politics as they operate in practice, and has ushered in great theorizing about how international relationships unfold.[2] However, the focus in the international hierarchy literature has at times omitted a major type of international relationship, namely coercively-imposed international hierarchy, that is crucial for explaining the full range of relationships that exist under a continuum of international hierarchy.[3]

While the literature on international hierarchy has not been as focused on coercively-imposed international hierarchy, there has been an expansion of scholarly interest over the past decade into the specific forms of imposed international hierarchy, such as literatures on military occupation, foreign regime change, peacekeeping operations, armed statebuilding missions, international territorial administration, nation-building, stability operations, and more.[4] Interest in this literature was driven by the recent number of cases where interna-

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[1]These logics has been usefully termed trade-offs, positionality, and productivity by Bially Mattern and Zarakol (2016).

[2]The immense literature on international hierarchy in recent years is too extensive to list fully here, but a sample of this literature includes: Adler-Nissen (2014), Bially Mattern and Zarakol (2016), Butcher and Griffiths (2017), Butt (2013), Cooley (2005), Denison (2017), Donnelly (2006), Goh (2008), Hobson and Sharman (2005), Kang (2003, 2005), Lake (1996, 2007, 2009), MacDonald (2018), MacDonald and Lake (2008), Mcconaughey, Musgrave and Nexon (2018), McDonald (2015), Musgrave and Nexon (2018), Paul, Larson and Wohlforth (2014), Towns (2012), Wendt and Friedheim (1995), Zarakol (2011, 2014).

[3]This point is made by MacDonald when discussing Lake's conceptualization of hierarchy through contracting relations (MacDonald and Lake 2008).

[4]Each of these literatures is too vast to include here but a sampling incudes: On military occupation see Collard-Wexler (2013), Edelstein (2008), Marcum (2015). On foreign regime change see Downes and Monten (2013), Downes and O'Rourke (2016), Lo, Hashimoto and Reiter (2008), Peic and Reiter (2011), Zachary, Deloughery and Downes (2017). On peacekeeping operations see Balas (2011), Balas, Owsiak and Diehl (2012), Doyle and Sambanis (2006), Fortna (2004, 2008), Hultman, Kathman and Shannon (2014). On state-building and nation-building see Dobbins (2003), Dobbins et al. (2005, 2007), Lake (2016), Miller (2013), Paris and Sisk (2009). On international territorial administration see Ratner (2005), Stahn (2008), Wilde (2010). And on stability operations see Boutellis (2015), Karlsrud (2018), Muggah (2013), Taw (2012).

tional actors have imposed foreign rule to promote international stability, and sparked in large part by the 2003 American occupation of Iraq and its aftermath. However, each of these literatures have grown and developed in isolation, with scholars interested in occupation writing about military occupations, peacekeeping scholars writing about peacekeeping missions, foreign regime change scholars writing on foreign regime change cases, and soon each of these academic literatures create their own datasets of cases, and more importantly, their own conceptualizations and definitions of these political phenomena. This has had the effect of limiting the number of cases of consideration by each study and separates each of these literatures for each other except for certain footnotes. While this has lead to important empirical and theoretical work on the determinants of success in occupation, statebuilding, peacekeeping operations for instance, it has also cluttered the conceptual landscape and partitioned our understanding of coercively-imposed international hierarchy. This has led to, I argue, conceptual chaos that manifests with a failure of these literatures to speak to each other in their attempts to understand success and failure in extending political authority over various foreign ruled territories from afar.

Thus while there has been much learned about coercively-imposed international hierarchy in the past two decades, the accumulation of knowledge across concepts has sputtered. Reflecting this, I argue that these concepts that are traditionally treated as separate would be better served by being treated as sub-types of the same unified concept of foreign rule that reintegrates this literature into our understandings of international hierarchy. Uniting these various traditionally separate concepts into one overarching concept of coercive international hierarchy, what I call foreign rule, would help clarify analysis on the difficulty of extending political authority to foreign territories, no matter the identity or the intentions of the foreign actor. Once embracing the view that these various literatures are truthfully all discussing forms of coercively-imposed international hierarchy, the relational approach implicit to the literature on international hierarchy illustrates the remarkable similarities among these different concepts.

In this theory note, I argue that conceptualizing the varieties of foreign rule as distinct concepts rather than different sub-types of the same overarching concept only serves to complicate and further clutter the conceptual landscape in our understanding of coercively-imposed international hierarchy. Rather, embracing a relational approach to conceptualizing foreign rule as a united concept allows us to reintroduce conceptual clarity into our analysis of foreign rule, while allowing us to identify commonalities across historical time periods among different sub-types. By avoiding partitioned concepts based on formal-legal definitions that define new forms of foreign rule as unique to certain actors or current periods, we can reintroduce historical legacies and apply lessons from earlier periods to improve scholarship

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and decision-making when analyzing foreign rule.[5] Recognizing the similar relationships between the foreign ruler and local population also helps explain when local resistance against foreign rule is more common, and what forms of foreign rule relationships make resistance more or less likely. Beyond the conceptual clarity it introduces into our understanding of international hierarchy and international relations, a unified concept of foreign rule improves the ability to make causal inferences about various aspects of foreign rule missions, especially what makes them more or less likely to succeed. By increasing the universe of cases for study, scholars are able to more accurately test their predictions over whether different types of foreign rule missions, different goals, different strategies, or even different foreign rulers themselves produce different outcomes. Further, relational views of international hierarchy crucially also bring local populations back into the discussion of foreign rule and forces scholars to consider outcomes and stability for both the foreign ruler and the local population.

The remainder of this theory note will proceed as follows: First, I explore how formal-legal definitions originating in international legal conventions have helped fragment the current cluttered conceptual landscape, and the problem with relying on partitioned concepts. Second, I highlight the relational approach inherent in understanding international hierarchy and discuss how it helps define the broader concept of foreign rule. I then define my concept of foreign rule and discuss its conceptual logic, using the illustrative case of stabilization missions in Haiti to show why focusing on a relational view of coercive international hierarchy helps explain levels of resistance in Haiti in more detail and context. Finally, I will discuss some implications for the use of foreign rule as a concept and how it can improve scholarly analysis. Re-aligning international relations scholarship to focus on the commonalities across time and space is imperative to improve our analysis and theorizing about the conditions for consolidated political order and resistance under foreign rule.

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[5]Importantly, this theory note is not an attempt to claim that modern cases of statebuilding, peacebuilding, and stability operations are etc. are identical to imperial rule and colonialism of the past, although some scholars have sought to highlight these commonalities (Chandler 2006). Rather, I propose that the when embracing the relational view of hierarchy, that the definitions that have separated these concepts become more flimsy and show that each is more of a sub-type of foreign rule and similar to the others forms of foreign rule. From there, the relational characteristics of these concepts have largely remained constant over time and can help explain various problems with modern analyses of extending political order and creating stable governance abroad by highlighting how different unit-level variables have encouraged more or less success. While it is clear that colonial relationships of the 19th century, military occupations during World War II, UN territorial administrations, and modern stabilization operations all had very different political goals, examining how their relational characteristics are similar allows us to understand how local dynamics of today appear akin to previous problems of establishing rule.

