

The Development of the International Organization and Organizational Sociology Theories and Perspectives. Part 1-The Origin

Medani P. Bhandari ¹

¹ Akamai University, Hilo, Hawaii, USA

Abstract — This paper provides an overview of how international organizations were formed, for what purposes and how their structure has been changed. The distinction between formal organizational studies and studies of international organizations is minimal, because both help to widen the idea of creating an original position for better combinations of favorable circumstances or situations in human affairs. The chapter will explain, the origin of the term international organization (OR); historical roots of or studies; and define or; analyze the types of ORs in the contemporary world; reveals the relationship between the international relation (IR) and regime theories application in the OR's studies; and the impact of the globalization. The chapter also unveils the relationships between organizational sociology and OR and finally it gives a general outline on the application institution theory in the study of OR following a brief summary. Organizations have the ability of inspiring and bringing people in concert to achieve combined goals. They are accountable for determining the intelligence needed to meet their goals. This chapter provides a glimmer of international organizations theory, origin, historical account, definitions and utilization of contemporary academic world intertwined with the international relations, regime and globalization as well as the organizational sociological theories and perspectives can be utilized to study of international organizations. This chapter will help to understand the historical account of international organization, pedagogical development and contemporary theories and practices of international organizations and organizational sociology.

Index Terms — international organizations, international relation, organizational sociology, organizations theory, globalization, regime theory.

I. INTRODUCTION

There is not much historical literature available on how international organizations were formed and how their expansion occurred beyond state borders prior to 1900.

However, we do know the internationalization or formalization of organizations beyond state borders was aimed primarily at securing the political and legal security of the state (Bernard 1868; Burns 1917; Calvo 1896; Dickinson 1920; Potter 1922, 1935). Another aim of formalizing organizations was to build cooperation between nations' citizens for their own welfare and the exchange of business commodities. According to Potter (1922) "Among nations of the world the first and basic type of relationship and activity to develop is that of interchange of commodities and cultural contributions in general which we call international intercourse. This activity leads into forms of international organization which is private or unofficial in character, and also into that form of worldwide culture and activity which we call cosmopolitanism" and "The principal element in modern cosmopolitanism, as it has developed since 1850, is a common economic and scientific culture" (Potter 1922, p. 36, p. 50). Potter's account largely highlights how (between 1900 and 1920) cosmopolitanism paved new ground for the establishment of international organizations related to travel, communication, industry, and commerce, how finance was developing and establishing control over the international relations of the world (Potter 1922, p. 51) and how imperialism was adopted in the in the western world.

Traditionally, international organizations have been mostly established by the states to fulfil political goals (Archer 1991). The study of international organizations is fully developed as a subfield of political science, and we as sociologists have much to learn about the dynamism of politically embedded international organizations. Therefore, from the sociological viewpoint we know only a little about the international organizations. On the other hand, both organizational sociological theories and international organizations theories follow the same historical route of theory building in that there are ontological similarities between international organizations



and organizational theory. In this context it is necessary to understand what a theory is and how theories come into practice. Broadly, theories are developed through critical thinking, knowledge building and reasoning. According to Robert Cox "Theory is always for someone and for some purpose. All theories have a perspective. Perspectives derive from a position in time and space, especially social and political time and space. The world is seen from a standpoint definable in terms of nation or social class, of dominance or subordination, of rising or declining power, of a sense of immobility or of present crisis, of past experience, and of hopes and expectations for the future" (Cox 1981, p. 128). Cox's notion of theory provides the legitimate ground to understand the theories in social sciences (in the context of this paper organizational sociological theories examine the social context of organizations and international organizations theories deal with the political context of organizations in time and space).

As sociologists we believe that all forms of organizations follow certain norms, values, social order, legal and social rules and regulations; they are established with vision, mission and try to attain certain goals. The ultimate goal of any national or international organization is to help to maintain and fulfil the societal demands (which could be political, economic or social). In this context as sociologists we know some basic grounds of international organizations, their foundations, their bureaucratic functions and roles in society. There is a large body of sociological knowledge which sits as a background to international organizational research, but relatively little in the way of specific contributions. For the international organizations of the future, however, particularly those that will attempt to address global environmental concerns as they affect communities, there is a body of sociological knowledge poised to inform international organizations.

