The Durability of Externally Imposed Democracy & the Futures of Iraq & Afghanistan

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Abstract

Why do imposed democracies endure? The fates of the fledgling polities in contemporary post-war Iraq and Afghanistan underscore the relevance of examining this question. Drawing on the subfields of comparative politics and international relations, we do so with a framework anchored to four sources of polity durability: (1) the domestic environment in which the democratic polity is imposed; (2) the degree of domestic security in the state into which a polity is imposed; (3) the commitment of the imposing power and (4) the international environment within which the host state and the imposed polity are nested. We use duration analysis and a sample of imposed democratic polities enduring in the twentieth century to test our expectations derived with the framework. We find that ethnic cleavages, economic development, domestic and international security, prior democratic experience, and the commitment of the imposing power to the imposed state are central to the the survival of imposed democracies. Our findings underscore the challenges that building durable democracies in post-invasion Afghanistan and Iraq face.
Introduction

What explains the durability of democratic political systems that are cultivated, or imposed, by foreign powers? The necessity of exploring this question is underscored by the fledgling democratic polities in post-invasion Afghanistan and Iraq. One policy perspective emphasizes that cultivating durable democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan is feasible, because aspirations for democracy are universal (Bush, 2003; Davis, 2005; Dawisha, 2004). As such, citizens in these two countries will readily embrace and support democratic institutions as a superior form of government, even if these institutions are transferred from abroad. The post-WWII cases of West Germany and Japan, two states that simultaneously served as exemplars of democracy in regions marked by authoritarian regimes historically, as well as stalwarts in a Cold War security system that successfully thwarted global communism, were noted by American policymakers as standards for allied nation-building efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

An alternative perspective, one more skeptical of the potential durability of democratic institutions in contemporary Afghanistan and Iraq, emphasizes the manifold reasons that these two states were unlikely to be conducive to democratic institutions imposed from abroad, including exiguous democratic traditions, autocratic legacies, longstanding ethnic divisions, weak or poorly developed economies, and hostile regional environments (Bellin, 2004; Diamond, 2005; Edelstein, 2004). From this perspective, the cultivation of democratic institutions in Afghanistan and Iraq is more likely to mimic the short-lived democracy imposed by Britain in Sudan in 1956 than the beacons of democracy installed in post-WWII West Germany and Japan.

That the proponents of each of the aforementioned perspectives can marshal supporting historical evidence is not in dispute. A more central issue concerns whether the cases of West Germany, Japan, or even Sudan for that matter, are indicative of the durability of imposed democratic institutions in general. These cases might, or might not, be representative of the historical durability of imposed democratic polities.

In general, the strategy of relying solely on corroborating best, or worst, cases hampers the identification of the forces associated with durable imposed democracy dura-
bility, and by extension, undermines the accuracy of policy prescriptions. For example, contemporary policy prognostications of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq suggest that institutional durability is, in part, a function of the degree of prior experience with democratic institutions (Byman, 2003; Dawisha, 2004; Ottaway and Lieven, 2002), economic prosperity (Dawisha and Dawisha, 2003; Marsden, 2003), ethnic heterogeneity (Byman, 2003; Wimmer, 2003), as well as the commitment of the imposing parties (Benomar, 2004; Carothers, 2003; Dobbins, 2003; Edelstein, 2004). We argue that in the interests of predictive accuracy with respect to imposed democratic polities, these factors should be considered in dynamic form within the context of forces that shape the durability of imposed democracy.

We examine the sub-sample of imposed democratic polities enduring in the modern state system, a phenomena that occurs primarily during the twentieth century. We focus solely on imposed democratic polities, rather than embedding the imposition process within a general model of democratic durability, because our analysis of the survival patterns of indigenous and imposed democratic polities suggests that the latter are distinct from the former (we elaborate on our rationale for pursuing this strategy in the following section.) This strategy allows us to make out of sample forecasts for democratic survival in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We draw on scholarship from the comparative politics and international relations fields to formulate a framework for studying the durability of imposed democratic polities. This framework facilitates examining the durability of imposed polities as a function of causal forces originating from several levels of analysis. Our framework of imposed polity durability is anchored to four primary causal sources: (1) the domestic environment in which a democratic polity is imposed; (2) the domestic security conditions prevailing in the state hosting an imposed democratic polity; (3) the commitment of the imposing state; and (4) the regional environment within which the host state, and by extension the imposed democratic institutions, are nested.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. In the next section we discuss the distinctions between imposed and indigenously developed democracies and establish why
we choose to examine imposed democracies rather than undertaking an analysis of all
democratic regimes. We follow this rationale with a discussion of prior research bearing
on the durability of imposed democratic regimes. Next, we develop our causal framework
and related expectations about the durability of imposed democratic polities. In turn,
we outline our research design for testing expectations identified within the framework,
and employ survival analysis of our sample of imposed democratic polities to test the
strength of these expectations. Last, we employ our empirical model to forecast the fates
of the democratic regimes in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan.

Analyzing Imposed Democracies

This study focuses solely on the durability of imposed democratic regimes, rather than
embedding our analysis of imposed democracy in a broader sample including indigenous
and imposed democratic regimes. We pursue this strategy for three reasons. First, our
inquiry is stimulated by post-war democracy-building endeavors in contemporary Afghan-
istan and Iraq. As such, from a policy perspective the decision to either allow Afghanistan
and Iraq to develop indigenous democratic regimes or to impose democratic institutions
from abroad was determined in favor of the latter path by the allied countries following
their invasions Afghanistan in 2002 and Iraq in 2003. Thus, we wish to study not whether
post-war Afghanitan and Iraq, for example, will be more durable than the indigenously
developed democratic institutions in the United Kingdom, but rather whether the con-
temporary cases are likely to follow the path of the durable democracies in post-WWII
Germany and Japan, or the rapid failure of democracy in post-colonial Sudan in 1957.

Second, although we anticipate that the durability of democratic institutions in im-
posed democracies like Afghanistan and Iraq is linked to structurally immutable condi-
tions, e.g., a host state’s prior experience with democratic forms of governance, we do not
see these structural forces as fully determinative of democratic survival in these imposed
states. Among both indigenously and externally imposed democracies, external forces
also shape the survival of democracy. Both the prevalence of fellow democracies and the
level of conflict and cooperation a new democracy faces among its neighbors condition
the degree to which a nurturing environment exists for durable democracy. Unlike in-
digenously developed democracies, external powers also play a direct role in shaping the durability of democracy in imposed democracies. The policy choices made by an imposing power such as the type and duration of the imposition process directly influence the survival of imposed democracy. A highly committed imposing power, for example, can supplement local efforts at stability in an imposed state through a continued military presence in the country. The establishment of durable, stable democracies in Japan and West Germany were significantly aided by the long-term American commitment of military and economic resources to both of those countries. Our focus on imposed democracies allows us to better understand how these external forces shape the durability of imposed democracy.

Last, from the standpoint of durability, indigenous and imposed democratic regimes are, we argue, “birds of a different feather.” While manifesting themselves in revolutionary and evolutionary forms, the organic properties of indigenous democratic regimes are distinct from those of their imposed counterparts. In indigenous regimes, the emergence of democratic regimes is the product of domestic actors motivating and responding to political, social, economic, and demographic pressures by promoting democratic governance. Critically, preferences for innovations toward democratic governance precede the outcome, successful or unsuccessful, of efforts to innovate a political system, thereby providing a normative and ideological basis for the survival of democratic regimes.