The Fragmented Conceptual Landscape of International Coercive Hierarchy

Prior to discussing my contention that conceptualizing various forms of coercively-imposed international hierarchy as one concept of foreign rule is useful, I first must discuss how the conceptual landscape has become so fragmented and why there has not been a focus on the unified aspects of these concepts previously. I contend that formal-legal definitions, specifically developed throughout international law and legal conventions, have largely served as a basis to partition concepts and then adopted in the study of international relations without understanding the origins and justifications for new conceptualization in international law. The purpose of new conceptualization in international law is very different from seeking precise conceptualization to allow for social scientific comparison of international relationships across time and place. International legal definitions exist to define and legitimate what new patterns of authority and behavior are acceptable in the international system, rather than trying to decisively litigate the actual content of international practices. In general, regardless of the reason for new concepts coming into the international legal lexicon, understanding that international legal definitions serve a different purpose than concepts in the study of international politics should be sufficient to make clear that adopting a relational approach when conceptualizing imposed-hierarchy is superior to the formal-legal approach that leads to fragmentation. Thus I contend it is the importation of these partitioned concepts into the international relations literature that has had the incidental effect of fragmenting the conceptual landscape.

When looking at the actual content of these formal-legal definitions of these imported concepts, the relationship implied by the various definitions are remarkably similar. Take, for instance, the legal definition of military occupation by Benvenisti (2004, 4) where he defines military occupation as "the effective control of a power...over a territory to which that power has no sovereign title, without the volition of the sovereign of that territory." In this definition, there is nothing to separate military occupation from other forms of foreign rule such as mandates, territorial administration, armed statebuilding, or others who also focus on the relationship of a power maintaining sovereign authority over a foreign territory. And yet over the last ten years, the proliferation of concepts that imply the same international relationship, but are still treated as separate categories of international behavior continues to grow. A quick sampling of common definition in these various literatures illustrates this point. For example: "Military occupation is the temporary control of a territory by a state (or a group of allied states) that makes no claim to permanent sovereignty over that territory" (Edelstein 2008, 3). Foreign-imposed regime change is "the forcible or coerced removal

of the effective leader of one statewhich remains formally sovereign afterwardby the government of another state" (Downes and Monten 2013, 109). "Armed international liberal state building is the attempt by liberal states to use military, political, and economic power to compel weak, failed, or collapesed states to govern more effectively and accountably" (Miller 2013, 7). Nation-building is "the use of armed force in the aftermath of a conflict to promote a transition to democracy" which includes focusing on "reform and strengthening of institutions for governance" with "the application of military force" (Dobbins et al. 2005, 2). International territorial administration is a "formally-constituted, locally-based management structure operating with respect to a particular territorial unit, whether a state, a sub-state unit, or a non-state territorial entity" carried out by "international organizations or international appointees." (Wilde 2010, 33-34). Stabilization missions are "a process involving coercive force in concert with reconstruction and development assistance during or in the immediate aftermath of a violent conflict in order to prevent the continuation or recurrence of conflict and debilitating levels of non-conflict violence" (Zyck, Barakat and Deely 2013, 19). Peace operations "deploy either military or civilian personnel or both, in a post-conflict or potentially conflict environment...to stabilize a country and make sure that the conflict will not (re)start again" (Balas 2011, 387).

Behind these concepts is an emphasis on formal-legal definitions that attempt to heighten unit-level differences between concepts rather than focusing on how similar the actual relationship between units are to previous missions of imposed hierarchy. Examining this highlights how the formal-legal aspects of these definitions are used to separate the concepts, whether based on the goal of the armed mission (nation-building, stabilization operations for instance), the identity of the intervening power (international territorial administration, peace operations), and the means through which one actor attempts to achieve their goals (statebuilding, foreign-imposed regime change). However even with vital difference between these related concepts, the fundamental relationship of coercive international hierarchy remains. When looking at the genealogy and the origins of these definitions, they largely emerge from the international law and international legal conventions, having the purpose of changing and determining the legal authority for certain missions, but this only makes social scientific comparison and accumulation of knowledge more difficult.

The role of formal-legal conceptualization has received much attention in the literature on hierarchy in international relations. This has focused in part on critiquing the traditional assumption of the international system as purely anarchic, which hierarchy scholars argue can only emerge from a particular view of formal-legal authority.[6] In particular, Lake (2009, 24-

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[6]See Donnelly (2006), Hobson and Sharman (2005), Krasner (1999), and Milner (1991) for different treatments of how formal-legal conceptualizations of authority are the basis of assumptions of an anarchic

28) has argued that international relations theory has focused on the formal-legal conception of anarchy that presumes order and political authority emerges from a defined role or lawful position giving an actor the authority to compel action from another.[7] This in contrast to what Lake (2009, 28-44) calls relational authority, which he contends is a more accurate depiction of social reality in the international system, where states and international actors construct authority relationships not premised on the authority inherent in their position but through the social processes of interaction. In fact, Hobson and Sharman (2005) point out that that the legal means through which states are deemed parts of the international system is itself a relational type of authority based on relationships between international actors determining who is counted as a power and a sovereign actor in the system.[8] While Lake especially focuses on how social contracts between states originates relational authority, the important take away is that scholars of international hierarchy have already emphasized how focusing on legal conceptualizations obscures the social processes and similar types of authority practiced among a variety of different actors. Thus, while different definitions and views of the sources and implications of types of legal authority matter for debates over anarchy versus hierarchy in the international system, I contend that importation of certain international legal concepts has also created a problem of over-conceptualization of coercively-imposed international hierarchy based in formal-legal differentiation.

Recognizing this view that formal-legal definitions can sometimes obscure, I contend that in the literature on coercive international hierarchy, formal-legal definitions have separated concepts as unique international legal constructs, and does not look at the relational aspects that clearly show these concepts as similar relationships of coercive international hierarchy. Largely, these international legal concepts use unit-level characteristics to delineate the formal-legal boundary between different forms of what I call foreign rule, rather than focusing on the relational aspects that unite them. However, these formal-legal definitions are not as normative free as suggested, and there is a long history in international law where actors created new legal concepts that could be used to serve as the basis for imposing forms of coercive hierarchy or denying sovereign equality. As Anghie (2004), Benton (2010), and Pitts (2018) all argue, for centuries the international law of sovereignty was purposefully constructed at

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international system.

[7]As Lake (2009, 24) points out, this originates in Max Weber's view of the sources of authority by the state (Weber 1978, 215-254).

