insights from previous research on IC performance that would help to interpret the book's significance for these debates. The book points to good news for IC performance: a judgment rendered by an IC has the potential to generate positive compliance and trade outcomes. The good news seems to stop there. Domestic politics determines whether the outcomes are positive, irrespective of the precise nature of an IC's performance and might suggest that painstaking efforts made by judges to get a decision right do not matter. To prevent such inferences, I caution readers to not overstate the book's implications about IC performance, as the book provides only limited discussion of how we should conceive of IC performance and does not control for alternative aspects of performance, such as the clarity of a judgment or whether there is a separate opinion attached to a ruling. Moreover, the book examines a limited set of ICs (the WTO DSM and ECJ) and only in the area of trade. Regarding design, Peritz confirms what others have shown:

flexibility provisions spur noncompliance. As I see it, another question about institutional design arises from the case selection. Despite having very different institutional designs, the outcomes generated by the WTO DSM and ECJ are similarly affected by domestic politics. Can design mitigate the effects of domestic politics? The contrasting cases would suggest no. Without clarification on how to interpret this anomaly, the reader should be careful to not overstate the implications for institutional design.

Even with these shortcomings, this book is outstanding. I highly recommend it to students and scholars of international law, international courts, international organizations, and trade.

—THERESA SQUATRITO

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The publication of Andreas Krieg's *Subversion: The Strategic Weaponization of Narratives* could not have been timelier, as clashes of weaponized narratives are on display at a global scale, from Ukraine to Gaza and beyond. Amid this tense, turbulent, and tragic context, Krieg's book represents a

welcome and needed addition to the body of academic literature that deals with the "new normal" use of subversion as the optimal strategy for major and minor global actors to use as a tool of statecraft. The work is likely to appeal to academics and practitioners alike in offering a panoramic

yet concise overview of subversion's history, essence, and peculiarities, situating it in the context of contemporary political warfare.

Krieg defines subversion as a "twenty-first-century activity that exploits vulnerabilities in the information environment to achieve strategic objectives below the threshold of war with plausible deniability and discretion" (p. 6). Within the broad category of subversion, Krieg focuses in particular on the role of so-called weaponized narratives. These narratives are used by adversaries to exercise control over a targeted public sphere and to undermine individual and collective relationships that underlie the broader general sociopolitical consensus within the targeted polity. More importantly, the author offers a plausible connection between the mere description and characterization of the subversion phenomenon, the role and place of weaponized narratives within the general processes of mobilization and orchestration of subversive efforts, and the operational scaling that allows for subversion's classification and measurement. Krieg illustrates this operational approach by demonstrating that "weaponized narratives generate effects, measured in terms of mobilization on an influence continuum that ranges from undermining social media discourse on one end of the spectrum to a strategic shift in policymaking on the other," while clarifying that "these effects might occur sequentially, simultaneously, or coincidentally" (p. 7), which explains the difficulties in exact attribution to a singular operator or operation.

Advancing his core argument, Krieg stipulates that contemporary subversion represents a peculiar set of aggressive interventions designed to undermine adversarial societies' "sociopolitical centers of gravity" with the clear intent of undermining the stability of their various constitutive facets,

ranging from the military to the sociopsychological, in order to degrade their governing potential and capacities. In an extension of this main argument, he situates the specific task and purpose of weaponized narratives as the instrumentation that allows for manipulation and control of the targeted populations via the process of impediment and erosion of social and political consensus. Even more valuable than the argument itself is that Krieg offers thoughtful schemata that allow readers to situate the effects generated by the deployment of weaponized narratives, measured on the basis of social "offline" mobilization caused, which in turn varies from social media discourse attacks and disruptions to actual strategic shifts in policymaking at its extreme kinetic manifestations. Krieg provides an important elucidation of conceptualizing subversion as a method of warfare; namely, that subversion can be viewed as a warfare tool only if it is linked to clear strategic political objectives and affects actual human wills.