There are hundreds of scholars (political scientists) who have evaluated international organizations in combined perspectives (Cook 1992; Lash 1971; Norton 1998; Otto 1996; Archer 1983, 1992; Barnett and Finnemore 2004). On the other hand, only a few sociologists (Selznick 1949; Whyte 1943; Ness and Brechin 1988; Brechin 1997) have tried to examine international organizations through a combined perspective (via the application of international relations and regime as well as sociological theories). Through the close examination of the available literature on organizational theory and international organizations, I found that there is an overlap of relevant theories. There is also a close relationship among international relations, regime formation and development, globalization, global transformation and internationalization of social movements, and organization and international organizations theories. Historically, sociological epistemologies have been developed to tackle the social problems and formal and informal organizations have been formed to address social issues as they appeared. When socio-economic and political problems crossed the borders, international organizations were formed to tackle those issues at international scale.

In this short essay, firstly, I will briefly explain what are the

international organizations, their origin and the relationship among international relations, regime formation and development, globalization, and global transformation. And, secondly, I will note how organizational sociological perspectives can inform for the study of international organizations. The field of organizational sociology as an academic discipline is relatively new. As Scott (2004) notes 'the overall history (organizational sociology) is, I believe, a positive one, beginning from a relatively barren landscape and developing into one of the most vigorous intellectual areas of the second half of the twentieth century' (page 1). Scott's statement provides a basis to compare the organizational sociology with international organizations history. Organizational sociology mostly developed as a substantive field of study from 1970, whereas international organizations text books for graduate classes can be found as early as 1922 (Potter's introduction to international organizations was published in 1922). However, the epistemology of social sciences has the same historical roots (Cox 1981) that apply in the context of organizational sociology and international organizations theory-building. Organizational sociology examines organizations in three major perspectives as rational, natural and open systems. According to the rational perspective, organizations are instruments designed to attain specified goals. These perspectives are developed on the basis of major classical organizational theories (e.g. Fredrick W. Taylors' scientific management theory, Henri Fayol's administrative theory, Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy). Natural system perspectives disagree with the rational system and add the view that organizations are collectivities; they were developed by the post-modern and modern theorists (who incorporated the classical theorist's concept and added more contemporary thoughts) (e.g. Elton Mayo, Chester I Bernard, Philip Selznick). Open system perspectives view "organizations as systems of interdependent activities linking shifting coalitions of participants. The systems are embedded independent on continuing exchanges with and constituted by- the environment in which they operate" (Scott 2003, p. 30). Open systems perspective is the most recent phenomenon of organizational analysis. This perspective is backed by the contingency theorists such as James Q. Wilson, Jay Galbraith, and Paul Lawrence, Jay Lorsch, and the proponent of organization as model, Karl Weick (Scott 2003). Various organizational thought can be classified according to micro and macro levels of organizational analysis including system-structural, strategic choice, natural selection, and collective-action views of organizations (Astley and Van de Ven 1983). On the basis of these major perspectives organizational sociologists have developed various approaches to analyze the function of organizations in social environments.

Some of the scholars of international organizations have used such thoughts and perspectives (Young 2002; Finnemore 1993, 1996; Finnemore and Sikkink 2005; Barnett and Finnemore 2003, Abbott and Snidal 1998). However, there is no extensive utilization of this solid sociological knowledge in international

organizations literature. Likewise, sociologists also have not pointed out which organizational theory mostly fits the study of international organizations. Only a few organizational sociologists have attempted to utilize organizational theory to study international organizations (Hawthorne 1932; Selznick 1949) (his examination of Tennessee Valley Authority and grass roots organizations must be the earliest complete sociological study of organizations), (Jonsson 1986; Ness and Brechin 1988; Kahn and Zald 1990; Goldman 2005). Kahn and Zald (1990) apply Graham Allison's (1971) essence of decision method to understand how international organizations work to foster international relations. They argue that both nations and organizations face parallel problems, including the need to manage conflict and to enable cooperation. They focus on the dynamic of international organizations and international relations in terms of decision making under the condition of uncertainty. Kahn and Zald (1990) illustrate organizations as a model for national states and the importance of understanding the organizational character of international relations. Goldman (2005) studies World Bank work procedure partly as insider and partly as external observer; his study examines the bureaucratic hegemony of the World Bank, which (despite the World Bank's mission statement) is not necessarily useful or productive in the development of the developing world. These organizational sociological approaches can serve as models in the study of international organizations. Such perspectives could inform the international organizational discipline from sociology.