[8]Even in the canonically international relations dataset on interstate conflict, the Correlates of War, who is included in the country lists is explicitly relational in nature as it is determined by the diplomatic relationship between states. The official definition of membership in the international system is: "1) prior to 1920, the entity must have population greater than 500,000 and have had diplomatic missions at or above the rank of charge daffaires with Britain and France; 2) after 1920, the entity must be a member of the United Nations or League of Nations, or have population greater than 500,000 and receive diplomatic missions from two major powers (Correlates of War Project 2016).

different times to justify various forms of foreign rule and delineate who counted as sovereign members of the international community.[9] Even more, these definitions, by necessity of the purpose of the states who were making the legal definitions, embraced formal-legal differentiation based on unit-level factors in order to highlight why it was legitimate to impose coercive hierarchy on one territory but not another. By seeking to differentiate who could impose hierarchical relationships upon who, this necessitated the need for unit-level differentiation. The goal was not to create a comprehensive understanding on the conditions for effective imposition of international hierarchy but rather trying to legitimate the times it was permissible in the international order. Benton (2010, 236) emphasizes this point by discussing how the international legal community justified inclusion of territories as sovereign or non-sovereign based on how 'civilized' they were deemed. As Anghie (2004, 52-64) directly says, if you can see a people or territory as barbarian, a unit-level characteristic, then you can withhold the formal-legal conception of sovereignty from the territory and feel justified in imposing coercive hierarchy of foreign rule, a relationship of international hierarchy.[10]

Hence, international law developed in a way to provide different definitions as to what was a legitimate imposition of hierarchical authority and under what conditions forms of coercive hierarchy could be imposed. The focus of the international law of sovereignty however focused on who can have their sovereignty infringed and based on that identity and not on what the relationship should look like. This means that throughout the history of international law, formal-legal definitions based on unit-level characteristics have served as the defining aspects between different legal concepts and definitions, overlooking the actual relationship imposed. This evolved over time as certain forms of coercive hierarchy became to be seen as illegitimate following normative change and problems with colonization, occupation, trusteeship and more. Once it became normatively problematic to engage in, say, military occupation, rather than ending the practice of imposing foreign rule, states found new means to construct new legal concepts based on different unit-level characteristics that could serve to legitimate similar forms of coercive hierarchy. Even today, conceptualizing in international legal bodies is based on the organizational biases and craft definitions that fit with their own preferred actions already underway. As Barnett et al. (2007, 53) explain regarding the various definitions of peacebuilding, "At the UN, there continues to be considerable variation in the meaning of peacebuilding because organizations are likely to adopt a meaning of peacebuilding that is consistent with their already existing mandates, worldviews, and organizational interests."

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[9] For an excellent outline of the development of international law and its relationship to questions of sovereignty and empire, see Koskenniemi (2002, 98-166).

[10] As Anghie (2004, 38) convincingly lays out, "colonialism was not an example of the application of" the international law of "sovereignty; rather sovereignty was constituted through colonialism."

This concern with states continuing behaviors international law has tried to regulate or eliminate, but ensuring it appears legitimate is not uncommon in international law, as scholars have illustrated related to international law and warfare. The idea that states attempt to use or avoid certain legal categories instrumentally based on their definitions and obligations is not a new realization. For instance, scholars have shown that when faced with legal obligations, state will seek to muddy the idea of what is a war and what obligations states have when engaging in warfare (Fazal 2012, 2018, Hurd 2017). Instead of states avoiding the behavior that international law has tried make illegitmate, they instead seek to either change the definitions or massage their actions to say they do not follow under the international legal category governing their behavior even while continuing the behavior.[11] This, I argue, operates similarly in the view of limiting sovereignty under international law. Certain forms of imposed hierarchy became less legitimate in the international system, international legal minds worked to create new definitions based on other unit-level characteristics such as the identity or intentions of the powerful state imposing hierarchy. This was treated as a completely new form of imposed international hierarchy, with new legal doctrine and regulation that defined and governed the relationship. As formal-legal definitions in international law were often defined by states as a means to legitimate their impositions of international hierarchy, they had an incentive to make new impositions of limited sovereignty appear different compared to past distasteful actions. Thus rather than banning the behavior or circumscribing the ability to impose hierarchy or limit sovereignty, new international legal concepts were created that allowed for both legal justification and legitimation and avoidance of other legal concepts that were deemed no longer legitimate. Rather than international law changing behavior, it changed what concepts were defined as a means to legitimate international actions.

There are different reasons why states may want to have new international legal concepts that aid in imposing coercive hierarchy. New international legal concepts may provide ways to attempt to signal benign intentions of the foreign ruler. In the modern era, they may want to try to say that their goals are no longer a civilizing mission but a promotion of peace and stability. In practice, this does not take into consideration the actual relationship imposed on the weaker territories or how the local populations actually feel about the imposed form

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[11]Even during World War II, the Nazi occupiers across Europe tried to avoid dealing with the international law of occupation by having a puppet ruler invite the German occupiers into the country, thereby formally claiming they were not engaging in a military occupation. Following the war, the international law of occupation was changed to define it as an occupation even when invited, but the United States and Soviet Union sought new ways to sidestep this definition as well due to the normative problems associated with occupation in wake of the Nazi experience.[12]. While extreme, this is emblematic of how states seek to continue to impose relationships of coercive international hierarchy, but try to create new legal categories or concepts to avoid the normative traps of previous missions.

of coercive hierarchy. There are not discussions of whether the local population think certain forms of imposed hierarchy or limited sovereignty are more legitimate than others, but just an assumption that the new legal definitions and concepts will transmit that it is legitimate, even without their say in the process. While the local population may feel that regardless of the different names for concepts, that similar imposition of foreign international hierarchy is similar to previous cases, they often resist and think of it as different while the foreign ruler does not understand why their motives and intentions are not signaled.

Formal-legal definitions also exist to try to break away from previous histories rather than working to comparison to previous eras more simple. In faction, it is exactly the point in much of this new formal-legal conceptualization to say that modern relationships of imposed hierarchy cannot be compared to previous concept as states try to avoid the legal obligations that are associated with those other legal concepts. In international law, it is not the goal to define new legal concepts in an effort to connect similar cases from the past to allow for empirical study. When bringing these concepts to social scientific study, however, this partition of concepts actively harms the empirical inferences we can makes, and harms our understanding of imposed international hierarchy. Instead, the unit-level focus on international legal definitions should be eschewed for a relational approach under international hierarchy as discussed below. Once we accept that foreign rule is a relationship of coercive hierarchy, the legal definitions that separate occupation, mandates, territorial administration, and peacekeeping from each other break down.

Once deciding to not focus on formal-legal differentiation as a means to define new concepts, unit-level factors, such as the identity of the actor imposing hierarchy or the intentions and goals of the mission, are stripped away from formal-legal definitions of various forms of foreign rule, the separation of concepts of coercive international hierarchy breaks down. Instead, these concepts that I argue are forms of foreign rule begin to appear much more similar than dissimilar. There are still important variations in the various cases that are largely based on unit-level factors, but those differences serve to explain various outcomes rather than operate as justification for partitioning actions as different concepts. Instead of utilizing definitions that exist in international law as a way to justify government behavior, focusing on the relational dynamics that unite these concepts produces more useful analysis. A unified conceptualization of foreign rule improves our understanding of international hierarchy and international politics.

