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Jeffrey S. Lantis. *Arms and Influence: US Technology Innovation and the Evolution of International Security Norms.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016. 280 pp. $29.95, paper, ISBN 978-0-8047-9977-5.

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What do the atomic bomb, President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, nuclear reprocessing, reconnaissance satellites, and armed drones all have in common? According to Jeffrey S. Lantis's *Arms and Influence: US Technology Innovations and the Evolution of International Security Norms*, all were endogenous technological innovations that created dissonance among elites. According to Lantis, these technologies created issues that did not fit in with the existing international security norms—standards of appropriate behavior among states—and they then enabled the possibility of norm change to better suit elite interests.[1]

The book is well organized. Chapter 1 introduces the topic and chapter 2 lays out Lantis's theory of norm change (modeled in figure 2.1 on p. 20). Lantis's methodology employs comparative case studies where the independent variable is technological innovation. The dependent variable is bivariate: cases where the innovation produced "significant normative change" and cases where the innovation did not shift "prevailing normative understandings" (p. 30). Five case studies follow (in chapters 3-7): the prohibition against weapons of mass destruction (WMD) norm, which was challenged by the atomic bomb; the norm of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, challenged by innovations in uranium enrichment and reprocessing technologies; the norm of sovereignty and nonintervention, which bumped up against satellite imagery and remote sensing by governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and the norm prohibiting the militarization of outer space, challenged by innovations in space-based missile defense systems and antisatellite (ASAT) technologies.

Lantis's book focuses attention on the nexus of three areas: as Lantis writes, "This book explores the complex relationship between technology, policy-making, and international norms" and "sets out to identify stages and processes associated with norm change as well as open theoretical avenues for further exploration" (p. 2). More specifically, noting that the United States "has played a critical role in shaping many international security norms," Lantis continues: "this book examines the potential fragility of international norms through circumstances of attempted norm change by great powers. It sets out to document how determined leaders may develop strategies intended to change or manipulate normative security architectures for their own utilitarian purposes, and in the process fuel contestation that may or may not lead to successful outcomes" (pp. 2-3).

Overall, the scope of the book is clearly identified. Lantis narrows in on cases where there is

one existing, global (but not universal) norm present. States comprise the actors regulated by these norms. An endogenous, technological, security-related innovation occurs in each case, changing the calculus for the United States such that it sought to alter the existing norm.

Lantis provides several research questions on p. 4. These include contemplating why states might consider violating constraining norms, how great powers deal with technological innovation and its varying impact on national interests and international norms, how great powers attempt to change norms, and what this all means for international cooperation theory.

Chapter 2 is where the rubber meets the road. Lantis sets out to create "a new model of norm change" (p. 11). This model is set firmly in constructivist theory, which is discussed across the first two chapters of the book. After laying out the well-known "norm life-cycle model" and its three stages (emergence, norm cascade or broad acceptance, and internalization), Lantis offers a review of criticisms of the early study of norms. These include an insufficient focus on how norms might change, the role of endogenous (as opposed to exogenous) shocks, and norm maintenance (or lack thereof) and how and why states do this. Lantis then sets out to propose a new model. To do this, he first elaborates on the actor and an endogenous event that sets the model in motion. In the former case, Lantis focuses on elites in states, specifically "the roles of U.S. presidents and high-ranking administration officials who may interpret and contest norm meanings in relation to national interests" (p. 17). While not his focus in the study, it would be interesting for Lantis to contrast the constructivist approach to realist and neoliberal views about norms. In particular, since the book focuses on international security norms and how great powers attempt to redefine possibly constraining structures, the realist view might provide a very intriguing contrast.

Lantis then posits a five-stage model (figure 2.1 on p. 20 and then a modified model as figure 8.1 on p. 156). In the first stage, elites recognize a "techno-normative dilemma," wherein "leaders learn of significant technological innovations that cause them to reevaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the boundaries of international norms" (p. 19). In the second stage, elites redefine the norm in domestic political space. In the third stage, elites engage in constructive norm substitution at an international level (at times within multilateral institutions) through contestation. In the fourth stage, the outcome occurs (which, for the elites, is hopefully norm change), or the "substantive alteration" (p. 27) of acceptable or unacceptable behavior. How is norm change seen? Lantis asserts successful norm change "will be coded as evidenced by both legitimacy in the form of multilateral institutional changes in rules and standards and significant policy changes in bandwagoning behavior by great powers" (p. 29). The final stage is norm stewardship (which holds until stage 1 occurs). Like the book overall, the model raises a series of interesting questions.

The first set of questions focuses on the heuristic itself. Does it make sense to treat the model like a cycle moving from one step to the next? Simplification is useful to facilitate understanding—and Lantis recognizes the reality is more complex in chapter 8 (see p. 155)—but one is immediately drawn to the possibility of feedback loops; the question of how sequential this all is (could elites, for example, first work at the international level and then the domestic one?); and the role of time or the duration of each stage. Lantis argues leaders have three options after stage 1: reject the current norm, comply with the current norm (presumably in spite of the techno-normative dissonance), or redefine and change the norm through contestation. This is a critical question with which Lantis seeks to grapple. Lantis asserts that the third approach, contestation, is "much more likely" (p. 20). However, the flipside of this

assertion is that sometimes the model stops after stage 1.