The deeper analysis of the role and function of weaponized narratives as a popular choice of contemporary means of war favored by dictatorships begins with a broad overview of the academic debates about the place and role of "truth" and "objectivity" as cardinal categories in dealing with the phenomena of individual perception and cognition and their role in the construction of the collective worldviews. After summarizing the key components of these ongoing debates in the first two book chapters, Krieg explores the essential and interconnected elements of the contemporary global media environment through its perceived role as a "gatekeeper of truth" (pp. 35–62). What follows in the third chapter is probably the most valuable part of this theoretical work; namely, a deep dive into the concept

of subversion and its relation to the contestation of individual and collective political wills.

In this chapter, the book unpacks the history of subversion and explains how weaponized narratives subvert political wills through the lenses of the theory of reflexive control and the Soviet tradition of so-called active measures, referring to the Soviet and contemporary Russian time-tested method of political warfare that ranges from espionage and subversion to state-sponsored assassinations. The chapter also engages with the question of whether subversion should be viewed as an act of war. Krieg convincingly argues that while "subversion might not be violent, and may or may not be illegal, it might be more useful to classify it as a means of warfare when it generates a significant effect in the physical domain of the information environment" (p. 80). Moreover, this chapter outlines a clear view of subversive strategies and offers a valuable and practical approach to dissecting them. This specific approach is conceptualized in an original six-stage subversion model comprised of (1) orientation and (2) identification; then, (3) formulation and (4) dissemination; and completed by (5) verification and (6) implementation (pp. 85–87). These six stages are conceptualized in their potential to cause strategic effects in the virtual and physical domains when deployed in the framework of political contestation of wills.

The implications of Krieg's overall argument regarding the power, potential, and paramountcy of subversion within the toolbox of modern political warfare are further depicted in the fourth chapter. There, he analyzes the tension between the advent of "liberation technology" and its adoption and appropriation by the contemporary "digital authoritarians" in their quest to suppress, control, and countermobilize various publics. The author's deep insight into the intricacies of Arab public spheres, multiple discourses, and complex politics allows him to support his arguments with a wealth of concrete examples that illustrate his overarching logic and make the text interesting and readable.

In the subsequent chapters, Krieg applies his six-stage model to two selected case studies, one dedicated to the Russian concept of war and the other to the method of weaponizing narratives used by the United Arab Emirates (pp. 119–71). These cases are selected to illustrate two distinct approaches to subversion. The first illustrates the contemporary "updates" to a tested Soviet political warfare tradition based on the cybernetic theory of reflection and cognitive manipulation and control within the near-peer competition context. The second case demonstrates subversion's capacity and potency for a relative newcomer to political warfare, namely the UAE, which the author describes as a "Little Sparta," noting that it ran a "counterrevolution" in the field of weaponization and narrative control via the establishment of a dense, state-sponsored informational network capable of global operations. The author applies the six-stage theoretical process framework in scrutinizing these two very different cases in terms of their statecraft traditions and the size, scope, aim, and intensity of their operations, as well as their political warfare potential and, more specifically, their national-level contemporary subversion strategies. The theoretical application to these two highly distinct cases is a significant strength of Krieg's approach and demonstrates consistency and coherency in his analysis.

The conclusion of Krieg's book explores the possible routes to what he refers to as

"information resilience" and the challenges related to achieving it in the context of liberal democracies. Here, he offers his understanding of the state's role in its regulatory capacity to achieve such a state of resilience and the importance of civil society in increasing the capacity of a state to withstand weaponized narrative attacks by hostile actors. His overall conclusion regarding the roles and activities in countering subversion is unequivocal: he argues that "the state's monopolization of the processing, dissemination, and usage of information would corrupt the liberal public sphere, [therefore] measures to increase the resilience of the information environment should come from within civil society through an inclusive, multistakeholder process" (p. 192).

In sum, *Subversion* will be a welcome and valuable new addition to the essential reading lists of academics, practitioners, and laypeople in the areas of contemporary disinformation disorders, computational propaganda, and political warfare.

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