Foreign Rule: A Relational Approach to Coercive International Hierarchy

In order to rectify the problem of over-conceptualization and the partitioning of various forms of imposed international hierarchy into different concepts that harms accumulation of knowledge, I propose scholars should reframe these concepts in terms of the relational approach implicit in the study of international hierarchy and that will offer a more robust conceptualization. I contend that by uniting these distinct concepts into one over-arching concept, what I term foreign rule, helps frame these sub-concepts in terms of the relational characteristics that unite them and allows for better empirical and theoretical analysis of their impacts on international politics. how do I define foreign rule to unite the relational aspects that have been lost through over-conceptualization? Foreign rule is a hierarchical relationship that powerful states impose on other territories through armed force so as to govern territory outside its sovereign jurisdiction. Formally, I define foreign rule as a hierarchical relationship in which a foreign state, group of states, or international body uses military force to impose itself as the *de facto* sovereign authority of a territory, while making no permanent claims to include the territory as part of the foreign ruler's home state. This definition excludes annexation, conquest, economic dependency, covert regime change operations, conditionality[13], secessionist groups claiming rule by an outsider, and other hierarchical relationships that do not reach the level of surrendering sovereign authority through armed force.[14] It does include concepts that are traditionally considered separate political phenomena, namely military occupation, mandate and trust territories, foreign-imposed regime change missions (FIRCs), international territorial administration, stability operations, and perhaps most contentiously, modern UN peacekeeping missions where the mission assumes *de facto* sovereignty of the territory.[15]

This definition requires some unpacking. First, as suggested above, scholars of international hierarchy have argued that under a relational view of the international system, the structure of the international system shows many more relationships of hierarchy than the traditional view of states under anarchy assumes. The relational view of international poli-

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[13]For example, the IMF and EU using conditionality programs to push weaker states to reform domestic institutions (Levitsky and Way 2010, Stone 2008, Vachudova 2005).

[14]This definition implies that the territory under foreign rule remains a defined separate piece of territory outside the foreign ruler's home territory. Thus, territory under foreign rule does not undergo state death as discussed by Fazal (2011), but has a foreign entity taking sovereign control of the distinct territory and ruling from afar. On a continuum of international hierarchy, state death would be one end of the continuum with full sovereignty at the other end, and foreign rule taking up a large section of the middle.

[15]This includes post-Cold War operations where the UN has assumed control of territory as illustrated by Chesterman (2005). Crucially, however, I do not claim that all UN peacekeeping operations are forms of foreign rule, but rather only cases where there is a transference of sovereignty.

tics, not only in the purview of scholars of international hierarchy, is elucidated by Jackson and Nexon (1999) who contend that international relations is best understood by focusing on the structure of the relationship between international actors rather than the characteristics of one actor to determine the nature of international political actions. Relational thinking in international relations allows one to focus on the nature of the system through the relationship of units rather than defining the nature of the system through the characteristics of the units themselves (Jackson and Nexon 2013).[16] Following from this, Lake (2007, 58) illustrates that once you embrace relational views of authority, it becomes clear that there are varying amounts and types of relationships of international hierarchy in the international system. MacDonald (2018, 131) builds on this view by contending that "hierarchy in world politics is fundamentally a relational phenomenon. The position of actors within broader networks of political, economic, and social exchange shape not only who can claim the right to command, but also who will tend to obey." This is to say that the relational view of international politics and the study of international hierarchy are both intertwined, and once accepting the presence of international hierarchy, moving to view their related concepts in a relational vein is the the next logical step.[17]

As MacDonald (2018, 136) argues, international hierarchy is "an authority relationship between dominant and subordinate states" and exists in "cases where a dominant state is exercising genuine authority over a subordinate." With this relational definition, hierarchical relationships appear much more common in international politics, as powerful states exploit the inequality of the international distribution of power to take control of some part of the sovereign authority of weaker states. While states still exist in anarchy and possess formal equality, as described by Waltz (1979, 114-116), in practice, many scholars have now highlighted the vertical stratification that often exists at the international level, and focus on the authority relationships between states under anarchy.[18] Hierarchy amidst anarchy implies

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[16]Relational analysis emerged in sociology in response to debates over the proper level of analysis for social relations. Scholars began to disagree over whether unit level characteristics were the proper level of analysis when the characteristic of units rarely change overtime. This lead to a call for relational sociology where the dynamic interactions between units would serve as the unit of analysis (Emirbayer 1997). For more on how relational analysis has emerged in international relations and sociology see (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994, Hafner-Burton, Kahler and Montgomery 2009, White, Boorman and Breiger 1976).

[17]Traditionally, international politics has been conceptualized as a system defined by sovereign equality due to the presence of anarchy in the international system. As Waltz (1979, 114-116) argues, the lack of a global super structure forces states to act as sovereign equals. In recent years however, many have noted that international politics, although operating under formal anarchy, often find that relationships between states are categorized by sovereign inequality. While relationships between states still maintain formal sovereign equality, Lake (2007, 2009) and Buzan and Little (1996) both argue that in practice various relationships of sovereign inequality define the international system. Thus international hierarchy comes to define many relationships present in the international system.

[18]It is important to note, however, that great power politics – the level of international politics that Waltz (1979) and others who write on the effects of anarchy are largely interested in – still largely operates as an

that the subordinate state does maintain its ability to act independently, however, they are constrained by the power differential that is imposing hierarchy among the system. International hierarchy remains distinct from Waltz's conceptualization of domestic hierarchy, given that formal anarchy at the international level and sovereign decisions can still exist (Waltz 1979, 81).

Fundamentally, international hierarchy implies a relational view of authority and embracing this view breaks down the formal-legal conceptual barrier that has harmed conceptualization of foreign rule. Once embracing this relational view of international hierarchy, it becomes clear coercively-imposed international hierarchy has been over-conceptualized and using formal-legal definitions rather than relational definitions has created incentives to partition concepts based on unit-level factors. While there are often incentives to bifurcate concepts in international relations in order to highlight how unique time periods or international actors can produce particular outcomes, focusing on overarching commonalities is a more useful way to categorize concepts within international politics. As Butcher and Griffiths (2017, 330) argue, having a broader yet consistent conceptualization of political phenomena can help "accumulate knowledge...and differentiate the general from the local and the similar from the unique."[19] Embracing this relational view of international hierarchy to conceptualize foreign rule is not only warranted but necessary for better theoretical understanding and empirical analysis. These benefits include that it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the varieties of this political relationship across history as well as identifying the appropriate universe of cases in empirical analyses.

Given that this understanding of international hierarchy illustrates the benefits of relational conceptualization instead of partition via formal-legal definitions, foreign rule is thus defined by the relationship between two entities rather than any unit-level characteristics of the foreign ruler or the foreign ruled territory. This is a direct implication that builds on the relational view of international hierarchy. While unit-level characteristics are important for explaining certain outcomes, they should not be used to separate these concepts due to how it imposes formal-legal distinctions of authority. Removing the unit-level features form definitions only leaves the relational aspects. Similar to how interstate war and interstate trade occur between two distinct units in the international system, foreign rule is a unique relationship between two political units in the system that is defined by the stronger unit's

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anarchic system as great powers are unable to impose hierarchy on other great powers. If they could, then that state would no longer be considered a great power.

[19]In response to Butcher and Griffiths (2017), Denison (2017) argues that creating bright-lines between concepts instead of thinking about the commonalities and overlapping nature of certain concepts causes a rise in incomprehensible concepts. Instead, allowing for more unified but gradated concepts can actually improve our understanding and maintain more accurate distinctions in international relations.

temporary takeover of the sovereign authority of a weaker unit.[20] While unit-level characteristics can prove to be important causal variables when explaining variation in foreign rule strategies and outcomes, as I discuss below, defining foreign rule based only on unit-level characteristics does more to muddle our understanding of the phenomenon than clarify its uniqueness. While they can show why the UN might achieve more success in imposing foreign rule, why democracies produce more or less resistance to their rule, and why soviet-style imposed hierarchy achieves certain political goals better than other foreign rule missions, these unit-level factors are not what separates the actual relationship imposed.

