

Military Occupations Dataset: Chilean Occupation of Bolivia

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Introduction

Question:

- Why do states occupy others?
- Why are some occupations successful and others fail?

Military Occupations Dataset:

Quantitative categorical framework using qualitative data to:

- Evaluate specific goals & strategies employed in occupations.
- Examine the interconnected nature of conflict between opponents.

Occupation Definition:

- A State must use:
 1. It's military to threaten force and/or defeat an opponent's military.
 2. To capture territory from another government, ranging from a small portion to its entire set of territorial possessions.
- The State:
 3. Displaces the ability of another state to act as sovereign.
 4. Assumes some level of governance to administrate the foreign territory.
- The Occupying State must:
 5. Demand, or impose, that the occupied territory fulfill a goal, or set of goals, in order for the occupation to terminate.

Note: If a formal claim to ownership occurs within 12 months of war termination, it's excluded as an occupation. Twelve months or greater counts as military occupation for the dataset.

War of the Pacific:

- **Participants:** Chile, Bolivia, Peru
- **Duration:** April 5th, 1879- April 4th, 1884
- **Cause:** Chilean invasion of Antofagasta province, February 14th, 1879.
 - Natural disaster in Bolivia causing economic disaster. Need for revenue.
 - Growth in the nitrate industry. Chilean companies in Bolivian territory.
 - Chilean fear of an emerging Bolivian and Peruvian superpower.
 - Violation of the 1874 treaty between Bolivia and Chile, guaranteeing tax-exempt Chilean enterprise. Bolivian 10-cent tax on the Chilean Antofagasta company's nitrate exportation.
- **Result:** Chilean victory over Bolivia and Peru. Chilean annexation of the Bolivian Litoral and Peru's Tarapacá province.

Methods

The dataset identifies evidence of occupation through the organization of quantitative categories that demonstrate the varying aspects of occupation. Evidence is drawn from primary and historical secondary sources as well as contemporary scholarship on the War of the Pacific. Sources can be either in English or Spanish and are multidisciplinary in nature. Information is compared and contrasted not only to verify accuracy, but also to identify common historical themes. The code sheet relies upon the qualitative argumentation of these themes as evidence for the fulfillment of the categories. Ultimately, their fulfillment or lack of proof will correlate to one of the five requirements of occupation.

Target Category Example:

Occupational Strategy: Investment

Finding Sources:

Primary Sources: *British Foreign State Papers v.71*

Historical Secondary Scholarship: Espinosa Enrique. *Jeografía descriptiva de la República de Chile*, Bulnes, Gonzalo. *Chile and Peru : The Causes of the War of 1879*.

Contemporary Scholarship: O'Brien, Thomas F. "The Antofagasta Company: A Case Study of Peripheral Capitalism. ",

Comparing Sources:

- BFSP: Chile previously owned the territory before 1866.
 - O'Brien: 93% of Antofagasta's population was Chilean.
 - Bulnes: Antofagasta considered itself to be Chilean and welcomed occupation.
 - Espinosa: Antofagasta was incorporated into Chile's judicial system post-war.
- Antofagasta and its citizens had strong, positive ties to Chile pre- and post-war.**

Evaluating & Applying Sources

Because Antofagasta had strong ties to Chile, Chile used a type two model of investment as an occupational strategy. The nation directly engaged with the occupied population and relied upon its support to facilitate the occupation. **Demonstrates evidence for occupation in that Chile displaces Bolivia's sovereignty over Antofagasta and effectively administers the province.**

Results

Extent of Occupation:

Extent Partial: The Chilean military captured the Antofagasta province after the Bolivian military had seized a Chilean nitrate mining company. (Sater et al., 32-33)

Occupation Aims:

Treaty Enforcement:

Bolivian violation of the 1874 treaty between Bolivia and Chile over the Antofagasta province. Bolivia's 1879 export tax on Chilean companies caused Chile to invade Antofagasta. (Stater, 19)

Territorial Gain:

Yes, the capture of Antofagasta. Materially, Antofagasta increased access to the Pacific trade routes and the lucrative nitrate and mineral deposits of the Atacama Desert. (OSU, 2024)

Policy Change:

Chilean intervention to protect Chilean business interests. (University of Iowa, 85)

Primary Goal: Territorial Gain

Occupation Strategy:

Investment:

Chile had already developed the province: nearly 93% of the population was Chilean (O'Brien, 1980), and its largest business, the Antofagasta company, was Chilean. Citizens welcomed their occupiers, and (Bulnes, 124) Antofagasta was incorporated into the nation like any other possession. (Espinosa, 24)

Leadership Change:

None

Strategic/Natural Resource Value:

Natural Resource: YES (Nitrate reserves)

Strategic Value: YES (Coastline)

Troops Stationed in Territory:

1,500 Chilean soldiers were sent to guard Tarapacá and Antofagasta. (Stater, 72) 500 men disembarked initially at Antofagasta, but since most of Antofagasta's population was already Chilean, troops faced no resistance (Arana, 61).

Treaty/Agreements on Occupation:

War of the Pacific: none. 1884 Treaty of Valparaiso: Total Chilean control over the province. (Treaty of Valparaiso, 1884)

Outcome of Occupation

In April of 1884, Bolivia granted Chile the right to occupy its Antofagasta province in a truce. (Stater, 344) In 1895, Bolivia and Chile opened negotiations in recognition of Chilean sovereignty over Antofagasta. (St John, 68) Bolivians refused to make formal peace until they could receive territorial compensation for the loss of their Pacific outlet and proposed a succession of Chile's newly captured Tacna or Arica provinces. (St. John, 60) The plebiscite in Tacna and Arica resulted in a return to Peru, ending Bolivia's opportunity for ownership of a port. In the 1904 Peace Treaty, Chile officially acquired sovereignty over Antofagasta "absolutely and in perpetuity" and, in return, built a railroad connecting Bolivia's La Paz with the Arica port. (Dunkelberg et al., 2019)

Conclusions

Occupation:

1. The Chilean military threatened to use and then deployed its military to defeat the Bolivian military.
2. Capture of the Antofagasta territory from Bolivia.
3. Chile displaced Bolivia's state sovereignty over the region.
4. Chile successfully administered the province.
5. **Chile was able to fulfil its goals in ending the war.**

Discussion & Future Study

The fifth pillar creates dialogue for future research.

- Chile had the intention of eventual annexation of the province.
- Chile only officially annexed the province 20 years later due to long-term disputes with Bolivia over access to ports.
- Chile couldn't terminate the occupation until an official peace settlement was reached.
- Because Chile waited until its political goals were achieved, MODs defines Chile's presence in Antofagasta until 1904 as occupation.
 - If a formal claim to ownership occurred more than 12 months after war termination.

Future research should consider this assessment or categorize the totality of the conflict as annexation.

