Leaders and International Conflict

Chiozza and Goemans seek to explain why and when political leaders decide to initiate international crises and wars. They argue that the fate of leaders and the way leadership changes shapes leaders’ decisions to initiate international conflict. Leaders who anticipate regular removal from office, through elections for example, have little to gain and much to lose from international conflict, whereas leaders who anticipate a forcible removal from office, e.g. through coup or revolution, have little to lose and much to gain from conflict. This theory is tested against an extensive analysis of more than 80 years of international conflict and with an intensive historical examination of Central American leaders from 1848 to 1918. Leaders and International Conflict highlights the political nature of the choice between war and peace and will appeal to all scholars of international relations and comparative politics.

Giacomo Chiozza is Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at Vanderbilt University and studies international relations and international security. He is an expert on the study of attitudes towards US power and the study of political leaders in conflict processes. He is the author of Anti-Americanism and the American World Order (2009) and of several articles published in academic journals, including the Journal of Conflict Resolution, the American Journal of Political Science, and the European Journal of International Relations. In 2008–09 he served as a member of the American Political Science Association Presidential Task Force on US Standing in World Politics. Professor Chiozza holds a Ph.D. from Duke University.

H. E. Goemans is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Rochester and studies international relations with a focus on conflict. He is the author of War and Punishment: the Causes of War Termination and the First World War (2000) and has authored and co-authored articles in the American Political Science Review, the American Journal of Political Science, the Journal of Politics, International Organization, the Journal of Conflict Resolution, and the Journal of Peace Research. Professor Goemans holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.
Leaders and International Conflict

GIACOMO CHIOZZA AND
H. E. GOEMANS
## Contents

*List of tables*  
page viii

*List of figures*  
ix

*Acknowledgments*  
x

*Online appendices*  
xi

1 Leaders  
1.1 The central question  
4
1.2 The central argument  
4
1.3 Leaders in the study of international politics  
5
  1.3.1 Is war costly for leaders?  
7
1.4 Conclusions  
11

2 Why and when do leaders fight?  
2.1 How leaders are removed from office  
13
  2.1.1 Explaining the forcible removal from office  
16
  2.1.2 Fighting and gambling for survival  
18
  2.1.3 International conflict and regular removals  
32
2.2 Competing leader-level explanations of international conflict  
35
  2.2.1 In- and out-group bias  
35
  2.2.2 Evaluation  
37
  2.2.3 Competence  
40
  2.2.4 Evaluation  
42
2.3 Conclusions  
44

3 International conflict and the fate of leaders  
3.1 Introduction  
46
3.2 The manner and consequences of losing office  
49
## Contents

3.2.1 International conflict and the fate of leaders 54

3.3 Competing risks: regular and forcible removals 61
   3.3.1 Testing the hypotheses 62

3.4 Under what conditions? 68
   3.4.1 Conflict and domestic political institutions 68
   3.4.2 Conflict and domestic political unrest 74
   3.4.3 Conflict and economic development 79
   3.4.4 Conflict and economic growth 84
   3.4.5 Summary 87

3.5 Conclusions 88

4 The fate of leaders and incentives to fight 91
   4.1 Introduction 91
   4.2 Measuring the risk of losing of office 95
   4.3 A statistical test of our theory of conflict initiation 102
      4.3.1 The risk of conflict initiation 106
      4.3.2 Conflict outcomes 108
      4.3.3 An overview of the findings from the statistical model 111
         • Regime type 112
         • State of the economy 114
         • International political context 115
   4.4 Conclusions 116