The benefits of relational conceptualization over unit-level conceptualization can be highlighted, paradoxically, in how some scholars have previously tried to partition these concepts. For instance, some argue that modern missions of international territorial administration are unique international relationships in the modern era and not just new forms of international hierarchy and trusteeship adapted and updated. They argue that the UN territorial administration missions in the Former Yugoslavia and East Timor were unique operations due to the unit-level characteristics of the administrator – namely that it was the United Nations and not a unilateral nation-state administering the territory and the intentions and goals of the UN mission.[21] However as both Wilde (2010) and Ratner (2005) illustrate, focusing on unit-level factors instead of relational attributes to define new concepts only served to blur the important similarities between the modern UN missions and cases of international trusteeship throughout the early 20th century, making it more difficult to think about the applicable lessons form the past. Thus, a definition of foreign rule embracing relational thinking allows for a well-struck balance between generalization and historical contingency. In so doing, a focus on international relationships instead of unit-level factors pushes one to find a generalizable account that can explain the evolution of an international relationship and allows for historical contingencies and unit-level factors to exist as causal variables that impact the relationship in distinct ways. This creates a more sound conceptual basis that allows for theory building. Concentrating on the relationship between actors allows us to move beyond unit-level characteristics to define foreign rule, leaving unit-level variation to help explain why such a relationship emerges or the success and failure of certain foreign rule operations.[22]

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[20]Examples of unit-level characteristics include: domestic political system, leadership attributes, domestic economic systems, organizational attributes and more. To reiterate, while all of these unit-level characteristics can serve as important variables that can help explain the emergence and effectiveness of certain international phenomena, they are factors that help explain the phenomenon rather than aspects of the phenomenon itself.

[21]For a full sense of this argument see Bain (2003), Caplan (2005), Fox (2008), Matheson (2001), Stahn (2008), Van Willigen (2013), Zaum (2007).

[22]This is not a unique feature of UN peacekeeping as cited above. In a short time period, the international

Foreign rule, as coercively-imposed international hierarchy, is a piece of the continuum of hierarchical relationships under international hierarchy. It refers to imposed authority relationships where the dominant power imposes sovereign authority upon the subordinate power through armed force, and the subordinate power is obligated to comply with the sovereign inequality imposed (MacDonald 2018, 137). Given that international hierarchy is defined as a *de facto* relationship between different units in the international system, foreign rule is simply one form of international hierarchy coercively-imposed through military force and domination. It is a hierarchical relationship imposed by one unit onto another and defined by the authority relationship imposed. The recognition that international hierarchy exists in the international system, and that force is used to impose hierarchical relationships upon certain units, is fundamental for understanding the nature of foreign rule. However, rather than creating a bright-line between anarchy and hierarchy as organizing political principles, it is vital to recognize that hierarchical relationships, via domination between political units, exist on an continuum of international hierarchy ranging from full sovereignty to integration into a domestic order through annexation. I contend that my definition of foreign rule exists as a a part of this continuum of international hierarchy via domination, whereby military force is used to place the territories under coercive hierarchy, while maintaining their nominal independent status. It is the focus on foreign ruled territories maintaining nominal sovereignty and the act of subordination being imposed through military force that defines the hierarchical relationship of foreign rule. Figure 1 presents a rough representation of this continuum on international hierarchy via domination. While there are other forms of international hierarchy on the the continuum that do not qualify as forms of foreign rule, such as covert regime change, colonization, and conditionality, my conceptualization of foreign rule captures the relationships imposed by force and without interest in integrating them into a domestic order.

Once the benefits of defining foreign rule as a relationship that is not based on unit-level characteristics or legal definitions become clear, traditionally separate concepts combine under my definition of foreign rule. At its core, foreign rule is a coercive form of international hierarchy imposed by a powerful state on a foreign territory where domination and *de facto* sovereignty, backed by military force, defines the relationship. Such a definition recasts the US and Soviet Occupations of South and North Korea (military occupation), the US intervention in South Vietnam (statebuilding), the British and French mandates in the Middle East following World War I (mandate and trusts), the Soviet Union's regime change mission

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community found that the mandate system for imposed hierarchy was not working well so they instituted the trusteeship system after World War II, thus changing conceptualizations within a short time trying to omit lessons from previous era. Today the shift to various names for stabilization operations shows a similar move to conceptualize away past missions.

International Hierarchical Relationships of Domination

Figure 1: Continuum of International Hierarchical Relationships via Domination

in Mongolia and the Vietnamese regime change operation in Cambodia (FIRC), the French mission in Mali (stability operation), and NATO policy in Bosnia and Kosovo (peacebuilding), into one concept: foreign rule.[23] Examination of these phenomena as part of one overarching concept presents many possibilities for increased understanding of the dynamics of foreign rule, and how different variations of this relationship can produce different outcomes.

After establishing the international hierarchy continuum above, and in light of my view that foreign rule exists as a subset of international hierarchy, it is useful to elucidate why I consider foreign rule to be a unique concept that does not include other related forms of international hierarchy. First, with regards to the far left of the hierarchy continuum: why does foreign rule exclude cases of a powerful state intending to include the acquired territory into their home state? When examining a continuum of international hierarchy, once territory is incorporated as part of the home state, it is no longer foreign rule. Conceptually, foreign rule stands apart from other actions taken by powerful states, such as annexation and irredentism, that aim to take control of territory as foreign rulers. These cases are not interested in establishing an international hierarchical relationship to control the territory. Rather, they seek to include the territory as part of their own domestic order. For instance, when Nazi Germany annexed Austria during the Anschluss in 1938, the Germans integrated Austria into its own domestic order and governing structures, effectively eliminating Austria as an independent sovereign unit (Mazower 2008, 46-52). Once a territory no longer retains even its nominal sovereign authority, it is no longer subject to foreign rule, but rather

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[23]Most contentiously, I include some UN peacekeeping operations in my analysis, but mostly only following the end of the Cold War where the UN acted as the *de facto* sovereign in territories they operated in. As an example, the UN mission in East Timor starting in 1999 is a mission of foreign rule, given the UNs role in serving as the interim state authority as they transitioned to independent statehood. The UN mission in Burundi (ONUB), however, does not count as a mission of foreign rule, as the UN mission never assumed governance functions in Burundi. For analysis on when and why the shift in UN peacekeeping occurred, see Fox (2008).

domestic order. I argue that managing foreign territory that it is not part of the domestic governance apparatus is a distinct process from attempting to integrate a territory into your domestic order, and therefore different processes guide how states approach governing territory they view as their own versus territory they regard as foreign.[24] Additionally, if temporary control were removed from the definition of foreign rule, all cases of separatist movements and insurgency campaigns against a government (like Catalan in Spain and Tamil in Sri Lanka) would have a claim to exist as a case of foreign rule in their bids for independence. While both sets of relationships are important and merit in-depth study, they remain distinct phenomena on the continuum of hierarchy. Instead, distinguishing the relationship of a powerful actor governing a foreign territory and the relationship of a powerful actor governing a territory they consider part of their home state is a critical conceptual distinction. [25] As long as the foreign ruler does not attempt to include the territory as part of their home state, and maintains the territory as a distinct political unit outside of their home territory, then it is still foreign rule, regardless of the length of the foreign rule mission.

