

EDITORIAL

The Emergence and Change of International Organizations

by John Mathiason and Kirsten Haack

The emergence of international organizations as part of an increasingly important international public sector provides challenges for scholars, researchers, and practitioners alike. Different disciplines can provide new insights into what is happening in the world as international organizations take on new and increasing functions. This edition of JIOS provides examples of innovative work in organization theory, history, and field experience.

Spencer Weart, a noted historian of science, applies his analysis to the role of international organizations in addressing the problem of climate change. The process was long and somewhat complex but instructive. It is also not very well known. While much of the current focus lies on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Weart's analysis shows how that unique institution evolved. While the IPCC is formally intergovernmental, in practice it is an unusual combination of scientists—not all of them governmental—and governments. Weart shows how this cooperation evolved, including the critical role of the International Council for Science (ICSU)—a nongovernmental organization with a global membership of national scientific bodies—and two international organizations, the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme (that not coincidentally provide the secretariat for the IPCC). He documents the way a scientific consensus emerged over a series of meetings. While he does not say so directly, obtaining a consensus from scientists is equivalent to herding cats, but the process of connecting epistemic communities with international organizations is instructive. This will be followed up in JIOS next year with an issue dedicated to the current international organizations addressing climate change.

The EU is a case of an international organization that has undergone a significant transformation over time. To an extent, it is now a combination of traditional state-based international organization and a sovereign government, since under the Maastricht Treaty, sovereign functions have been delegated to it by the EU's members. Understanding the underlying reasons for this evolution are addressed by Turkish scholar Armağan Emre Çakır in his analysis of how contingency theory—a concept from larger organization theory—can help explain the process by which the EU has evolved. He shows how three aspects, policy determinism, contingency determinism, and the more recent SARFIT model, can each explain variance. From a historical perspective, his note that some of these aspects reinforce the functionalism originally proposed by David Mitrany at the dawn of the UN is of interest. Clearly, the use of analytical modes that were originally developed in other contexts can help illuminate the current and future growth of the international public sector.

Klaas Dykmann's reviews of two books dealing with the origin of the UN adds to Weart's and Cakir's articles, by looking at how historians can illuminate the organization's formation. To an extent he proves the philosopher Santayana's dictum, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." The two books by Mark Mazower and Dan Plesch provide alternative, and somewhat new, interpretations of the factors underlying the UN that can provide a more nuanced interpretation of the origins of the organization.

The area of human rights or, more precisely, the role of international organizations in enforcing agreed norms, is the subject of several components of this issue. Dorota Gierycz' Insider's View brings the perspective of a scholar who has also been a practitioner in the field of human rights. Gierycz spent the early part of her UN career in the Division for the Advancement of Women, concerned with developing international norms and standards. She then went to three field missions for the UN where she was concerned with implementation of human rights norms. Her essay on "Human Rights in the UN System since the Demise of the Three Pillars Approach" reflects that experience. She describes the evolution of the machinery and concludes that it is still a work in progress. René Rouwette's review of Yogesh Tyagi's study of the Human Rights Committee (the expert body that oversees compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) notes how the book describes the procedures followed by that body and points out in its final chapter how it brings out exciting new academic questions.

Continuing the focus of the issue on history, Davide Rodogno's review of Michael Barnett's *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* addresses one of the areas of greatest growth in the international public sector: humanitarian operations, referring to disasters that can either be natural or man-made. The review notes that Barnett describes three stages, of which the first was the longest. This reflects the fact that international humanitarian response has been growing rapidly. In his review, Rodogno finds some weaknesses and suggests further lines for historical analysis.

Finally, Steiner and Frey's article "Correcting the Imbalance of the World Heritage List: Did the UNESCO Strategy Work?" touches on another aspect of international organizations, namely accountability. Within the international system, there is an emphasis on results-based management, but one of the weaknesses of the approach is ensuring evaluation of whether results have been achieved. While many organizations undertake or outsource evaluations of programs and projects, academic researchers have been less prone to do so. Steiner's and Frey's analysis, therefore, is highly welcome. Their focus is on the world heritage list, one of UNESCO's success stories, and by undertaking a comparative analysis of the list over time, they determined whether UNESCO's objective of increased diversity has actually been achieved. Steiner and Frey use content analysis (by coding the countries on the list) that permits a quantitative picture of the list's development over time. Content analysis is an under-utilized technique in studies of international organization, but here it is used to good effect to determine the extent to which UNESCO has been successful in expanding the world heritage list.

The articles in this issue of *JIOS* thus show several approaches that can elucidate the growth and management of international organizations by seeing them in their historical context and by using concepts and research techniques drawn from a variety of disciplines.