Conversely, imposed democratic regimes are by definition revolutions from above (Dower, 1999), in which foreign states seek to install democratic institutions while simultaneously engendering the local population’s preference for, and capacity to sustain, said democratic institutions. Given the top-down, or inverted, nature of the process by which democratic institutions emerge, and in particular with popular preferences, even if they are latent, manifest after democratic institution are installed, is prone to failure. Additional characteristics of imposed regimes, such as the pervasive presence of the imposer, normative and cultural incompatibility with a rapid transition to democratic governance, magnify the likely failure of imposed democratic regimes.
These expectations of varying rates of survival in imposed and indigenous democracies are borne out historically in the modern state system. In Figure 1 we plot the survival curves for imposed and indigenous democracies for the period 1816–1994. Although the hazard of democratic regime failure diminishes for imposed and indigenous democracies the longer they endure, imposed democracies reflect significantly different trajectory relative to their indigenous counterparts. Specifically, an indigenous democracy reflects a .74 probability of surviving at least a decade. By contrast, in its first year of existence an imposed democracy shows a .43 probability of surviving to ten years. Clearly, newly imposed democracies have a demonstrably higher rate of failure relative to indigenous democracies.

The survival of imposed democracies differs in another important way from that of indigenously developed democracies: Imposed democratic regimes demonstrate non-proportional hazards of failure as the regime endures. For example, an imposed democratic regime’s hazard of failure within the next ten years for an imposed democracy in its first year differs from the ten-year hazard of failure of an imposed democracy in its fifth

\footnote{The Weibull model estimation from which the plots in Figure 1 are derived is reported in the Appendix, p. 40.}
year. In fact, while the survival of an imposed democracy in its first year is significantly lower than that of an indigenous democracy in its first year, imposed democracies that survive at least five years reflect a better long-term survival rate than indigenous democracies. The marked differences in the survival patterns between imposed and indigenous democracies underscores the validity of developing an explanation of the performance of imposed democracies separately from their indigenous counterparts, a strategy that we pursue below.

Research on Democratic Durability

The study of the durability of political systems, one that is longstanding in the field of comparative politics, sits at the nexus of studies of polity persistence and regime change. Early research underscored the centrality of political legitimacy and institutional capacity as they pertained to the durability of political systems (e.g., Huntington, 1968), while subsequent research centers upon the role of polity type, primarily the relative performance of democratic regimes, which are generally found to be more durable (Gurr, 1974; Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi, 2000).

Despite a voluminous literature on democracy, the scientific analysis of foreign imposed regimes is relatively limited. The dearth of research is due, perhaps in part, to their unsurprising source and timing (Olson, 1993), as well as a legacy of policymaker’s reluctance to engage in constitutional engineering in the wake of failed efforts in the 1960s in a number of post-colonial states during (Gurr, 1974). However, several relatively recent studies lend important insights into understanding the durability of imposed democracies. For example, in an analysis derived from a monumental documentation of 198 foreign impositions of regimes for the period 1515–2000, Owen (2002) observes that great powers running the gamut of regime types are serial imposers in proximate target states, imposers usually impose their own form of regime in states experiencing civil unrest, and that patterns of imposition are strongly tied to the degree of international insecurity prominent during several periods in the international system.

Several studies examine the link between military intervention and democracy promotion, with early research locating support for the link between United States military
intervention and the democratization of target states (Meernik, 1996; Peceny, 1999), while more recent studies suggest mixed, even tenuous, support for this relationship (Tures, 2005; Pickering and Peceny, 2006). The latter result may be explained, in part, by research reported in Bueno de Mesquita and Downs (2006), in which the authors find support for the claims that interventions by authoritarian regimes retard, while those by the United Nations improve, democratization in target states. However, Bueno de Mesquita and Downs conclude that an overriding preference by imposing democratic states for reliable foreign policy allies results in backsliding on the commitment to building democracy in target states, which in turn facilitates the emergence of authoritarian regimes.

Thus, while it is clear that imposed regimes can reduce the interstate security threats to the imposer from the target state (Lo, Hashimoto and Reiter, 2008a; Werner, 1999), states hosting the imposed regime can often exhibit chronic instability that can erode local security conditions. For example, in previous research on imposed democratic polities during the twentieth century (XXXX, 2008) we find that ethnic heterogeneity combined with democratic institutions result in combustible conditions that promote violent domestic instability. Lo, Hashimoto and Reiter (2008b) locate a similar relationships when examining the outbreak of civil war. In turn, instability in foreign imposed regimes can undermine regional stability. In previous research (XXXX, 2005) we find that imposed regimes that are weakly democratic (often labeled “anocratic”) are most likely to be wracked by instability, which in turn retards peace, prosperity, and democracy in neighboring states.

Two pieces of research bear directly on the durability of imposed democracy. First, our previous research, one grounded in bivariate survival analysis of the durability of imposed democratic institutions, both colonial and non-colonial, in the twentieth-century reveals that the strength of democratic institutions, the degree of economic prosperity bolster, while ethnic cleavages undermine, the durability of democratic institutions imposed from abroad (XXXX, 2008). Moreover, we find evidence that, unlike the failure of indigenous democracies, the failure of imposed democratic institutions retards the sub-
sequent reemergence of democracy. Considered in sum, the empirical evidence, which is anchored to structural characteristics of imposed democracies, suggests a rather bleak prognosis for the durability of democracy in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan.

Second, Moon’s (2009) analysis of the prospects of achieving consolidated democracy in post-war Iraq (and by extension Afghanistan, Iran, and North Korea) anticipates that this consolidation is a function, in part, the degree and maturity of the authoritarian regime preceding a democratic transition. Moon’s (2009, 126) analysis of “established extreme autocracies” (EEAs) suggests that structural-oriented factors are likely to trump elite-oriented stimulants, because EEAs are generally bereft of the latter. EEAs rarely transition to consolidated democracy and those that do require nearly a half century to do so (2009, 136). Furthermore, Iraqi history fits the EEA profile, one marked by monarchism, foreign meddling, and a gradual hardening of authoritarian institutions under Saddam Hussein that successfully eliminated the democratic foundation necessary for consolidation.

Given the performance of EEAs with respect to transitions to consolidated democracy, Moon reasons that the credibility of the policy claim that Iraq can achieve consolidated democracy rests on the probability of postwar Iraq achieving what few states, e.g., Portugal in 1973 and Albania in 2002), achieved—rapid movement from an EEA to a full democracy. Relying on a “social requisites” model of democracy (school enrollment, democratic neighbors, oil exporter, primary product exporter, Muslim population) during the post-WWII period, Moon predicts each state’s degree of democracy in the year 2004. Moon (2009, 139) finds that the strongest predictor of democracy in a state in a given year is the “average level of democracy among a nation’s contiguous neighbors,” while an EEA legacy retards, and experience with an American occupation exerts no leverage on, democratic consolidation. These findings lead Moon (2009, 147) to conclude, setting aside “conditions that most commentators regard as Iraq’s biggest challenges—the insurgency, ethnic rivalry, and external interference,” the prospects for the consolidation of democracy in Iraq are “perhaps 1 chance in 1,725.”
Unfortunately, imposed democracies are often imposed under structural conditions that are suboptimal for their survival. The bleak picture of democratic survival for both Iraq and Afghanistan painted by their own internal characteristics, highlights the importance of understanding the degree to which policy choices made during the imposition process can shape the effects of these structural conditions on democratic survival. Yet, we know very little about the degree to which policy decisions by imposing states influence the durability of imposed democratic institutions within the context of structural conditions that militate against the survival of these very institutions. In the following section, we development a theoretical argument that links the internal structural conditions faced by an imposed democracy, the policy choices made by the imposing power, and the environment in which these policies are enacted to the survival of imposed democracy.

**A Causal Framework**

We reason that the performance of imposed democratic polities is similar in some respects to that of indigenously developed democracies, regimes that research in comparative politics and international relations suggests are conditioned by domestic and international causal stimuli. At the same time imposed democracies are distinct from indigenously developed democracies in that they often have a significant level of foreign support but face major challenges in achieving domestic security and legitimacy. In doing so, we formulate a framework of imposed democracy durability anchored to three sources of performance: (1) the domestic environment in which the democratic polity is imposed; (2) the degree of domestic security in the host state; (3) the commitment of the imposing state; and (4) the international environment within which the host state is nested. We elaborate each component of this framework in turn.