For example, the United States ruled over the Philippines for over 40 years, but never moved to include the Philippines as the 51st state or make them a permanent American territory. Hence the Philippines are considered to be a mission of foreign rule from 1898-1945 when they achieved independence from American and Japanese rule.[26] In contrast, the case of the Baltic states under Soviet rule do not qualify as a case of foreign rule, as they were made defined parts of the Soviet Unions home territory and thus fall under domestic rule of the Soviet Union. The Soviets ruled over the Baltic states for a similar-length period, but the fact that the Baltic states became independent states following the breakup of the Soviet Union does not retroactively make these cases of foreign rule, given their status as domestic territories of the Soviet Union.[27] This also illustrates why pre-

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[24]Admittedly, the links between state formation literature and theories of foreign rule are connected, as linkages can be built between the challenges of administering the territory of a population who sees the ruler as an outsider. In any case, this is outside the scope of this dissertation but provides interesting avenues to build upon. For more on these linkages see Hechter (2013) and Gerring et al. (2011).

[25]Similarly, Edelstein (2008) argues that the intention of a military occupier to not include the territory in their home territory helps define a military occupation. However, given this focus on intention is a unit-level consideration, I use the observed imposed relationship as the means to define the concept. Importantly, this does not imply that the length of the foreign rulers dominion over a territory determines whether a case meets the definition of foreign rule.

[26]It is important to note that territories like Puerto Rico, Guam, and other United States islands and overseas territories are considered a part of the United States federal government, and their citizens are United States citizens. Thus, these are not cases of foreign rule but rather a unique domestic political relationship.

[27]However both of these cases can be integrated into broader continuums of political order under hierarchy, such as espoused by Mcconaughey, Musgrave and Nexon (2018).

mandate colonial rule is not covered by my definition of foreign rule. While it is difficult to determine the intentions of colonial states in terms of their plans for future sovereignty of their colonies, there was often no explicit intentions among pre-20th century colonizing powers to see colonies cease to be an extension of the metropole (especially in colonies ruled directly rather than indirectly). By 1900, and certainly after World War I, new forms of colonization (mandates) included an explicit provision that stated the mandatory power must move the territory towards independence, and not maintain a permanent presence there, which was a definitive break from previous thinking on colonial rule and marked a unique presence for foreign rule (Pedersen 2015). While there are many commonalities between colonial and foreign rule (and they certainly sit next to each other on the hierarchy spectrum), the temporary rather than permanent nature of foreign rule is what separates itself from colonial rule.[28]

On the right end of the international hierarchy continuum are actions not included in foreign rule because the foreign territory retains sovereign authority. While annexation, conquest, and colonization are left out of my definition of foreign rule due to the expansive goals of the power imposing these actions on others, on the other end of the spectrum there exists covert regime change operations, conditionality programs, and certain UNPKOs which are also omitted from this definition (albeit they are very close on the international hierarchy continuum). Covert regime change operations, akin to American covert operations in Chile to support the overthrow of the Allende regime in 1973, fall outside of the scope conditions of foreign rule, given the lack of military presence.[29] While the goals of the major power carrying out the covert regime change operation are often similar to many cases of foreign rule, the relationship actually imposed fails to meet the definition. In this case, while the major power is seeking some policy goal, sovereign authority is never surrendered by force. Similarly, UN peace operations where the UN is invited by the host government and does not take control over the sovereignty of the nation are adjacent to foreign rule on the international hierarchy continuum, but do not qualify as such. For instance, the UN mission in Burundi (ONUB) presents a case where the peacekeepers were invited by

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[28] MacDonald (2013), Gerring et al. (2011), Lange (2009), and others, there illustrate that colonial periods can use similar relational logics of hierarchy to help explain variation in forms of colonial rule and various outcomes they produce.

[29]O'Rourke (2013, 17) defines covert regime change as an operation to replace the leadership of another state, where the intervening state does not acknowledge its role publicly. These actions include assassinating foreign leaders; sponsoring coups dtat; manipulating electoral results; and aiding, funding, and arming dissident groups. Each of these actions constitute a place on the international hierarchy continuum, but without an armed military presence prior to the action, these are often seen as policy substitutes to the choice to engage in intervention, rather than policy options for the post-intervention period. Similarly, the concept of partisan electoral interventions, highlighted by Levin (2016a,b), also does not reach the level of foreign rule but exists on a similar continuum of international hierarchy.

the government of Burundi, and they were only tasked with military missions, rather than working to impinge the sovereign authority of the government in Bujumbura. Finally, some view relationships of conditionality, whether through NATO, the EU, the IMF, or other international organizations, to represent a form of foreign rule whereby foreign rulers dictate their policy goals and force change through withholding policy goods. However, while also a form of international hierarchy, without a militarized component there is not a relationship of foreign rule. Sovereign authority still exists in the foreign territory and there is no forceful takeover of the sovereign authority in the foreign capital; rather, the options available to the foreign state are made more and less attractive by the larger powers dictating the conditional policies.

A relational definition of foreign rule, such as the one laid out above, while theoretically and conceptually more satisfying, should also aid and improve our ability to make empirical observations and better understand the conditions under which success and failure can occur in these missions. To help illustrate the benefit of a unified conceptualization of foreign rule, I argue that understanding more completely the success and failure of various foreign rule missions can focus on the ability of foreign rulers to successfully prevent armed resistance from arising, and using a unified concept can help explain amazing regularities across various different cases and time periods. One key political phenomena that scholars have sought to understand is variation in the level of resistance to foreign rulers and measurement of successful rule by outsiders in achieving their political goals. In much of the literature, scholars have tried to determine, for instance, the level of political resistance against various foreign rule missions and what makes resistance or compliance more or less likely.[30]

The case of Haiti provides a useful lens to understand how my conceptualization of foreign rule helps understand resistance to foreign rule mission. From an international hierarchy perspective, the history of Haiti is one of continued imposition of hierarchy, starting with Spanish and French colonial rule, continuing with a twenty-year long occupation by American marines, foreign regime change missions in the early 1990s, and a UN peacekeeping and stabilization mission in the 21st century.[31] However in colonial rule, occupation, FIRC, and peacekeeping datasets, these would all be separate cases of imposed political authority as they had different legal categories and legitimation strategies. Yet looking at this history, at different times and using different strategies of imposing sovereign authority, the foreign

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[30]This literature includes Collard-Wexler (2013), Darden (Forthcoming), Downes and O'Rourke (2016), Edelstein (2008), Ferwerda and Miller (2014), Hechter (2013), Kalyvas (2006), Kocher, Lawrence and Monteiro (2013), Lake (2016), Liberman (1998), Petersen (2001).

