

Knud Erik Jorgensen, 2009, *The European Union and International Organizations*, London: Routledge, 201 pages.

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Scholarly discussions on the nature of the EU are extensive yet without little agreement whether the Union is an international organization, a supranational entity, or a *sui generis* polity. The debates evolve around the idea of EU's uniqueness as an international actor. The purpose of Jorgensen's book is to fill the "wide gap in the literature" (p. 2) and to contribute to understanding of the multilateral system of governance, in which the EU plays its unique role as a distinct polity. At the same time, the book aims to provide a critical evaluation of the "Union's effective multilateralism" and explain the changing nature of the EU interaction with international organizations.

Dissatisfied with the lack of literature analysing the EU as an international actor, the book outlines the main existing approaches. Thus, it moves beyond the legal-institutional, inter-organizational, multilateral, and global governance perspectives and analyzes the EU from a different perspective. Departing from the assumption that the EU pictures itself more as an actor in the world of international organizations rather than international organization *per se*, the contributors to the volume provide detailed overview of the EU relations with the main international organizations. To study this complex relationship, the book adopts and adapts an analytical framework developed by Karns and Mingst (1992) to study the US relations with international organizations. Although the theory directly contributes to the achievement of the initial goal (and parallels are often drawn to the US experience), the book does not clearly indicate the reasons of such an approach and whether the US and EU experiences are indeed comparable.

One central claim is that despite financial contributions and support of multilateralism, the influence of the EU in a number of international organizations is rather limited. In this respect, the EU contribution is greater than the feedback it receives. An important achievement of this book is that it does not only discuss how the EU can "teach" lessons, but also how it can be "taught" by others. The contributors contrast such evidence with arguments related to the EU's mission in supporting democracy and multilateralism, and being the main guardian of European

security. Consequently, although the EU is largely represented in many international organizations, it does not have significant influence on the existing institutional design, activities of international organizations, institutional reform, and policy-making process. This conclusion is reached by studying the EU relations with the UN, International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO), NATO, International Labour Organization (ILO), International Criminal Court (ICC), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

In the chapter on IMF, Smaghi realizes that despite strong agreement among academics and practitioners on the single EU seat in the IMF, the issue will not be solved in the near future. However, a successful resolution would result in an EU position “potentially as strong as that of the United States” (p. 77). Mortensen argues that EU relations with the WTO should be looked at from the perspective of the current financial crisis and the move of the EU from “defensive player to a proactive leader” (p. 80) cannot be overshadowed. These views contrast to the preceding chapter by Pisany-Ferry, which claims that the EU is “an accidental player” and that it needs to choose a distinct position in the global economy to make it heard. Jorgensen conclude the volume saying that to the surprise of many the EU is “doing quite a bit” (p: 88) in the community of international organizations.

Overall, the volume achieves its objective of analyzing and evaluating the role of the EU within international organizations and measuring whether the EU impacts the actions and policies of other organizations. However, the nature of the influence is twofold as the EU was also influenced by other organizations, namely the UN, NATO, and WTO. The findings show that the EU pursues its goal of multilateralism and regards it “as both a means and an end in its own right” (p. 196). The book lacks indicators for measuring the possible EU impact on international organizations. This is especially important as also the editor mentions that international organizations “are not of equal importance to the EU” (p. 9). Nevertheless, the book deserves praise for looking at the combination of EU external and internal factors, and not analyzing them separately. Initially, the book might seem to lack a coherent theoretical framework, which is hectically adopted from the US studies. However, further reading reveals rigorous research and in-depth analysis of the cases, making the book a valuable source of information for studying the external relations of the EU.