**Domestic Environment**

The political institutions central to an imposed democratic regime are embedded in a domestic context that also conditions the durability of these institutions. We focus on four aspects of this domestic system in the host state that are noted in the comparative politics literature, as well as contemporary policy debates, as likely to influence the durability
of imposed democratic institutions: (1) political culture; (2) social heterogeneity; (3) economic development; and (4) the context within which an imposition is carried out.

Studies of regime transitions, particularly democratization, emphasize that civic culture conditions the success of new democracies (Almond, 1980; Diamond, 1993). This is due to the fact that norms of tolerance, trust in state institutions, egalitarianism, and willingness to compromise are essential for fashioning a political culture that can sustain a democratic polity. One might argue that political systems, as well as their inhabitants, exhibit “memories,” both positive and negative, of prior political institutions. As such, these memories can prime a political system for accepting or rejecting the democratic institutions imposed from abroad. While one perspective is that any prior experience with democratic political institutions provides a fertile political culture for an imposition, an alternative perspective suggests that past failures condition future failures, as individuals are unwilling to vest themselves fully in a form of government that has failed before, particularly those that are imposed from abroad.

While a prior history of democracy can provide a foundation for a durable imposed democratic regime, social cleavages in a society can provide a more formidable environment for an imposition. Differences between, as well as the relationships among, politicized groups are central to a society’s social fabric. Ethnic identities are visible symbols of the varied nature of a society’s social fabric, and as such provide ready vehicles for political leaders seeking to consolidate political power with appeals to nationalism accompanied by political, economic, and social discrimination (Fearon and Laitin, 1996; Hibbs, 1973; Horowitz, 1985; Mousseau, 2001; Gurr and Harff, 1994; Snyder, 2000). Nationalist appeals grounded in social differences, and the attendant emergence of “winners” and “losers” from these policies, are likely to increase the likelihood of political instability in an imposed democratic polity, thereby reducing an imposed democratic polity’s durability.

A frequent source of friction between competing social groups in a society is competition over scarce resources. As such, increasing economic prosperity can play an important role in fostering political stability in an imposed democracy. Economic prosperity and
development serve to satisfy the material needs of the population in an imposed democratic polity, thereby bolstering the polity’s legitimacy and political capacity (Fearon and Laitin, 2003; Przeworski et al., 2000). The economic performance of a political system provides a key signal to the populace regarding the new democratic institution’s capacity to govern, and in particular that the fledging polity can deliver security, stability, and economic growth (Easterly, 2001; Grindle, 1997; van de Walle, 2001). Central to this thinking is the idea that unmet expectations represent a core source of overt challenges to a political system (Davies, 1962; Gurr, 1970; Hibbs, 1973; Schatzman, 2005). Furthermore, an imposed democratic policy is most likely to be evaluated by its constituents on the basis by which it is able to deliver greater prosperity relative to the polity, most likely authoritarian, that it replaced.

The broader context into which the polity is imposed also exerts an important effect upon the survival of a newly imposed democracy. Historically, imposed polities are imposed by foreign powers following significant events, conditions that are often marked by conflict, such as following defeat in interstate war (e.g., Japan in 1952), or on the heels of severe intrastate conflict (e.g., Irish independence from Britain in 1922 following the Irish Civil War, 1922–1923.) Political institutions that are imposed following defeat in war are more likely to be viewed as illegitimate by a defeated state’s citizenry, and this illegitimacy can serve as a focal point for political dissatisfaction and the basis for the initiation of challenges against the nascent and capacity challenged imposed democracy. Furthermore, the destruction wrought by defeat in war can weaken, even eliminate, the capacity of the imposed polity to meet the material needs of its citizens in the form of goods and services, thereby exacerbating dissatisfaction with these institutions and eroding the durability of the imposed polity.

Democratic polities imposed in the aftermath of severe domestic conflict in the host state present distinct problems that also make durable democracy more difficult. For example, the issues central to a prior civil war, such as class or social cleavages, might remain, providing sources of instability when democratic institutions are installed. In some instances, the imposer seeks to manufacture stability in a state or political unit
wracked by conflict (American intervention in Haiti in 1915), while in other cases the imposer’s presence is, at least in part, the source of the civil conflict (e.g., British colonial presence in the British Raj, the territory became post-independence India and Pakistan.) Regardless, much like the aforementioned potential problem of institutional legitimacy confronting imposers following defeats in war, post-civil strife impositions may have little grounding in the host society.

Alternatively, democracy imposed in the wake of either domestic or interstate conflict may provide the foundation for a more durable democracy. Major conflict can create a recognition among the population of a state for its occupation and rehabilitation (Edelstein, 2004). To the degree to which the prior conflict contributes to war-weariness among the citizenry, their willingness to accept significant changes to the political order, particularly those that empower the citizenry itself, might increase. A militarily victorious imposer can capitalize on the defeated public’s dissatisfaction with the political institutions ultimately responsible for the defeat, with the imposer thereby gaining legitimacy for the imposed institutions which in turn engenders stability, arguably the dynamic that transpired in post-WWII West Germany and Japan.

**Domestic Security**

While it is nearly impossible for the United States and its allies to alter significantly the social and economic landscapes in the contemporary cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, an imposing power can seek to mitigate these destabilizing effects by adopting measures designed to improve the domestic security environment (Dobbins, 2003; Edelstein, 2004). Efforts to enhance the domestic security of an imposed democracy should increase the durability of democracy by reducing the pressure exerted on the regime, thereby enabling it to endure. Alternatively, an imposition absent such nation-building initiatives can undermine the very foundation upon which any political institutions must rest, a dynamic that some policy commentators argued prevailed following the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq (Kagan, 2003; Jones, Wilson, Infrastructure and Rathmell, 2005; Scowcroft and Berger, 2005).
The new domestic order created by an imposed democratic polity invariably produces winners and losers, as some groups benefit from the political changes while other groups lose power and influence that they may have once enjoyed under the erstwhile regime. Domestic groups that confront a loss of influence and resources following the creation of an imposed democracy can have a strong incentive to engage in political violence against the new regime. This is precisely what transpired in post-invasion Iraq, as former Baathists felt marginalized by the new political order and took up arms against the government and coalition forces. Only when Sunni insurgents began to see the material and security incentives for moving away from political violence and participating in the new government did violence begin to decrease and the threat to the new Iraqi regime diminish.

One response to this lack of legitimacy and limited capacity that is inherent to newly imposed democracies, and the domestic insecurity that often flourishes in such an environment, is to increase the capability of the domestic security apparatus in the imposed polity. Doing so can detect and deter local crime while increased numbers of military forces can be used to root out insurgent elements before they strike. Additionally, militarization can exert positive effects on other political, economic, and social processes associated with nation-building via the greater distribution of public funds (Dixon and Moon, 1986).

Imposer Commitment

An imposed state, however, need not be entirely responsible for the provision of its own security. Central to the durability of nation-building is the commitment of the imposer. This commitment might, for example, consist of the degree to which an imposing party provides domestic or foreign security, the magnitude of material aid, the shepherding of a constitution, or the selection of political leaders. Research on nation-building suggests that the greater the magnitude, persistence, and diversity of the imposing parties’ program of polity imposition, the greater the likelihood that nation-building will succeed (Dobbins, McGinn, Crane, Jones, Lal, Rathmell, Swanger and Timilsina, 2003; Edelstein, 2004). Key to the success of the imposed democracies in post-WWII West Germany
and Japan were the vast resources committed by the United States and allied countries for more than half of a century, overt commitment that continues to this day. Given this line of reasoning, greater imposer commitment to the host state should translate into greater durability by the imposed democratic institutions.

One sign of a strong commitment on the part of an imposer is the actual presence of its forces in the imposed state at a particular point in time. Not only can these forces assist locals in providing security, but they can also help establish and support political institutions and elections as well as promote economic development through infrastructure projects. This is precisely the type of work coalition forces in Iraq and NATO forces in Afghanistan have engaged in during their deployments. As long as these forces remain in country, the imposing power maintains the ability to augment the security capacity of the newly imposed government, increasing its capacity to prevent and respond to violent challenges to the government.