[31]The history of both Spanish and French colonization, and indeed a brief occupation by British forces, is too lengthy to describe here. For more a brief overview of Haiti under colonial rule see Burnard and Garrigus (2016), Dayan (1995), Garrigus (2006), and Stinchcombe (1995).

rulers were able to successful achieve their political goals in Haiti at certain times, while failing to achieve them at others. There has been variation in the success and failure of these missions, the levels of armed resistance and collaboration with the foreign rulers, and overall different outcomes to each of these different foreign rule missions. However, when thinking in terms of formal-legal categorization, the lessons of these successes and failures become more complicated to integrate into future missions and analyses of the past. When realizing they are all variations on foreign rule missions however, trying to determine what lead to increased resistance in the 1915 American mission versus the 1994 American mission becomes a more useful endeavor. Yet while it is clear that from the relational perspective, Haiti has faced various forms of foreign rule in the 20th and 21st century, databases and case lists would treat them largely as all separate political phenomena that just happen to all occur in Haiti. This creates both analytic and policy problems where it becomes difficult to understand what historical lessons are best to apply to future cases of foreign rule and whether there are lessons as to what types of imposition of foreign rule might produce the best outcomes. Rather than having a complete dataset tracking why resistance to colonial rule differed from the resistance to the American occupation, the 1994 FIRC, and the 2004-2017 peacekeeping operation, each are treated as separate even though more interesting variation can come from comparing across these cases. With legal-type definitions being used to treat these as specific types of cases, lose much of the temporal variation that can help explain not only what makes certain foreign rule missions more or less likely to succeed, but also how the local populations themselves will approach the foreign rule mission.

This is exemplified by attempts to try and ascertain the success and failure of stabilization missions in Haiti after 2004. It is important to analyze both in light of previous missions of foreign rule as a baseline and also examine how those previous missions affect local views towards the UN mission. Since 2004 the UN has had a presence in Haiti under the United Nations Stabilization Mission In Haiti (UNSTAMIH) following the coup and overthrow of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide (Dupuy 2006, Hallward 2007). Since its initiation, the UNSTAMIH mission has been used to help restore peace and stability in Haiti, and faced ecological and humanitarian disasters after the 2010 Earthquake and subsequent cholera outbreak, which was originated by the UN peacekeepers in Haiti themselves. However since its inception, scholars and practitioners have sought to evaluate the success of the UNSTAMIH mission and levels of resistance the mission has faced.[32] Yet, when evaluating these cases, the political history and legacy of Haitian resistance to foreign rule is often omitted. While Pressley-Sanon (2014) notes that discourses of resistance against the American, this is usually not under consideration as a factor as to why resistance to UN missions might occur.

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[32]For example, see Dorn (2009), Heine and Thompson (2011), Lemay-Hébert (2014), and Pingeot (2018).

After the cholera outbreak, some post-colonial analysis of the mission have highlighted some similarities, but reflection on how local Haitian might view the new foreign rule mission was largely absent. One exemplary example of how embracing relational views can improve analysis comes from Pillinger, Hurd and Barnett (2016), who focus on how the relationship imposed by the UN and the relationship how it existed between Haiti and the UN throughout the previous twenty years prevented legal accountability from taking hold after the cholera crisis. Thus they illustrate that when trying to evaluate the stabilization missions in Haiti after 2010, it becomes imperative to analyze both in light of previous missions of foreign rule as a baseline and also examine how those previous missions affect local views towards the UN mission. The focusing on the UN mission as a new peacekeeping mission, rather than a continuation of foreign rule cases that Haiti has faced for much of its history only serves to make it more difficult to make cross case comparisons.

Implications for the Study of Hierarchy and Foreign Rule

After examining the case of Haiti listed above, some initial benefits of using my conceptualization of foreign rule begin to emerge. Given that the international hierarchy literature has not focused on forms of coercively-imposed international hierarchy, nor has the various sub-literatures on foreign rule deemed it problematic to continue to partition concepts and both sets of literatures are making robust contributions, what are the benefits for the study of international relations for incorporating this broader conception of foreign rule? I contend there are four main implications for the study of international hierarchy and foreign rule going forward.

First, partially due to unit-level factors and formal-legal definitions, currently the literatures related to foreign rule largely overlook past antecedents that could greatly add to their analysis. The goal of formal-legal definitions in the international law of sovereignty, as discussed above, has been to focus on how new operations of imposed international hierarchy are unique to the modern era and different than previous missions. Thus in this vein, they contend that territorial administration, peacebuilding operations, and stabilization efforts are categorically different from previous trusteeships, mandates, occupations, and efforts to impose foreign-ruled order on a foreign territory. Focusing on relational aspects highlights the commonalities among these cases and allows for historical antecedents to be brought in as case comparisons.[33] As it is now, historical cases are largely omitted from the relevant case

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[33]Barnett (2011), Chesterman (2005), and Wilde (2010) do lay out the historical commonalities across

lists in various studies and then are not examined for ways in which political order might be more effectively imposed, or rather, more information on how difficult imposing hierarchical rule might be. As seen in the Haiti case above, the inability to think about missions in historical perspective derives directly from the view that new missions of imposing hierarchical order are categorically different from previous operations. Embracing the concept of foreign rule as an over-arching concept can then help to re-integrate these previous missions that are historical relevant and make for better planning and analysis.

In fact, one of the benefits for the recent turn in studies of international hierarchy has been to integrate history more into our studies of international relations and international orders.[34] Examining how different political organizations have constructed political order outside of the traditional Westphalian conception of sovereignty, and how these different histories and conceptualizations of political order, has helped our understanding about the construction of international orders and the varieties of options availability to states and other political units on how to structure relationships. Conceptualizing foreign rule as coercively-imposed international hierarchy helps embrace this more historical-relational view that makes it easier for scholars and practitioners to think about historical cases and how they can apply to modern issues.

Second, building on the ability to integrate history back into our concepts of foreign rule, there is an additional analytic benefit of being able to increase the number of cases we are able to use to make causal inferences about the causes of success and failure and the impact of foreign rule periods on local territories. Currently, using partitioned concepts means that the number of observations used to generate causal claims are limited by the definitions they use. This overly partitions their ability to compare cases to other similar cases. Increasing the number of observations has two discrete effects. First, as King, Keohane and Verba (1994, 23-24) argue, increasing the number of observations helps maximize the analytical leverage that a researcher has over answer certain research questions, while increasing the ability to accurately infer causality. A larger universe of cases will allow for scholars to make more authoritative statements about the impacts of various variables on the phenomena of interest, and also them to create richer empirical work. Using foreign rule as an overarching concept to study, even while examining the various sub-types, makes for more compelling causal claims. Specifically, when examining the conditions for success and failure in foreign rule or the determinants of resistance to foreign rule, limiting the case selection in the research

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many of these missions, touch in some sense on the relational similarities. However they are focused more on the motivations for these foreign rule projects as they augment yet remain familiar across time.

[34] A small example of this trend, highlighted in particular by Butcher and Griffiths (2017), includes Hui (2005), Kang (2010), Kwan (2016), Møller (2014), Pella Jr. (2015), Phillips and Sharman (2015a,b), and Ringmar (2012).

design to narrow legal definitions only serves to truncate the sample size. It also leads to omitting cases that are highly relevant to the phenomena as hand and treat them as the same as cases of no hierarchy between actors. This leads to scholars losing valuable variation and data points that could be leveraged in their studies to produce more sound causal inference on what causes resistance against foreign rulers and successful foreign rule.[35]

Second, it also means that scholars are using the correct reference category when analyzing the determinants of success and failure in foreign rule missions. There are two distinct ways over-partitioning of concepts matters for reference categories. If the analysis being done is in reference to all countries at certain time periods to see if peacebuilding or occupation has distinct effects, then the reference category that a scholar is comparing cases of peacebuilding to non-peacebuilding includes other cases of foreign rule in the reference category. Second, if the analysis is just of what makes cases certain cases of occupation succeed or not succeed, not including other cases of foreign rule not traditionally thought of as occupation means that there are fewer cases to compare as the baseline category. If the goal is to see whether UN peacekeeping missions are successful or not, just looking at UN peacebuilding missions, for instance, is insufficient to truly track how local populations with react, but rather examining the full range of foreign rule cases as the reference category and then seeing if peacebuilding missions involving the UN preform better makes for better analysis.[36] Embracing a larger set of cases with unit-level factors that are traditionally used to partition concepts as explanatory variables, the ability to create more accurate studies and causal estimates about foreign rule missions will be enhanced.

