Abstracts

The Call of the Proxy: Organizational Patterns and Lobbying of Non-State Armed Groups

Zhou Yiqi Xu Yi (3)

【Abstract】 International peace is increasingly threatened by proxy wars, often fueled by non-state armed groups acting as proxies. Studying the lobbying behavior of these groups can shed light on their relationship with external supporters and the reasons behind their influence on the global community. In this paper, we delve into the lobbying activity of armed groups in proxy wars, specifically examining how their organizational patterns impact their lobbying efforts. By analyzing two dimensions (internal integration and division of labor), we aim to understand how these groups are able to maintain stable lobbying entities and effectively utilize resources to actively lobby for their cause. Internal integration plays a crucial role in stabilizing both the actor and narrative levels of lobbying activities, while division of labor allows for continuous generation of lobbying content and effective operation of channels. Ultimately, an armed group's organizational performance is the key factor in maintaining lobbying activity amidst changing circumstances in a proxy war. To validate our theoretical hypotheses, we conduct a comparative case analysis of the Free Syrian Army and Syrian Democratic Forces' lobbying efforts in the United States during the Syrian crisis using data analysis tools.

【Key Words】 non-state armed groups, proxy war, lobbying, organizational patterns, the Middle East conflict

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How Do International Peacekeeping Operations Affect External Support in Civil Wars?

Lyu Huiyi Si Xiaoyu Chen Chong (29)

【Abstract】 External involvement and intervention have been widely regarded as a major reason for the protracted nature of civil wars. Conventional wisdom holds that international peacekeeping operations can effectively deter and prevent third-party support for civil wars. However, this view lacks systematic evidence and empirical validation. This article argues that since the deployment of peacekeeping operations largely depends on the consent of host governments in civil war countries, it can exert an asymmetric impact on governments and rebel groups, leading to increased external support for rebel groups. On the one hand, the presence of international peacekeepers can reinforce the perception among rebel groups and their potential external supporters that the balance of power is shifting towards the government, thereby inciting increased support for the rebels. On the other hand, peacekeeping operations increase international attention to host governments of civil war countries, raising the reputational and audience costs for governments and their third-party supporters when violating international norms, thus subjecting them to more constraints and potentially reducing direct third-party support for host governments. Utilizing a civil war dataset from 1992 to 2017, this article employs various quantitative methods to examine the impact of United Nations (UN) and non-UN peacekeeping operations on external support for governments and rebel groups, respectively, in civil war countries. Statistical results reveal that both UN and non-UN peacekeeping operations significantly increase external support for rebel groups rather than host governments, and drive a shift in external support from direct means, such as troop support, to indirect means, such as the provision of weapons and funds. These findings have important implications for understanding the dynamics of external support during civil wars and for enhancing the effectiveness of international peacekeeping operations.

【Key Words】 peacekeeping operations, civil wars, rebel groups, the United Nations, third-party intervention

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The Return of Geopolitics? Strategic Non-Traditional Security Cooperation Under the Bloc-Oriented Path

He Jiajie (60)

【Abstract】 In recent years, as the United States accelerates its strategic competition with China, the contest between China and the US in Southeast Asia has expanded from the macro level to the realm of non-traditional security. On various non-traditional security issues, the US has proposed initiatives to strengthen cooperation with Southeast Asian countries. These initiatives not only exclude China's participation but also reflect certain bloc-oriented tendencies. Non-traditional security cooperation issues are typically seen as governance matters. However, they have increasingly taken on strategic significance and become a key aspect of great power competition due to two factors: The characteristics of the specific issues themselves and the broader geopolitical environment. The bloc-oriented nature of non-traditional security cooperation is primarily realized through two mechanisms: First, resource projection, where great powers actively project their power and influence in the region by engaging in non-traditional security cooperation; second, wedge-driving, in which great powers align with regional countries to exclude and isolate competitors, thereby driving a wedge into the existing cooperation networks between the competitors and regional countries. Through an analysis of recent maritime security cooperation between the US and Southeast Asian countries, it is evident that the US, on the one hand, maintains its regional hegemony by providing dual-use public goods and selectively helping Southeast Asian countries build capacity. On the other hand, it constructs exclusive cooperation networks to outcompete China's cooperation initiatives and employs social forces to shape the "China threat", aiming to divide China from regional countries and diminish their willingness to balance against the US.

【Key Words】 non-traditional security cooperation, US strategic competition against China,

bloc-oriented approach, maritime security, stigmatization

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Why Are Binding Inter-State Cybersecurity Agreements Formed?

Huang Bei (86)

【Abstract】 The construction of international security rules in emerging technology fields has become a critical focus for the international community. In the realm of cybersecurity, although the process of establishing global rules faces significant challenges, some countries have already reached international treaties, government statements, and other formal cybersecurity agreements at bilateral and multilateral levels. Why do some international cybersecurity collaborations result in binding agreements while others cannot? Existing research often lacks clear distinctions among different types of cybersecurity rules, overlooks the dynamic interactions between states during the rule-making processes, or selectively applies case studies. This paper focuses on binding cybersecurity agreements between countries and uses common consequences of cybersecurity threats and the perception of regime threats between states as independent variables. The author constructs a theoretical framework based on countries' gain-loss analysis and conducts a comparative analysis and process tracing of four cases: the Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime, the consensus between China and the United States on cybersecurity issues, the UN process on cyber arms control rules, and US-Russia cybersecurity dialogues. The study finds that common consequences of cybersecurity threats and perceptions of regime threats between countries, by shaping common interests in cooperation and influencing the estimation of default losses and the credibility of commitments, jointly affect the achievement of binding cybersecurity agreements.

【Key Words】 international rules, binding agreements, international cooperation, cybersecurity, international security

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【Abstract】 As a perpetual shadow of representative democracy, the influence of populism is on the rise. However, the academic community knows relatively little about the political and economic consequences of populists in power. This paper argues that populist authorities tend to radicalize rather than institutionalize. Only when populists hold office can they establish a political order that challenges democracy. Populists do not significantly achieve redistributive effects, as the changes in the competitive dynamics of post-industrial party systems suppress their willingness and capacity to implement large-scale redistribution. To test this theory, this paper constructs an original dataset covering 27 European countries from 1990 to 2019, employing a two-way fixed effects model, synthetic control method, and counterfactual estimator to identify the causal effects of populist governance. The findings reveal that populists in power not only fail to fulfill their redistribution commitments but also weaken civil liberties, accountability, and the rule of law to some extent, exacerbating political corruption. The effects of populist ruling parties exhibit a certain lag, with populist leaders causing greater impacts. Further mechanism analysis indicates that the primary risk of democratic backsliding arises from right-wing populism, while left-wing populism tends to correct deviations in liberal democracy. Democratic experience can mitigate the negative effects of populist governance, whereas charismatic leaders intensify their adverse impact. This paper highlights the macro consequences of populist rule, contributing to the clarification of the relationship between populism and liberal democracy, thereby enhancing our understanding of the causes of democratic backsliding globally.

【Key Words】 populists in power, quality of democracy, redistribution, liberal democracy, democratic backsliding

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