The continued presence of the forces of the imposing power, however, cuts two ways. Although their presence can bolster security in the imposed state and create an environment that encourages economic development and political stability, the continued presence of imposer forces can also breed opposition among the local populace, potentially inciting nationalist-based political challenges against it. Edelstein (2004) points to a necessary balancing act by occupation forces, they must remain in country long enough to produce the stability that is a prerequisite for withdrawal but must withdraw before pressure against the occupation mounts among the local population.

Despite this potential backlash against the presence of foreign forces in an imposed state, we expect that, all else being equal, the presence of imposing forces will have a positive effect on the durability of an imposed democracy. In their early years, imposed regimes suffer from two key challenges: A lack of legitimacy and limited institutional capacity. Although both can cause an imposed regime to fail, we see the limited ability of newly imposed democratic regimes to manage internal social divisions within their societies and provide security to their people as the most pressing challenge they face. While imposed democracies do face legitimacy problems, the ability of the citizenry of
these states to elect leaders and participate in the political system should make this problem less acute than in imposed non-democracies. As a result, we expect that the longer an imposing power occupies an imposed state, the better able it should be to create a more secure environment that is conducive to the long-term survival of the newly imposed state. Following a similar logic, the presence of an imposer’s forces in an imposed state during any specific year, by enhancing the imposed government’s to deter and respond to challenges to the government should increase the survival of imposed democracy.

**International Environment**

Imposed democratic polities are likely to exert a strong impact on the regional subsystems into which they are imposed, as do the new and revolutionary states examined by Maoz (1996), often destabilizing status quo balances of power. Imposed democratic polities themselves can be threatened by neighboring states, forcing them to divert precious resources to security and away from delivering public goods. Doing so, however, decreases the capacity of the imposed democratic polity to satisfy its citizens’ domestic demands. This tradeoff, in turn, increases domestic dissatisfaction and the likelihood of challenges that undermine the durability of imposed polities. Foreign threats, then, reveal an imposed democratic polity’s incapacity, thereby potentially accelerating a cycle in which this incapacity stimulates greater dissatisfaction.

Extant scholarship suggests that political leaders can prefer the presence of external threats because these threats afford the state a rationale for centralizing power, mobilizing resources, rallying publics, and eliminating rival domestic power centers, all goals that facilitate the state-making process (Levy, 1989; Thies, 2005; Tilly, 1978). This logic suggests that imposed polities might benefit from the presence of interstate threats because threatening behavior from abroad enables political leaders to increase the polity’s control over domestic policy outcomes, as well as cohering the policy preferences of individuals and groups, and reducing threats to the fledgling democratic regime.

Democracies imposed in more nurturing regional environments, e.g., those populated by other democratic regimes, face a less difficult challenge in stabilizing themselves and
persisting. First, an imposed democracy created in a strongly democratic region is less likely to be seen as a revolutionary state, and as such reducing the likelihood that neighboring states will see the imposed democracy as a threat to their own internal security. Second, the presence of other neighboring democracies can provide an imposed democracy with local examples of durable democracy.

The durability of imposed democracy is shaped by policy choices made by the imposing power during the imposition process as well as the domestic and international environments in which the imposition takes place. In the following section, we formulate a research design to test the expectations corresponding to these different sources of imposed democracy durability.

**Research Design**

**Identifying Imposed Polities**

We begin our identification of imposed democratic polities using the *Polity III* dataset (version November 2000) (McLaughlin, Gates, Hegre, Gissinger and Gleditsch, 1998) covering the period 1816–1994.² Specifically, we begin by relying on *Polity III*’s coding of the variables *ORIG1* (Origin of New Nation’s Polity), *ORIG3* (Established Nations, External Conflict), and *MODEL* (Source of [Polity] Model) to identify our preliminary sample.³ We augment this initial sample identified via Polity with cases of polity imposition identified in *The Encyclopedia of World History* (Stearns, 2001) and the electronic version of *Keesing’s Record of World Events* (Keesing’s, 1997) (the latter source is employed for the 1960–1994 period) to identify polities that were imposed, cultivated, or established by other states. We exclude from our sample polities that emerge primarily

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²The *Polity III*’s terminal year of 1994 has the advantage of being unrelated to the contemporary cases of interest, post-Taliban Afghanistan and post-Hussein Iraq. Therefore, this sample facilitates out-of-sample predictions of durability in the contemporary cases that, save for advances in social science theory and scientific methodology, might very well have been estimated prior to the impositions of democracy in these two countries.

³The variable *ORIG1* coding values of 1 and 2 reflect new polities imposed in new states. The *ORIG3* coding values of 2 and 3 reflect polities imposed in existing states. And the variable *MODEL* coding value of 1 allows us to identify several additional imposed polities. Although our operationalization of imposed polities is unique, studies by Maoz (1996, 127-129) and Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson and Morrow (2003, 437) each rely to some degree on the *Polity* data sample for the timing and type of polity origination and termination.
ily as the result of indigenous political processes (e.g., the United States following the American Revolution and independence from England in 1787.) Based on these coding criteria, 103 imposed polities including the full range of regime authority patterns are identified as enduring in the 1816–1994 period in the Polity IIId sample.⁴ In turn, we identify the subset of imposed democratic polities during the 1816–1994 period.⁵

For the purposes of empirical robustness, we employ two different sample generation methodologies for identifying imposed polities that are democratic. In our first approach, we use the Polity IV composite regime score (i.e., the difference between the Polity IV ordinal democracy and autocracy scales, or DEMAUT) in the imposed polity’s first year of existence to determine whether an imposed polity case is democratic or not. Because we see the imposition of democracy as oftentimes consisting of a piecemeal process of gradual democratization, such as those taking place in contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan, we adopt a lower threshold for democracy than the +6 DEMAUT score that signals a regime closer to full Jeffersonian democracy. Therefore, for the polity to be classified as democratic, its initial DEMAUT score in the first year of the imposed polity’s existence must be ≥1. Following this approach, an imposed polity persists until its DEMAUT score in any year falls below its score in the first year of the polity, at which point the imposed polity is considered terminated. Regimes that persist through the year 1994, the terminal observation point in our data sample, are treated as right-censored.

The first coding procedure generates a sample of 38 imposed democratic polities during the 1816–1994 period, of which two are excluded from our analysis due to missing data (Lesotho 1966-1969 and Indonesia 1949).⁶ Following these exclusions, our sample includes 36 imposed democratic polities, of which 24 fail at some point during our period of observation. In turn, these 36 imposed democratic polities translate into a total of

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⁴The German Federal Republic (West Germany) endures for the period 1949–1990, at which time the unification of the two Germanies results in a single Germany state for the 1990–1994 period. We combine these two intervals to reflect the 1949–1994 period for the imposed German polity.

⁵As a practical matter, the first observation of imposed democracy, Cuba, enters our data set in the year 1902.

⁶These cases are lost due to missing data for the variables measuring ethnic cleavages, militarization, and economic growth, which are operationalized below.
imposed-democracy-years, our unit of analysis. Below, we refer to this method of operationalization as the Composite Polity operationalization.

Our second sample generation methodology relies on the design reported in Ulfelder (2007), one that is grounded in the level of competition in the selection of a polity’s chief executive and the degree of restrictions a polity places upon political participation. To qualify as a democracy using this criteria, an imposed polity must demonstrate some measure of competition in executive selection (identified as $EXREC > 5$ in Polity IV) and must have minimal restrictions on political participation (identified as $PARCOMP = 0$ or $PARCOMP > 2$ in Polity IV) in the initial year of the imposed democratic polity. Once identified as an imposed democracy, the polity persists until it fails to meet either of the aforementioned executive selection or political participation criteria, at which point the imposed democratic polity is coded as terminated. In keeping with the Composite Polity operationalization, imposed democratic polities persisting through the year 1994 are treated as right-censored.