In the following paragraphs I will briefly note the origin of international organizations; their development followed by the definitions and roles of IOs, their focus and relationships with the international relations, regime and globalization theories. As I noted in the above paragraphs, most of the organizational sociological perspectives (rational, natural and open) and approaches (organization as complex phenomena, network, institutional, transaction cost, ecological etc.) could be utilized as models for the study of international organizations. However, in this essay I will discuss major organizational sociological perspectives and explain how they could contribute to understanding international organizations in very general terms. Finally, I will illustrate how sociological organization as complex phenomena and institutional theory can be applied to study the international organizations and conclude this essay followed by the endnotes.

II. THE ORIGIN OF THE TERM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

Historically the study of International organization, examines the formal organizations and their roles to address in particular issue areas of international cooperation from political perspective. According to Archer (1991), the term international organization was first used by Professor James Lorimer of England in 1867. Archer does not give any detail how and which context Lorimer used the term "International organizations". In this respect Pitman Potter (1945) have done extensive research about the origin of the term, confirming that

James Lorimer was the first lawyer who used the term international organization in his lecture before the Royal Academy in Edinburgh on may 18, 1867 on the heading of "On the application of the principle of relative or proportional, equity to international organization". According to Potter, Lorimer again used the term international organization in his publication in 1971. Following Lorimer, Thomas Willing Balch used the term international organization in 1874 (Potter 1945, p. 805). However, Potter assures us that until 1920 the term was not familiar to the American academician. Pitman Potter in his article entitled "Origin of the term International Organization published in 1945 notes that "when thinking out the application of the general principles of political science and the art of the government to the international field in the years 1914-1920, and composing a general text on the subject, the present writer employed the phrase has been employed previously or not (Potter 1945, p. 803). Potter in his book "Introduction to the study of international organization" published in 1922, randomly uses the term "international organization" without any definition of the term. He begins "I have tried to show that international organization is not a new thing in world history, nor a reform proposed for the future, but a political system of long standing which deserves to be studied as such" (Potter 1922, vii in preface). He further notes that "I have tried to show how this standing system of international organization has expanded and developed, particularly in the past century, to set forth the cases which will probably lead to a continuation and intensification of that process in future. Finally, I have expressed the conviction that such a process is salutary, in that it meets a real need of the world today and have attempted to make some suggestions regarding steps which might profitably be taken in the improvement and development of existing institutions of international governments". Potter's publication of 1922, which is already a historical document (in the current context), focuses on two major historical accounts of international organizations (1) international organizations were not new phenomena even in the beginning of the 20th century; (2) the expansion of international organizations was accelerating even during 1900 to 1922. Potter's (1922) account also asserts that study of international organizations involved a major field examination of world politics and international relations.

Potter's (1922) prime motive was to establish International Organizations as a separate field of study under the political science discipline. He does not oppose the application of a holistic approach to study of international organizations and thinks that international organizational study can benefit from a broader approach. Most importantly Potter searches other disciplines such as sociology and psychology and explains how researchers other than political scientists examine the state. He states, "sociologists have traced the origin of the state to the primitive tribe or clan or even to the elementary human family" (page 24). Classical examples of such search of human political life can be seen in the research by Weber and Durkheim in sociology and in Malinowski's research in anthropology. To

