
Book Reviews

The Power of Dependence: NATO–UN Cooperation in Crisis Management, by M. Harsch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015, ISBN 9780198722311); xii+212pp., £55.00 hb.

Since the end of the Cold War, crises around the world have presented increasingly complex challenges which defy hegemonic or unilateral solutions based in IR theory, instead requiring nuanced strategies based on functioning co-operation between international organizations. In an essential, but sparsely populated academic field, Michael Harsch's new study offers theoretical and practical insights into one such relationship. Focusing on the UN and NATO since 1992, Harsch demonstrates how inter-institutional co-operation offers the capacity to pool resources and combine expertise, allowing for a more tailored approach to the complexities of conflict. At the same time, institutional co-operation is a byzantine affair fraught with parochialism, competition for limited resources (both material and symbolic) and differing objectives. With practical studies of inter-organizational co-operation comparatively rare, Harsch's book is a timely and unique resource which helps bridge the gap between IR theory and organizational science. It is also a blueprint for how researchers can help effect actual political change.

Based on exhaustive elite interviews and primary documents, Harsch provides a critical account of NATO–UN cooperation in recent years through a 'resource dependency approach'. Following a brief, but detailed introduction, the book is divided into two parts. Part I provides a clearly explained theoretical framework based in resource dependency, arguing that inter-organizational co-operation is determined by hegemonic interest, organizational culture and inter-personal trust. As Harsch identifies, differing objectives and approaches to conflict resolution can lead to an inverse proportionality between capability and action, as organizations lacking a well-defined resource balance will inevitably clash. In Part II, this thesis is illustrated using three recent, empirically rich case studies: Bosnia 1992–95, Kosovo 1998–2008 and Afghanistan 2003–11. At moments, these historical narratives can be a sober read, but this is testament to the quality of theoretical research and painstaking analysis which underpin this pioneering study. Indeed, these analyses amply demonstrate the validity of Harsch's resource-dependency approach and provide strong evidence for using this book not merely as another academic study, but indeed as a practical tool for reforming the flagging relationship between international organizations addressing modern crises.

The detailed text is well written and the argument clear, and the book will prove a valuable resource not only to those studying inter-organizational co-operation, but more broadly to researchers in peace studies and intergovernmentality. Although the book makes only passing references to the EU, the theoretical model of resource dependency will prove essential to ongoing research into inter-organizational co-operation

(and failures thereof) in relation to European crisis management of issues such as the Ukraine, the refugee crisis and responses to Islamic State. These demonstrate the complex collaboration between international bodies and further validate Harsch's thesis, as all of these co-operations can be rebalanced in accordance with the resource-dependency principles outlined in this timely and valuable study.

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