This coding procedures results in the identification of 33 imposed democracies during the 1816–1994 period, of which one case, Lesotho 1966–1969, is excluded due to missing data. After excluding these cases, our sample for this operationalization of imposed democracy includes 32 imposed regimes, of which 20 fail during the period under study. This operationalization of imposed democracy produces a total sample size of 641 imposed-democracy-years. Below, we refer to this operationalization of polity termination as the Competition/Participation operationalization. The cases of imposed democratic polities generated with the Competition/Participation and Composite Polity operationalizations are reported in Tables 1 & 2, respectively.

Because we are interested in the survival of imposed democracies as a phenomenon distinct from that of indigenously developed democracies, we recognize that there may be a point at which an imposed democracy effectively ceases to be “imposed” and begins to more closely resemble an indigenously developed democracy. For example, it is hard to argue that an imposed democracy that has survived for 100 years faces the same challenges to its survival as an imposed democracy in its first year. We address this
issue in our analysis in two ways. First, we estimate a Weibull duration model for our analysis, a model that allows us to deal with cases that are right censored in our data set and explicitly accounts for the presence of duration dependence. Second, for robustness, we break out our analysis and drop all observations beyond the 30th year of imposition. Although any such cut–point is arbitrary, we choose the 30th year because it is a period that is long enough for an imposed democracy to institutionalize itself into the country but not so long that the analysis is overly leveraged by the sample of observations that occur in the most long–lasting imposed democracies.

Table 1: Imposed Democratic Polities, 1816–1994, Composite Polity Operationalization (N = 38).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Start Yr.</th>
<th>End Yr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>1932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar (Burma)</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
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<td>Japan</td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1955</td>
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<td>Benin</td>
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<td>1965</td>
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<td>Somalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1966</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
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<td>Jamaica</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>1969</td>
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Table 1 continued on next page.
Table 1 —continued from previous page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
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<th>End Yr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1993</td>
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<td>Guyana</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1977</td>
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<td>Botswana</td>
<td>1967</td>
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<td>1994</td>
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<td>Zimbabwe</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1986</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 2: Imposed Democratic Polities, 1816–1994, *Competition/Participation* Operationalization (N= 33).

<table>
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<th>End Yr.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>1951</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
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<td>Haiti</td>
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<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1994</td>
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<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 continued on next page.
Dependent Variable

The dependent variable for this study is imposed democratic polity durability. In addition to the aforementioned issue of right-censoring at the Polity IIId terminal year of 1994, several cases in our analysis are also left-censored in that they are recognized and coded by the Polity IIId project as polities before the COW sample treats the states hosting these polities as sovereign.\(^7\) In cases of left-censoring, we code the elapsed duration of the imposed polity based upon the start date of the initial polity imposition as coded by the Polity project, rather than the start date coded by the COW.

Among the imposed democracies in our sample using the Composite Polity operationalization, the median polity failure time is 12.9 years with the least durable polity being the imposed democracy in Sudan which endured for two years, and the most durable failed democracy being Cuba that endured from 1902–1951. The most durable non-terminated imposed democracy, however, is the imposed democracy in Canada, which endures for 128 years in our data set and persists to this day. The median polity failure time of the Competition/Participation sample is slightly longer at 15.5 years. The least durable imposed democracy in this sample is Sudan, which persisted from 1956–1957. Ireland, reflecting a start date of 1922, is the most durable polity in this sample. Despite being the longest enduring democracy in the Composite Polity operationalization, Canada is excluded from the Competition/Participation analysis, failing to meet the political participation criteria during the first twenty years of its existence.

\(^7\) The Polity project codes polities, whereas the COW codes sovereign states. As a result, the Polity series includes semi-autonomous polities in territories prior to statehood (e.g., Canada in the nineteenth century), intervals excluded from the COW sample until, in some cases, a later point in time.
Independent Variables

Domestic Environment

We focus on four factors that we anticipate will influence the durability of imposed democratic polities: (1) prior democratic experience; (2) level of ethnic fractionalization; (3) level of economic development and growth; and (4) the process by which the imposition of democracy takes place. We discuss the operationalization of each in turn. First, we operationalize a variable accounting for the presence of prior democratic experience, Prior Democracy, by coding a dichotomous variable with a value of 1 if the state hosting an imposed democratic polity reflects prior experience with a democracy with a \( \text{DEMAUT} \) score \( \geq 6 \).  

Second, we use Krain’s (1997) measure of ethnic fractionalization to create a variable, Ethnic Diversity, reflecting ethnic divisions in each state hosting the imposed democratic polity. The chief benefit of the Krain’s (1997) data is that it calculates ethnic fractionalization in a host state every decade for the period 1948–1990.

Third, we include three variables in our analysis in order to assess the level of economic development and growth of an imposed democratic polity. Due to the fact that observations in our analysis extend from 1901–1994, reliable Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data is unavailable for many of our units. As a result, we create a proxy for prosperity by relying on Bennett and Stam’s (2000) \( \text{EUGene} \) software to create the variable Development \( \text{(CINC)} \) using data from the Composite Indicator of National Capabilities (CINC) originally collected by Singer, Bremer and Stuckey (1972). Development \( \text{(CINC)} \) is calculated by taking the natural log of the sum of energy consumption and iron and steel production for each imposed-democracy-year in our data sample. Second, to control for those states with the lowest level of economic development, those at the gravest risk

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8 We initially coded prior democratic experience as the number of prior years with a \( \text{DEMAUT} \geq 6 \). Among our sample of imposed polities, none of the imposed polities with a prior \( \text{DEMAUT} \) score greater than or equal to 6 at any point in their history, however short-lived, failed, regardless of the duration of such experience. Because there is variation in these states’ entry point, there is variation in their duration until censoring.

9 For imposed-polity-years prior to 1948, we assign the level of ethnic fractionalization Krain identifies for a particular host state in the year 1948. For the period 1991–1994, we assign the values Krain identifies for year 1990.
for imposed democracy failure, we include a dichotomous variable *Pre-industrial* that is coded with a “1” for those states which CINC records a “0” for both energy consumption and iron and steel production. Third, we operationalize a measure of economic growth by calculating the difference between the current year’s level of economic development and the previous year’s economic development for the polity, dividing this difference by the previous year’s economic development, to create the variable *Economic Growth*.

Last, to operationalize the conditions in which a democratic regime is imposed following civil or interstate conflict, we code a dichotomous variable, *Post-conflict*, to identify whether or not the polity imposition directly followed either a civil or interstate war involving the state hosting the imposed polity. We rely on (Stearns, 2001) and the electronic version of *Keesing’s Record of World Events* (Keesing’s, 1997) to code this variable.

**Domestic Security**

To measure an imposed democracy’s capacity to prevent and resist violent internal threats to the regime, we create a variable, *Militarization*, measuring the degree of militarization of the imposed state. To create this variable, we rely on *EUGene* (Bennett and Stam, 2000) to identify the number of military personnel of each host state in a given year in thousands.

**Imposer Commitment**

We also expect that the commitment that an imposing power directs to an imposed democracy will impact domestic security and influence the durability of democracy. To

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10. This variable provides a more effective way of dealing with observations that would involve calculating the natural log of “0” than simply dropping the cases or arbitrarily adding “1” to the value before calculating the natural log.

11. We attempted to include a variable measuring the occurrence of internal political conflict within the imposed state during the persistence of an imposed democratic policy. This variable was highly correlated to several variables in the model, including the level of militarization, ethnic diversity, and economic development. As a means to overcome the problem of multicollinearity while still accounting for the influence of internal conflict, we constructed a model of political conflict that used the aforementioned collinear conditions to predict internal political conflict, and in turn include the residuals from this model as our measure of internal political conflict in our model imposed democracy durability. This residual-based measure of internal political conflict was never significant in our Weibull estimations. As a result, we concluded that political conflict was, at best, a symptom of the forces that caused the failure of imposed democracy rather than a cause itself. In the interest of parsimony, we excluded this variable from the models we report below.
operationalize the presence of an imposing power’s military forces, we create a dichotomous variable, *Imposer Present*, that is coded a value of 1 if the military forces of an imposing power are present in an imposed state in an imposed-polity-year. We rely on Stearns (2001) and *Keesing’s* (Keesing’s, 1997) to identify intervals during which the imposing state(s) maintained military forces in the host state. These periods of imposer presence may occur during the initial imposition period of an imposed democracy or through a subsequent re-intervention by the imposing power.