The focus on elites also raises a number of questions. A first question is how to bring in domestic politics. On one end of the spectrum, perhaps reflecting a realist view, the concept of elites ends up being roughly synonymous with the notion of the state. So describing the view of the Nixon, Carter, or Reagan administration as a whole ends up aggregating the perceptions, interests, and so forth of individual elites in the administration into a single viewpoint. Conversely, one could look at important actors as individuals and see how their views combined to form one or more policy directions. Certainly, for some of the cases Lantis examines, such as the atomic bomb, there were debates between individuals in the administration, and perhaps outside the administration, such as influential scientists. Of course, the relevant elites might differ in composition depending on the case. The point is that this could require more of an unpacking of domestic politics as well as foreign policy. Related to this is the notion that elites somehow recognize which technologies are game-changers. It is not clear why elites would always recognize this. It is possible that even in such eventful cases like the atomic bomb, people might view this technology as "just another weapon."

A related point that may differ in the case of the United States versus other states is the extent to which elites really need to change the domestic political space. For example, at least in the case of armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), it seems elites kept this pretty close to the vest. As Lantis points out on p. 121, President Obama publicly acknowledged drone strikes for the first time in 2013, more than a decade after they began. So, at least for some military technologies, such as UAVs or militarization of space, influencing public opinion may not be as important. This is simply a question for additional reflection. This leads into a further point. How much dissonance is necessary before elites act? Could elites see techno-normative dissonance but fail to act? What types of innovation create dissonance? Does the innovation have to be in your own country? At what point of the technology maturation process does dissonance occur? Commercial satellite imagery goes back to the 1970s-80s with NASA's Landsat and the French satellite, SPOT. Much of the concern over satellite reconnaissance and sovereignty seemed to occur in the late 1950s and early 1960s (due to fallout over the U-2 program, Sputnik, and Corona).

Another set of questions focuses on stage 2. Both measures of success (legitimacy and bandwagoning) focus on international factors. Why not measure success domestically? What are domestic measures of successful norm redefinition? In particular, do elites ever push for a norm or norm change that is not supported domestically? As queried earlier: could elites attempt to reverse the order of stage 3 and stage 2? A final set of questions concerns stage 4. It could be difficult to identify when a norm change has occurred. If a norm is static and subsequently replaced by a different norm, this seems to be more straightforward; however, if norms are dynamic and can evolve, then maybe they can turn into something significantly different without a "norm change" occurring. Lantis's measures are a bit tricky because both (legitimacy or bandwagoning) probably exist to degrees—which raises the question of how much legitimacy or bandwagoning needs to occur for norm change to have happened.

Lantis then examines the five cases in chapters 3-7. A case study approach is quite appropriate for this study and seems like a very reasonable solution. (It would be nice if a constructivist made a list of all the norms out there—or at least a large number of norms—to aid researchers in testing propositions related to norms.) Other cases could be examined and one hopes Lantis's framework could be applied in the future to such topics as cyberwar or biological and chemical weapons.

Fortunately, as noted in table 8.1 (on p. 151), Lantis does examine cases of success and failure in terms of norm redefinition. While one might wish to delve into the particular case studies, so much has been written on each of these topic areas that this reviewer will simply raise two general questions with the cases as a whole.

One general point about all the cases is that Lantis really sets himself a difficult task in providing evidence in support of his arguments. The focus on elites means the obvious evidence would be speeches, memoirs, policy directives, and so forth of leaders. On domestic persuasion, one way to view this would be to conduct a content analysis of contemporary news media, making the assumption that there should be a shift in opinions favorable to the original norm and that following persuasion, the body of news reporting would shift to the redefined norm. Lantis proposes seeing the two measures of elite action at the multinational level through "public records of multilateral institutions, outcome documents, resolutions, or other institutional endorsements or policy statements" for legitimacy and in the "discourse and policy actions" (p. 29) of states for the bandwagoning measurement. Reading through the case studies, this reviewer wished for additional evidence to support or discredit Lantis's hypotheses in each of the five cases.

A second point concerning the model proposed by Lantis is that it fails to specify the amount of time within and between stages. This is important because more contemporary cases of potential norm redefinition might be more difficult to discern, since not a lot of time has passed and in some cases some of the views of the elites, among other evidence, may not yet be available. One is reminded, for instance, of the amount of material on the Cuban Missile Crisis that was released (in some cases declassified) decades after the event. While the case studies in the book focus more on activities (e.g., nuclear reprocessing) than specific events (excepting the use of atomic weapons), it is possible that their review might be premature. One might at least wish to place an asterisk next to two of the cases examined here, drones and imagery from commercial reconnaissance satellites, since views on their use and impact against existing norms might be less well known.

Overall, the book is very interesting to read, from both a theoretical and empirical perspective. It raises a number of provocative ideas, particularly in regard to the notion of the dynamics of norms and how actors in the international system might move from one norm to another. The author should also be commended for organization and clarity. For a book on technological innovation, it is not overly jargon-laden. Readers who are familiar with a range of traditional international security topics, including WMDs, spy satellites, intervention, advanced weaponry, and so on will find the case studies more familiar. Likewise, a basic understanding of constructivism would be helpful. Word choice is very important to constructivists, and scholars from different disciplines (e.g., sociology and political science) may use the same word differently or different words to refer to the same concept. The reader simply needs to take their time, but Lantis has facilitated this process by describing the scholarly work on norms in a very accessible manner. The book, therefore, is appropriate for and will interest both students and scholars who are interested in norms, international security, technology, and the role of hegemonic, if not great power, states. Such readers are likely to find much to reflect on by the conclusion of the book.

Note

[1]. The views expressed in this book review are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the National Intelligence University, the Department of Defense, or the United States Government.

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