REVIEWS

The Organization of International Organization(s)

by Kirsten Haack, Northumbria University

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Calls to study the organizational dimension of international organizations are heard regularly, yet very rarely do researchers actually turn to this dimension of International Organizations (IO) Studies—too strong is the need to 'prove' that IOs are not irrelevant or merely puppets in their masters' hands. Only recently have questions of IO autonomy received increased attention, be that through principal-agent approaches (Hawkins, Lake, Nielson, and Tierney, 2006), IO-as-bureaucracy approaches (Barnett, 2004) or leadership (Chesterman, 2007; Kille, 2006; Young, 1991). This is all the more surprising considering proposals for and attempts at organizational reform abound, with both institutional and management reform at the United Nations, for example, an ongoing process since its inception more than sixty years ago. This volume, the proceedings of a conference held in Munich in 2008, aims to remedy this by analyzing the contribution of organization research (OR) (broadly defined) to International Relations.

The sub-title of the volume is at first glance a little confusing, if not confused. One is reminded here of a small but significant difference, highlighted by Inis Claude in *Swords into Plowshares:*[1]

> It is perhaps necessary to stress . . . the distinction between international organizations and international organization. Particular organizations may be nothing more than playthings of power politics and handmaidens of national ambitions. But international organization, considered as an historical process, represents a secular trend toward the systematic development of an enterprising quest for political means of making the world safe for human habitation (Claude, 1964, p. 405).

The addition of a small matter such as the letter "s" signifies a change in perspective from IR to IO, and the title here would suggest the authors are primarily interested in how the international system is structured—organized—not how IOs can be understood as organizations. Despite this, the focus remains firmly on IOs, be they intergovernmental, nongovernmental, or transnational.

1. I thank Margaret P. Karns for pointing this out.

The editors note that IOs are more than member states or secretariats, as emphasised by contemporary IO research. Instead, by ignoring individual actors, they enable the reader to see what is 'organizational' about IOs, i.e., where and how OR can contribute to our understanding of IOs. The contributions are then organized in three parts, focusing on IOs as organizations, interactions between organizations, and contributions by IOs to global order.

In Part 1—IOs as Organizations, the authors follow the direction of Barnett's and Finnemore's (2004) research, which analyzed bureaucratic structures and processes, and their impact on organizational outcomes. Barnett's and Finnemore's work has had significant influence on reconsidering IOs beyond member states, yet the authors here show that the application of OR leads to a more refined picture of organizational processes and activity, also demonstrating the role of member states in organizational pathologies. Ahrne and Brunsson (ch. 2) show that in contrast to other organizations, IOs are meta-organizations, i.e., consisting of other organizations, not individuals. This has consequences not only for an organization's identity and ability to act, in particular punishing non-compliance, but also for our theoretical assumptions of OR in IO Studies. In Chapter 3, Gehring applies Luhmann's system theory to overcome the difficulty faced by existing OR in IO Studies in accounting for organizational autonomy in the face of the predominance of member states. Veit and Schlichte (ch. 4) draw on the concept of 'organized hypocrisy' to demonstrate that Barnett and Finnemore's bureaucratic pathologies need to be extended to take into account the problem of linking different arenas and multilevel decision-making. Using the case of state-building, they show that three levels involved in policy-making and implementation, center, regional/national office, and 'bush office,' have incompatible organizational goals. In Chapter 5, Seibel notes that organizational pathologies are not only located in bureaucratic processes but can also be in the interest of member states. The case of transitional administrations shows that "successful failures" serve the rational interest of member states by keeping the underlying (geopolitical) issues off the political agenda. Finally, Roscher (ch. 6) applies concepts of organizational learning to UN reform processes, demonstrating that they have a prominent part in reform ideas. Despite this, very few reform attempts have indeed achieved organizational learning.