We recognize that the significant presence of an imposing force can have a long-term impact upon the survival of imposed democracies. Specifically, periods of long colonial occupation or long military occupation provide an imposing power with a sustained ability to establish and nurture political institutions and a security apparatus to support it. As a result, to measure the long-term effect of a colonial occupation, we create the variable *Colonial Duration* that describes the total period of colonial occupation in years of the imposing power in the imposed state. We use data from the International Correlates of War (ICOW) Colonial History 0.4 data set (Hensel, 2006) to code the duration of colonial presence. *Colonial Duration* is coded as “0” for those imposed democracies that were not imposed as part of a colonial process. Last, we create the variable *Military Occupation* that describes the total number of years the imposed state was occupied by the imposing power during the imposition process. We use data from (Edelstein, 2004) to identify military occupations and code their durations. We code this variable as a “0” for imposed democracies that did not experience a military occupation.

**International Environment**

To capture the influence of the international environment on the durability of imposed democracies, we consider the frequency of neighboring democratic states as well as the occurrence of conflict in the imposed state’s region. First, to measure the extent of regional democracy, we create a variable, *Democratic Neighbors*, measuring the frequency of democratic states within 950 kilometers of an imposed polity in an imposed-polity-year. We employ Gleditsch and Ward’s (2001) *Minimum Distance Data* to generate the distances between states. We employ data from *Polity IV* (Marshall and Jaggers, 2000)
to code the combined polity score for each state within this 950 kilometer range. We then identify the total frequency of states reflecting *Polity DEMAUT* scores ≥6.

To code the threats an imposed democracy faces in the international system we code two variables. First, to identify the level of threat directly facing the imposed democracy we use the *Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID)* data file (Ghosn, Palmer and Bremer, 2004) to operational a variable, *Uses of Force*, that reflects the frequency of militarized interstate disputes involving the imposed polity as initiator or target to date (i.e., updated in each imposed-polity-year.) Second, to code the broader regional threat environment faced by an imposed state currently, we code a variable, *Warring Neighbors*, reflecting the frequency of wars involving a state within 950 kilometers of the imposed state that are ongoing in the current year. We use data from the COW *Interstate War Dataset* v3.0 to code this variable (Sarkees, 2000). The descriptive statistics for each of the independent variables are reported in Tables 3 & 4.

**Table 3:** Descriptive Statistics (Interval-level Variables).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Composite Polity</th>
<th>Competition/Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Diversity</td>
<td>42.33</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Growth</td>
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<td>Militarization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colonial Duration</td>
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<td>Democratic Neighbors</td>
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<td>Military Occupation</td>
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<td>Uses of Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>Warring Neighbors</td>
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</table>

**Table 4:** Descriptive Statistics (Dichotomous Variables).

<table>
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<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freq.</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>Pre-industrial</td>
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</table>

Table 4 continued on next page.
Table 4dstatsdummy —continued from previous page.

<table>
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<th>Composite Polity</th>
<th>Competition/Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-conflict</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposer Present</td>
<td>151</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Analysis

The results of the Weibull analysis are reported in Table 5. Because the results across the four models are nearly identical, in the interest of brevity we focus our discussion upon the full sample of the Composite Polity operationalization of imposed democracy termination (Model 1). The results of our analysis were generally consistent with the theoretical argument that we outline above. There are, however, some important departures from our expectations, particularly in terms of the effect of the regional environment an imposed democracy faces upon its survival.
As we expected, the domestic environment into which an imposed democracy is introduced has a powerful effect upon its durability. The social characteristics of a society in which democracy is imposed play an important role in the survival of democracy by undercutting durability. Greater social divisions in a host state increase the demands placed upon fledgling regimes as well as heighten the risk that leaders of ethnic groups
will choose to employ ethnic cues to obtain, hold, and increase their political power in the new democracy, thereby eroding democratic institutions.

In substantive terms, our analysis indicates that increasing the level of ethnic diversity in an imposed state by one standard deviation increases the risk of an imposed democracy failing at any point in time by a factor of nearly six and a half. By way of illustration, increasing the level of ethnic diversity from that of Japan, one of the most homogenous countries in the world, to that of a much more ethnically diverse country, such as post-invasion Iraq, more than quadruples the risk of imposed democratic failure. In this respect, high levels of social cleavages represent a significant impediment to durable imposed democracy.

Imposed democracy, however, is not necessarily doomed in multiethnic societies. History is replete with durable democracies in multiethnic states such as Canada, Belgium, the United States, and India. In this respect, a tradition of democracy, because of its ability to cultivate respect for negotiated solutions to contentious issues in society, should increase the durability of imposed democracy. Our analysis is consistent with this logic, as a host state's prior experience with democracy has the strongest substantive impact on imposed democracy survival relative to any other causal factor specified in our models. In our sample, imposed democracies with any prior experience with a high level of democracy ($DEMAUT \geq 6$) prior to the implementation of an imposed democracy, none failed. To the degree to which there is variability in the duration of those states with prior democratic experience until the end point of our sample, this variability stems from the variation in their time of imposition.\footnote{It is this variation in time of imposition which allows for the inclusion of these cases in the model. Dropping these five strong democracies from the sample results in identical results. Therefore, we include these cases and implement their prior democracy control in order to demonstrate within the model the strong effect of prior democracy upon imposed democracy survival.} Despite the magnitude of its contribution to the durability of imposed democratic regimes, prior experience with democratic institutions is rare among imposed democracies in our sample, accounting for 13% of all imposed democracies in our sample.

Economic prosperity can also bolster the survival of imposed democracy. Consistent with extant research on general democratic survival, we find that increasing the level of
economic development of the state hosting an imposed democracy significantly increases the durability of democratic institutions. For example, increasing the level of economic development of an imposed state by one standard deviation reduces the probability of imposed democracy termination by slightly more than 6%. Imposed states at the very lowest level of economic development are especially prone to democratic failure. The cases in our sample that fit our operationalization of pre-industrial are more than seven times as likely to fail as those that do not.

While the links between prior democracy and economic development to the durability of an imposed democracy are important, they are also unsatisfying. After all, a state absent prior democratic experience can neither instantaneously acquire it, nor can suddenly it achieve economic prosperity. Therefore, from a policymaking standpoint, it is important to identify conditions that fortify democratic durability and are manipulable by policymakers.

At first glance, it makes sense to expect that economic growth, a condition that is arguably manipulable by imposers, would increase the durability of imposed democracy. Yet, our analysis suggests otherwise. Elevating economic growth in an imposed democratic polity by one standard deviation actually increases the risk of imposed democracy failure by 18%. This suggests that, while prosperity can foster durable imposed democracy, high levels of economic growth can also create a strain upon the political system that undermines the durability of imposed democracy.

An additional policy lever manipulable by policymakers in imposing states is the degree of domestic insecurity an imposed democracy confronts. Here, the degree to which an imposed democratic state is militarized has an important effect upon the survival of imposed democracy, with stronger militaries increasing the survival of imposed democracy. Increasing the size of the military of an imposed democracy from 20,000 to 50,000 military personnel reduces the likelihood of imposed democracy failure by slightly less than 8%. Significantly greater militarization results in translates into even greater gains in survival. For example, an imposed democracy with a military of 200,000 soldiers is 24% less likely to fail at any point in time than one with a military of 100,000 soldiers.
One concern with increasing the size of an imposed democracy’s military is that, while such an increase can enhance domestic security, it can also empower a potential challenger to the democratic regime, raising the risk that the military will overthrow the imposed democracy. We see no evidence of this effect in our analysis. Adding a curvilinear military force size variable in model (2) is not only statistically insignificant, but shows no evidence of the presence of a military peaking point after which growth in military raises the risk of imposed democracy failure.

