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Sommario/riassunto

Alexander B. Downes compiles all instances of regime change around the world over the past two centuries. Drawing on this impressive data set, Downes shows that regime change increases the likelihood of civil war and violent leader removal in target states and fails to reduce the probability of conflict between intervening states and their targets. As Downes demonstrates, when a state confronts an obstinate or dangerous adversary, the lure of toppling its government and establishing a friendly administration is strong. The historical record, however, shows that foreign-imposed regime change is, in the long term, neither cheap, easy, nor consistently successful.