Part 2 considers the organizational environment of IOs, i.e., their interaction with other organizations. The three chapters of Part 2 draw on a range of approaches, including strategic management, organizational psychology, and organizational sociology. Although a range of organizations are discussed, coincidentally all three chapters include the World Health Organization (WHO), Hanrieder (ch. 6) questions, IR assumptions of monopolistic international bureaucracies, and organizational environments dominated by member states. Using industrial economics, she shows that WHO operates in a world health 'market,' in which it seeks to adapt to increasing resource pressure by seeking horizontal and vertical competitive advantages over other IOs. Liese (ch. 7) analyzes why organizations such as the WHO, FAO, and ILO have opened up to civil society and private organizations to different degrees. Liese shows that exogenous factors as highlighted in IR research do not fully explain variances in engagement with other organizations. Instead, endogenous factors such as resource dependency and organizational cultures determine organizations' willingness to open up to other organizations.

In Chapter 8, Schäferhoff compares WHO's Roll Back Malaria partnership and the GAVI[2] Alliance to identify conditions under which public-private-partnerships are entered into. Using Allinson's 'bureaucratic politics' model, organizational cultures, leadership, and Barnett and Finnemore's (2004) work, he shows cooperation is generally not sought and more likely entered into the more other organizations are prepared to lead or if gains are seen as considerably large.

Part 3 then turns to international organization. Here, the authors consider the way in which organizations regulate and order global governance. The chapters by Dobusch and Quack (ch. 10), and Botzen and Plehwe (ch. 11) try to overcome the distinction made between governmental, nongovernmental, transnational, and private organizations, which limit understanding of processes achieving regulation goals. Analyzing the field of copyright, Dobusch and Quack show that organizational type matters as different organizations (public and private) mobilize interests and resources differently. Drawing on organizations in financial accounting and science knowledge management, Botzen and Plehwe analyze the emergence of different types of private organizations in the regulation process. Stating that the organizational environment and the definition of tasks determine the internal profile of organizations, they conclude a high degree of stability in either leads to the creation of bureaucratic organizations, while low stability results in flexible organizations such as academic think tanks. Daase's chapter (ch. 12) rounds up the discussion by noting there has been an increase in informal organization and regulation. He states informality is not derivate of formality, as assumed by many social sciences, but serves an important function in providing the means for institutional innovation.

Considering its origin as a conference proceeding, the volume shows an astonishing degree of cohesion with a number of chapters either looking at the same organization or very similar phenomena from slightly different angles. The majority of chapters use Barnett and Finnemore's (2004) study as their starting point for investigation. While this speaks for the timeliness and importance of this research, as well as its potential to add to a more global academic debate, the reader soon wishes the editors had exercised a little more editorial power after wading through yet another discussion of Barnett and Finnemore's arguments. Nevertheless, the volume's cohesiveness does attest to the strength of the approach taken here, highlighting that this volume is more than an answer to the question of how OR can be applied to IR or IO Studies but instead serves as a starting point. Indeed, it confirms that organizational research applied to IOs needs to be undertaken more comprehensively and systematically.

Overall, this volume is an extremely interesting and instructive foray into organizational research in IO studies. It is unfortunate then that the editors have chosen to publish in German, therefore limiting the impact of this stimulating research. The editors note that this choice follows the need, or desire, for more regional networking, as well as the establishment and enhanced profiling of German IO research. While this is purportedly because German IR is less compartmentalized and shut off to other social sciences disciplines (presumably contra Anglo-American research with its focus on state-centricity), therefore allowing for more fruitful application of organizational research to IR and IO studies, one cannot help but realize the editors' position is a highly defensive one. It is defensive toward the "dominant Anglo-

2. Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation

American mainstream" in which they seem to see themselves as somewhat disadvantaged, linguistically or otherwise. Such a situation would be altogether regrettable as the authors put forward a range of interesting points and approaches, which should spark new ideas for understanding and researching international organization(s). It is positive to note the editors have at the time of publication taken their enquiry to a broader European audience at the tri-annual ECPR-SGIR conference.[3] One would hope that this volume would be followed by further publications in English.

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3. Standing Group of International Relations of the European Consortium of Political Research