Actions by the imposed state are not the only way by which policy choices can shape the durability of imposed democracy. One of the things that distinguishes imposed democracies from indigenously developed democracies is the influence that an outside state exerts upon the imposed state and the implications this has for imposed democracy survival. For example, we expected that the presence of the forces of the imposing power might be able to make up for the lack of military capacity of the imposed state, thereby increasing the durability of imposed democracy. We see no evidence of this effect. Across all of our models, the presence of the imposing power during a particular year has no significant effect upon the durability of imposed democracy during that year.

More significant levels of imposer presence in the impose state, however, do have a strong, lasting impact upon the survival of imposed democracy. Imposed democracies that are implemented during a military occupation of the impose state are significantly less likely to fail the longer the occupation lasts, even after the occupation ends. An imposed democracy that was occupied militarily by the imposed state for just one year is 18% less likely to terminate at any point in time than imposed democracy that was never occupied. Longer occupations produce even more durable imposed democracy. An imposed democracy that experienced a five-year occupation is 45% less like to fail than one with just one year of occupation. Looking at this result against our findings with respect to democracies imposed in the wake of a military conflict points to an important insight. It is not conflict itself that causes the “reset” in an imposed state that makes it more amenable to the imposition of democracy, but a sustained military occupation by the imposing power.
Interestingly, we see little evidence that the duration of the colonial period, for those democracies imposed through a colonial process, significantly influences the survival of imposed democracy. In many respects, this is surprising. Like a military occupation, colonialism typically involves the sustained presence of the outside power in the colony and an accompanying exertion of significant influence by the colonizer over political affairs within the colony. One explanation for this null finding may rest with the diversity in colonial policies among colonizing powers. Military occupations involve a significant commitment on the part of the occupying power, with a recognition that instability in the occupied state is likely to have significant consequences for the occupier. There is wider variation in the connections between colonial power and colony in terms of the level of commitment the colonizer has toward the colony. In this respect, our null findings may reflect the fact that some colonial powers devote significant resources and commitment to the colony while others devote few and demonstrate less of a sustained interest in the colony.

Other outside forces besides the imposing power influence the durability of imposed democracy. Just as imposed democracies can influence the regions in which they are imposed, the regional environment can also influence imposed democratic durability. Regional security threats, for example, significantly reduce the durability of imposed democracies. During the life of an imposed democracy, each additional militarized dispute that involves militarized force by the imposed democracy or against it increases the likelihood of democracy failure by approximately 3%. An imposed democracy involved in ten militarized disputes reflects a 30% greater likelihood of failure than one involved with no prior use of force.

Beyond the threat directed specifically against an imposed democracy, the broader level of conflict within the imposed state’s region also significantly influences the durability of imposed democracy. An imposed democracy in which one war is ongoing within the region is 58% more likely to fail than one with no regional wars. Likewise, an imposed democracy in a region with three ongoing wars is more than twice as likely to terminate
than one in a region with only one war. This points to the inherent fragility of imposed democracies and the implications of their milieu.

Interestingly, although the imposition of democracy in a conflictual regional environment dampens the prospects of survival of a newly imposed democracy, the imposition of a new democracy in a highly democratic region also undercuts the imposed polity’s survival. An imposed democracy with at least one proximate democratic neighbor has a 31% greater probability of failing relative to an imposed democracy absent proximate democratic neighbors. Increasing the number of regional democracies to two doubles the probability of failure at any point in time. An imposed democracy with five democratic neighbors is nearly four times more likely to fail than one imposed an entirely non-democratic region. This is counter to our expectation that regional democracies would offer a support mechanism for externally imposed democracies.

What explains this surprising finding? Imposed democracies in highly democratic regions occur, by definition, in states which did not develop democracy indigenously, despite the considerable support and examples regional democracies present. In this respect, imposed democracies in highly democratic regions are most likely to occur in states that bear the strongest resistance to democracy, precisely the states in which imposed democracy is most likely to fail early. This logic is consistent with our findings with respect to prior democratic history, such that among those states with a prior history of democracy, imposed democracy is significantly more likely to persist. In this respect, one might think of the imposition of democracy in a highly democratic neighborhood as a treatment of last resort for a state that is least able to support democracy.

In general, our analysis underscores the stark challenges faced in attempting to impose democratic regimes successfully. Key influences upon the durability of imposed democracy such as its social fabric, level of economic development, and prior democratic experience are forces over which the imposer has little control. Other factors, such as the level of conflict in the imposed state’s region are at the mercy of other actors. Our analysis does, however, indicate that the success or failure of imposed democracy is not wholly subject to such deterministic forces. An imposer’s successful manipulation of
several conditions can be the difference between an imposed democracy that is doomed, and one that has some chance for survival. A highly committed imposer for example, can increase the length of its military occupation, creating firmer footing for a durable democracy in the imposed state. Similarly, the imposer can adopt policies to encourage the development of significant military capacity in the imposed state, capacity that can limit political challenges to the democracy and encourage its durability.

**Simulations of Post-invasion Afghanistan & Iraq**

Having examined the central forces that influence the survival of imposed democracy in general, we turn now to an application of our empirical model (specifically, the analysis reported in Table 5, Model 1) to forecasting the contemporary cases of post-invasion Afghanistan and Iraq. As part of this exercise, we also simulate the conditions faced by post-WWII West Germany and Japan. In generating these simulations we assign historical values for the model parameters for West Germany and Japan at the time of regime imposition (1955 and 1952, respectively) and contemporary values for Afghanistan and Iraq.

In Figure 2, we see the distinct survival patterns of imposed democracy forecast for current-day Iraq and Afghanistan as compared to the retrocasts for post-WWII Japan and West Germany. The model forecasts very high probabilities of imposed democracy survival in both West Germany and Japan. For Japan, the model predicts a 98.9% chance of imposed democracy surviving at least 25 years and a 96.7% chance of surviving at least 50 years. Indeed, the probability of imposed democracy in Japan surviving more than 75 years exceeds 93%. The retrocast for West Germany is even more favorable, with the model forecasting no probability of imposed democracy failure at any point within the first 75 years of the regime’s existence. The forecasts for imposed democracy survival in both Iraq and Afghanistan are significantly less positive. The fledgling Iraqi democracy has a 50% failure within the first 34 years of its existence and only a 27% chance of lasting more than 50 years. The forecasts for Afghanistan are even more grim. The model forecasts only a 50% chance that Afghanistan’s imposed democracy lasts more than 14 years and only a 25% chance that it lasts more than 21 years.
Despite the similarities in how they were imposed, through conflict and sustained occupation, the sharp differences in the conditions under which they were imposed are key to understanding the different model forecasts for West Germany and Japan immediately after WWII and contemporary Iraq and Afghanistan. For West Germany, a key reason for the durability of its imposed democracy is its prior democratic experience. Among the group of imposed democracies in our sample with prior democratic experience, none fail during our time period of analysis. Post-WWII Japan, however, had no such prior democratic experience and, yet, the model still forecasts a very high probability of its durability. Here, these forecasts are driven by Japan’s very low level of ethnic divisions, comparatively high level of economic development, and the long duration of its occupation by the United States. Each of these conditions pushes toward more durable imposed democracy. Indeed, West Germany also benefits from each of these conditions, with its even higher level of economic development, its own long occupation by Britain, France, and the United States, and its low level of social development.
Across each of these four sets of forces that encourage the durability of imposed democracy, both Iraq and Afghanistan are disadvantaged relative to West Germany and Japan. Neither Iraq nor Afghanistan has any prior democratic experience. Both countries have substantially more ethnic divisions than Japan and West Germany faced during their imposition process. The level of economic development in both Iraq and Afghanistan is substantially lower than either West Germany or Japan, a challenge that is particularly acute in Afghanistan which is among the poorest countries in the world. Iraq and Afghanistan are even disadvantaged by a factor under the control of the imposing power, the duration of their occupation. We find that longer military occupations tend to encourage more durable imposed democracies. Yet, while post-WWII Japan experienced a seven-year occupation period before its return of sovereignty and West Germany experienced an even longer ten-year occupation, the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan were significantly shorter. Iraqi sovereignty was restored in 2005 and Afghanistan’s sovereignty was returned in 2004. Of course, coalition forces remain present in both Iraq and Afghanistan, as do American forces in current-day Japan and Germany; but, our analysis underscores the importance of the duration of occupation and political control over the imposed state as decisive for the durability of imposed democracy, not simply the continued presence of military forces in the country.