answer the questions of what we know about the international organization, I think, we should understand how study of international organizations became an academic discipline. In this context Potter's book "Introduction to the study of international organizations" published in 1922, provides a basis. Potter does not directly define what is the meaning of International Organization but tries to explain it, in terms of international intercourse, cosmopolitanism, international politics, laws, treaties, negotiations, conferences, international bureaucracy (administration) and international control with the concrete example of the "League of Nations" its role and its formation. Another important point I would like to illustrate from Potter is his acknowledgement of the roles of non-state actors. He states "decades and even centuries, before the national states were willing to join together in common governmental action, private persons were ready and eager to associate their activities and their interests across the national frontiers. Private international financial, scientific and commercial organizations date back to the early days of modern Europe, not to mention, for the movement, the great religious orders and trading companies of a still earlier period" (page 37). However, in my survey of literature on international organizations, I found only very limited illustrations of Potter's contributions to the foundation of international organization studies by contemporary scholars. This seems an area for investigation.

III. HISTORICAL ROOTS OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION STUDIES

International organizations (IO) are not new phenomena. Broadly, international organizations' historical roots can be traced from Greek civilization (Plato, Aristotle), although they have mostly flourished since the Enlightenment era. However, empirical studies show that the scientific study of IOs begins only in the 19th century. Political scientists examine international organizations in terms of international relations, governance, and power dynamics. To examine society, they use various historical perspectives (developed by ancient and classical social thinkers) such as power and authority (rewards and punishment) and the political community (including nationalism). Power and authority notions were developed first by Plato and further explanations developed by Bodin continued to be built upon by the classical organizational theorists (Weber, Taylor, Simon etc.). Likewise, another perspective is to see the world in terms of mathematical order (quantitative approach) (Lucas 1977, 1980, 1981). Archer (1991) examines these perspectives in two major classifications i.e. (i) traditional and (ii) revisionist. Traditional perspective considers international organization as a part of institutionalized relationship between states and government. This perspective is state centric which only focuses on governmental international organizations. The traditional school of thought (which covers both realist and neo-realist school of thought) is mostly developed by the lawyers who

primarily study organizations such as League of Nations and United Nations, NATO, European Union etc. who contribute to the formation of international government. They examine international organizations' role in global legal policy formation. Likewise, revisionists also focus on the state centric approach to study international organizations; however, they do not discard the roles of non-governmental international organizations in world politics (Archer 1991).

Scholars in the social sciences have developed many social theories that address the underlying causes such as social, political, and cultural conflicts and inequalities (through various paradigms: positivist, constructivist, functionalist, interpretive, radical-humanist, radical-structuralist etc.; (Kuhn 1970, 1974, 1977, 1979). To address such issues, there is a long history of establishing many formal and informal organizations in national and international contexts (Potter 1922). There is no empirical evidence to state when international organizations began their formal roles. According to Archer (1992) the rise of modern international organizations began in 1919 at the Versailles Peace Conference. The participants at Versailles were the representatives of victorious powers ready to write a peace treaty, including many national interest groups and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) wanting to advance public health, the lot of workers, the cause of peace, or the laws of war (Archer 1992, p 3). This conference was influenced by the previous Hague Conferences in 1899 and 1907 which formed the grounds for the creation of the League of Nations. The League of Nations could not generate a consensus on world politics, which was the example of Second World War. Therefore, world leaders were looking for a new international organization that could bring the world's nations together to manage permanent peace across the globe. The foundation of the United Nations was the outcome of that effort. There have been debates about the role of the United Nations, its usefulness, and its power dynamics (Pangle and Ahrens Dorf 1999; Grant 2001). Though, the role of the United Nations to bring international society to resolve global geo-politico-socio-economic problems is unavoidable (Archer 1983). One of the United Nations' roles is also to bridge the gap between the states and nongovernmental organizations.

IV. CONCLUSION

Social sciences epistemologies have historically been developed to tackle social problems, and formal and informal organizations were formed to address social issues as they appeared. When socio-economic and political problems cross borders, international organizations form to tackle those issues on international scale.

The present paper is a first part of a cycle of papers devoted to the topic on development of the International Organization and Organizational Sociology Theories and Perspectives. The next part will be featured in the following paper of the Scientific Journal.

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VI. REFERENCES

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The complete list of references will be featured in the final paper of this Scientific Journal.