5 Case studies: Central America 1840–1918 117
   5.1 Introduction 117
   5.2 Central America 118
      5.2.1 Empirical strategy 135
      5.2.2 Ideology and international conflict in Central America 137
   5.3 Birth pangs of independence 1840–48 148
      5.3.1 The return of Morazán 148
      5.3.2 Malespin and the Liberal exiles in Nicaragua 150
      5.3.3 The fall of Carrera 154
   5.4 Conservatism ascendant 1849–71 156
      5.4.1 The return of Carrera 157
      5.4.2 Cabañas comes to power 158
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.4.3</td>
<td>The <em>National War</em></td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.4</td>
<td>Gerardo Barrios</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>The return of Liberalism 1872–1918</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.1</td>
<td>The rise and demise of Justo Rufino Barrios</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5.2</td>
<td>The era of Zelaya and Estrada Cabrera</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>A problem (largely) solved: the Washington Treaty</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A:</td>
<td>data and measurement</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.1</td>
<td><em>Archigos</em>: a data set of leaders</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.2</td>
<td>Dependent variables</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.3</td>
<td>Explanatory variables</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td></td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td></td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tables

3.1 Forms of forcible removal  page 51
3.2 How leaders lose office and the consequences  51
3.3 The fate of leaders and conflict involvement  54
3.4 The fate of leaders and the outcomes of conflict  56
3.5 Leaders in power after fifteen years of a defeat in a war or crisis  67
3.6 Autocratic challengers who suffered a forcible removal  71
3.7 Autocratic targets who suffered a forcible removal  71
3.8 Leaders of parliamentary democracies and crisis defeat  75
4.1 Estimated probabilities of crisis onset  106
5.1 Conflicts during the Union (1824–42)  119
5.2 Guatemala  123
5.3 El Salvador  124
5.4 Nicaragua  128
5.5 Honduras  131
5.6 Costa Rica  133
5.7 The era of Carrera and Conservative preponderance – I  139
5.8 The era of Carrera and Conservative preponderance – II  141
5.9 The era of Justo Rufino Barrios and Liberal preponderance  143
5.10 Zelaya, Estrada Cabrera and the era of Liberal dominance – I  145
5.11 Zelaya, Estrada Cabrera and the era of Liberal dominance – II  147
Figures

3.1 Number of forcible removals, 1919–2003  
3.2 International conflict and the manner of losing office  
3.3 The manner of losing office: conflict and domestic political institutions  
3.4 The manner of losing office: conflict and domestic political unrest  
3.5 The manner of losing office: conflict and economic development  
3.6 The manner of losing office: conflict, regime type and economic development  
3.7 The manner of losing office: conflict and economic growth  
3.8 The manner of losing office: conflict and economic growth for middle-income and non-democratic leaders  
4.1 Average probability of forcible and regular removal, 1919–2003  
4.2 Probability of forcible and regular removal from office in four countries  
4.3 A graphical representation of direct and indirect effects  
4.4 Coefficients for the risks of losing office on conflict initiation  
4.5 Coefficients for the risks of conflict initiation on the manner of losing office  
4.6 Endogenous conflict and irregular removal  
4.7 Endogenous conflict and regular removal  
6.1 Variance explained and the levels of analysis
Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Jeffrey Arnold, Carol Atkinson, Rand Blimes, Tim Büthe, Kevin Clarke, Eugene Gholz, Ron Hassner, Susan Hyde, Brenton Kenkel, Deborah Larson, Jeffrey Lewis, Nikolay Marinov, Sandra Morton, Michael Peress, Dan Posner, Norrin Ripsman, Bruce Russett, Ken Schultz, Glenn Scrimshaw, Curt Signorino, Duncan Snidal, Randy Stone, Marc Trachtenberg, R. Harrison Wagner and in particular Alexandre Debs and Arnd Plagge. Muhammet Bas provided extremely helpful research assistance.

We have benefited from the comments of the participants at the Peace Studies Program at Cornell University, the University of Chicago, PIPES, the University of California, Berkeley, UCLA, the University of Texas at Austin, Yale University.

Mistakes, omissions, and other assorted infelicities are our own responsibility.
Online appendices

Online appendices have been supplied as supplementary material for Chapters 3, 4, and 6. Please find the online appendices at:

http://sites.google.com/site/giacomochiozza/

or

http://www.rochester.edu/college/faculty/hgoemans/research.htm/

Links to these sites can also be found on the book’s homepage at:

www.cambridge.org/9781107660731