An optimist might positively interpret our forecasts for democracy’s prospects in both Iraq and, to a lesser extent, Afghanistan. After all, given the dire circumstances faced by both countries, a 50% chance of democracy lasting more than 34 years in Iraq and more than 14 years in Afghanistan seems hopeful. Additionally, our analysis reveals little evidence to support the common expectation that the full withdrawal of American troops from either country will significantly impact the survival of its fledgling democracy. Yet, these results also suggest considerable reason for pessimism in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is important to remember that this model forecasts the survival of imposed democracy but employs a low bar for defining democracy itself. In order for an imposed regime to be considered democratic, it must simply have a Polity score at the time of imposition greater than 0, a standard that is much lower than what is typically considered full democracy.
We employ this standard for identifying imposed democracy because we think that it is important to identify those imposed regimes with democratic tendencies that might, ultimately, transition to full democracy.

Iraq and Afghanistan are both examples of imposed regimes that, while showing some characteristics of a democracy, both fall short of full democracy. Although each country drafted constitutions and held parliamentary elections, each continue to be rated as “not free” in 2010 by Freedom House due to high levels of corruption, voter intimidation, and limitations on civil liberties.\textsuperscript{13}

Clearly, from a policy perspective the hope for both countries is that they will, over time, transition toward higher levels of democracy. This deepening of democracy, however, is by no means guaranteed. In fact, across our sample of imposed democracies, only three polities, Canada, South Africa, and Pakistan, transition from an initial polity score less than 6 to $\geq6$. Canada moved from an initial polity score of 4 to a 10 in 1921; South Africa transitioned from its starting polity score of a 4 to an 8 in 1993 following the end of the apartheid; and Pakistan transitioned from an even lower level of democracy very quickly, moving from a 2 in 1948 to an 8 in 1956. While these cases are rare, they are also unique. Unlike Iraq and Afghanistan, they were each colonially imposed. In South Africa, the shift toward full democracy occurred during a crisis in which the country was poised on the brink of revolution. In Pakistan, the democratic transition was short-lived, lasting only until 1957, after which time democracy failed entirely. Only Canada’s transition to full democracy was both peaceful and long-lived. As such, the prior track-record of imposed democracies only provides a limited basis for optimism that either Iraq or Afghanistan can become full democracies.

Our results show that there are only limited options available to policymakers that will increase the durability of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan. The duration of their occupations cannot be feasibly increased as sovereignty has already been returned to both states. Higher levels of economic development foster imposed democracy durability, but

\textsuperscript{13}Because of the continued presence of foreign troops and continuing violence in both countries, Polity IV codes assigns a polity score of -66, occupation, for both Iraq and Afghanistan in its 2008 coding, its most recent data release.
the economic growth needed to achieve a higher level of development actually undermines durability. One influence upon the survival of the imposed democracies that remains open to policymakers is the level of security faced by both Iraq and Afghanistan. Not only does increasing the size of the Iraqi and Afghan militaries increase the durability of democracy, but preventing the outbreak of conflict in their regions, particularly those involving them has a strong effect upon the survival of their imposed democracies.

Figure 3 shows the sharp differences in the forecasted survival of the nascent democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan depending upon the level of international conflict each regime faces. For each country, increasing the number of historical uses of military force used, or directed against, by the state hosting the imposed democracy to four and increasing the frequency of warring neighbors two dramatically reduces the likelihood of imposed democracy survival in both Iraq and Afghanistan. An Iraqi regime facing such a conflictual environment has a 50% chance of failing within 18 years, a sharp reduction from the model’s prediction of 34 years given current conditions. The effect of conflict upon Afghanistan’s imposed democracy is especially bleak. Given this level of international threats to Afghanistan, the model predicts a 50% chance that its democracy will fail within seven years. In fact, faced with such regional instability, the model forecasts less than a 10% chance that the Afghan imposed democracy survives beyond 15 years. In this respect, while conditions internal to both Iraq and Afghanistan play a key role in determining how long their imposed democracies will last, forces outside these countries and threats that they pose to them while also have a profound influence on democratic survival.

**Conclusions**

The durability of imposed polities is a function of international and local causal stimuli. As such, the study of the durability of imposed democratic polities necessitates breaching sub-field barriers and drawing causal insights from comparative politics and international relations, as well as ranging across political, social, and economic arenas. We embrace this approach herein in our modeling of the durability of imposed democratic polities during the twentieth century, and our analysis identifies some important insights into democratic
durability that are relevant to the contemporary cases of post-invasion Afghanistan and Iraq.

One striking conclusion emerging from our analysis is that, from a policy standpoint, the survivability of imposed democracies is overwhelmingly attributable to factors that are immutable by imposers. Thus, much like the predisposition of different human gene pools to diseases, the political, social, and economic genetic makeup of the state hosting an imposed democratic polity sets the parameters of durability of an imposed democracy.

With regard to conditions that are manipulable by imposers, our study contains merely a limited investigation of such factors—e.g., the presence of the imposing state, domestic security, economic growth, interstate security, and militarization—and the inquiry might be expanded to include foreign aid, strategic and economic alliances, trade, and so forth. Yet, while we can draw the empirically-derived conclusion that eliminating domestic challenges, many of them violent, will boost the survivability of imposed democratic institutions, the question is whether local and international conditions are conducive to a minimization of these challenges, and whether policies implemented by an imposer exert any significant control over toxic domestic environments. Indeed, extant
research (e.g., XXXX 2008, Lo, Hashimoto and Reiter, 2008b) suggests that eliminating domestic strife is difficult following an imposition.

Ultimately, our analysis provides a basis for a rather grim prognosis of democracy in the fledgling democracies cultivated by the United States and its allies in post-invasion Afghanistan and Iraq. Indeed, our out-of-sample forecasts of the durability of democracy in these two cases simply could not provide more negative relief relative to the oft-cited paragons of imposed democracy in post-WWII West Germany and Japan, findings that square with earlier assessments (Bellin, 2004; Bueno de Mesquita and Downs, 2006; Moon, 2009). Gurr (1974) notes that the failure of many of the post-colonial democratic regimes reinforced the limits of foreign powers to engineer long-term political trajectories in other states. Though their fates are not determined by the causal forces examined herein, the contemporary cases of postwar Afghanistan and Iraq might refresh the memories of policymakers regarding the limits to engineering political institutions. Indeed, our study of imposed democracy underscores that contextual conditions can overwhelm the survivability of democratic institutions imposed from abroad.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Hazard Ratio</th>
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<tr>
<td>Imposed Polity</td>
<td>2.865+</td>
<td>[1.591]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imposed Polity × ln(time)</td>
<td>0.575*</td>
<td>[0.139]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>0.934*</td>
<td>[0.030]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Growth</td>
<td>1.004</td>
<td>[0.006]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Democracy</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>[0.006]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Diversity</td>
<td>2.860*</td>
<td>[1.205]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Regional Polity Score</td>
<td>0.919*</td>
<td>[0.031]</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wald $\chi^2$</td>
<td>25.24***</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\rho$</td>
<td>1.624</td>
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*Note:* Robust standard errors in parentheses.

Democracy operationalized using Competition/Participation measure discussed on p.18.

Two-tailed significance: **p < .01, *p < .05, +p < .10.
References


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