Next, and perhaps most crucially, embracing a conceptualization of foreign rule necessarily brings the population under foreign rule back into our definitions and can help refocus scholars' analysis on local population and how they are affected by foreign rule missions. Formal-legal definitions of these concepts, by necessity, focused largely on the differences in intentions, identity, and methods of the foreign ruler. This means that when scholars discussing foreign rule, even when discussing resistance against foreign rule, the definitions only focus on the foreign ruler and define the action based on the foreign ruler's choices and actions. This causes the local population to be absent from studies of foreign rule and only

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[35]For example, Ferwerda and Miller (2014) argue that levels of political co-optation and local devolution explain levels of resistance to foreign rule. Importantly, however, while they only empirically examine the case of World War II France under Nazi rule, they continually cite literature from non-occupation cases and examine the literature on imperial rule, insurgencies, and more in their discussion of their theory. This is an important step to look for evidence across concepts when dealing with similar political phenomena. While the natural experiment research design does not require a firm definition for inclusion of cases, making the inclusion of disparate literatures easier in the theory, the fact that they included the various sub-types in their theory section shows a step that scholars should emulate.

[36]Collard-Wexler (2013) is one example where his expansive definition of occupation including UN missions allows for this type of analysis to show UN missions do in fact perform better.

the strategic choices of the foreign ruler seem to matter. This is a problem because much of the analysis scholars would like to know more about and the outcomes they are interested in directly relates to how the local population responds to the imposition of foreign rule. If local populations do not care about the formal-legal differentiation between these concepts, then trying to partition our analysis based on them to explain variation in resistance or success of the missions is flawed.

When only focusing on legal definitions based on goals and intentions of the foreign actor, local perceptions of those intentions and their experiences with foreign rule are lost in the shuffle. Many foreign rulers try to use different names for their missions of foreign rule to signal their intentions to local populations, but local populations often cannot tell the difference (if there is one). There is no reason for local populations to assume that calling an operation of foreign rule 'peacebuilding' would cause any different behavior than earlier missions of colonial rule or occupation. This is a crucial understanding to embrace when discussing foreign rule for many reasons, but chiefly, for understanding why rhetorical gymnastics and defining new missions as unique operations do not work with local populations. Some like to think local actors can discern the intentions of the foreign ruler, and the foreign ruler can signal via what they name their mission of foreign rule how long they intend to stay and their goals. However given the historical legacy of hierarchical domination in many regions of the world, many local populations are skeptical. One notable exception is Autesserre's (2014) work who shows how once locals are actually considered an equal part of the analysis, it becomes easier to see why certain peacekeeping practices produce more failure than would be assumed just from analyzing and theorizing about successful peacekeeping from the peacekeepers perspective. Encouraging scholars to focus on the relational view of foreign rule would have the added benefit of encouraging more thinking about the local population side of the relationship as well, and taking into account all aspects of the relationship. The relational approach reminds us that international relations exists between at least two actors, not just the more powerful nation in a dyad. Explicitly defining our concepts in terms of these relationships will only serve to improve our definitional rigor and ensure that our understanding of foreign rule focuses on both sides of the relationship.

Finally, using the concept of foreign rule and embracing the relational approach allows scholars and policymakers to view various types of foreign rule as alternative forms of the same policy, rather than distinct policy substitutes when making policy recommendations. This seems simple, but is crucially important.Reconceptualizing foreign rule as a relational structure allows potential foreign rulers to evaluate which form of foreign rule they would like to engage in and encourages thinking about potential strategy during foreign rule rather than assuming all are vastly different missions. Redefining the mission name does not remove

the tough political problems that are associated with imposing sovereign authority from afar. It also allows scholars to think about different strategic choices states could have made during foreign rule and examining when and why they chose a particular relational structure. Different strategies of foreign rule have been attempted across time, but shocking similarities appear when one places the strategies into the relational structure context.

One example of how some scholarly think about this is Saunders (2011) who argues that military interventions largely follow transformational or non-transformational strategies. These strategies exist across time, from enacting foreign rule through local leaders in empires to directly changing institutional structures throughout colonies. [37] Sadly, little examination of historical strategies of foreign rule seems to take place, and when it does happen, it is restricted to a limited sub-type envisioned by the legal definitions.[38] Limiting one's analysis to only historical cases that fit a narrow legal definition leads to sub-optimal outcomes as the great lessons of history are lost. Instead of being confused why some view peacebuilding operations as similar to colonial rule, examining what colonial rule can teach us about successful foreign rule or counterinsurgency is more prudent (MacDonald 2013). Examining policy choices of today and being able to reflect on the similar relational structures of the past would only aid in our understanding of foreign rule and future policy options.

As seen above, the relational approach already exists implicitly across various literatures and the focus on relationships helps illustrate the commonalities across conceptual boundaries. However, if highlighting this commonality only serves to clarify existing literature and does not improve our understanding of foreign rule and how to think about the challenges of extending hierarchical political authority, then the purpose of recasting foreign rule in a unified relational definition seems unnecessary. The failures in the above literatures to treat foreign rule as an overarching concept above their sub-types of foreign rule has lead much potential knowledge and data points to add in their studies to go unexamined. Thus, turning to the relational approach to understand foreign has vast implications for both the current academic literature as well as the policy decisions based on these studies.

Thus, recognizing the clear importance of the relational view implicit in studies of international hierarchy, a unified conception of foreign rule as coercievely-imposed international hierarchy is useful. Moving studies of international hierarchy towards more united concepts would greatly aid our analysis. Encouraging a recognition of the historical similarities

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[37]For example see Barkey (2008).

[38]For example, during the decision making process following the Iraqi invasion of 2003, US officials in charge did not have a direct plan for the post-war operation, and changed it drastically when they arrived in country. Problematically, the identified a military occupation as the form of foreign rule needed and then looked to the only other two 'military occupations' the US carried out post World War II: Germany and Japan. Thus, they determined to re-invent society the same way the US did 70 years ago even though many scholars said at the time the comparison was inaccurate.(Bremer 2006, Feith 2008)

between modern problems of establishing political order and other forms of hierarchical domination in the past helps reframe our analysis into more fruitful forms of inquiry. While the concept of foreign rule is one step in this direction, others can move to reconceptualize the field in similar ways when discussing hierarchical relationships in international relations. As international hierarchy becomes more prevalent in the literature and relational analyses of international politics are enhanced, refraining from over-bifurcation of our concepts is an important step. Through sound conceptualization and a focus on relationships as they are, only then can we adequately test our theories for successful imposition of international hierarchy.

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