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Over the past decades, human mobility and states repressive responses to it have increasingly become recognised as issues of global governance. Although migration and border control have traditionally been posited as matters of national politics, the transnational interdependence amongst state (and non-state) actors who seek to govern mobility has given rise to a range of international and multilateral institutions and agreements; the 2018 adoption of a Global Compact of the United Nations on 'Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration' being one recent example. Yet, these agreements primarily serve to enable wealthy states in the Global North and capitalist markets to expand and reinforce their appropriation of human mobility. The steady expansion of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a partner organisation to states that proposes, negotiates and implements control policies in the interest of migrant-receiving states in the Global North offers a fruitful case for understanding how these power dynamics play out in global migration governance.

The edited volume *The International Organization for Migration: The New 'UN Migration Agency' in Critical Perspective* offers a range of critical perspectives and insights into the IOM, including its historical development, political positioning and strategic expansion into new fields of migration governance. The editors of the volume, Martin Geiger and Antoine Pécoud, have extensive prior experience of researching and publishing on the organisation. The contributors are almost exclusively based in the Global North (including Europe and Canada), although the chapters cover IOM operations in a broader range of countries,

including East (Lecadet, Chapter 12) and West Africa (Scherf, Chapter 10), and Central (Kluczewska, Chapter 8) and Southeast Asia (Miramond, Chapter 11).

In the introduction to the volume, Pécoud offers a brief historical and contextual account of the IOM, an international organisation governed by its member states, yet which claims to be a 'neutral' proponent of 'managed' migration 'for the benefit of all' (p. 8). The acclaimed neutrality and 'non-normativity' of the IOM have been criticised for downplaying global inequalities and promoting the interests of states in the Global North (of controlling illegalised immigration) while also facilitating labour mobility (in the interest of global capitalism). These interests are prioritised at the expense of migrants and their rights; although the IOM human rights formally became a 'related organisation' of the United Nations in 2016, it still has no formal protection mandate. Moreover, despite its expansion in the humanitarian and development realms, the IOM leaves unquestioned the repressive even deadly implications of states border and deportation policies. For all these reasons, a critical investigation of the IOM and its operations is much required.

The edited volume offers an excellent starting point for such an endeavour. The first few contributions scrutinise the positionality of the IOM in global migration governance and problematise its lack of human rights protection mandate (Guild, Grant and Groenendijk, Chapter 2), its funding arrangements (Patz and Thorvaldsdottir, Chapter 4), its formal incorporation into the UN structure (Pécoud, Chapter 1; Geiger, Chapter 13) and the geopolitical shift that comes with the rise of China as a global player in migration governance (Zhang and Geiger, Chapter 7). Further chapters detail the strategic expansion of the IOM into new areas of governance, which include direct operations as well as 'expert' knowledge production (Robinson, Chapter 6) in the humanitarian as well as security realms (Kluczewska, Chapter 8; Tamimi, Cuttitta and Last, Chapter 9), in public health (Scherf, Chapter 10), on post-deportation (Lecadet, Chapter 12), gender and migration (which in practice is often reduced to anti-trafficking programmes—see Mahon, Chapter 3 and Miramond, Chapter 11), and development (Newman-Grigg, Chapter 5). In the concluding chapter, Geiger speculates on the future of the IOM as a 'poster child' and entrepreneur of global migration governance, which with its depoliticising rhetoric and lack of formal accountability enables states to outsource responsibilities for migration governance and avoid addressing the structural dysfunctions of their migration policies. The organisation, he concludes, will therefore require further monitoring (p. 302).

A key strength of this volume is in the range of questions it opens up for. Aside from generating important insights into the operation of the IOM, whose impact on global migration governance is non-negligible, the volume also offers fruitful examples of how we can approach, research and better understand ever-changing nature of global migration politics (Zhang and Geiger, Chapter 7), international bureaucracy (see Robinson, Chapter 6 and Scherf, Chapter 10) and multilateral governance (Pécoud, Chapter 1). This said, the editors find the strongest contribution of the volume to be the problematisations of the knowledge production of the IOM, which as Pécoud writes, 'becomes a de facto commercial issue enabling the growth of the IOM's business' (p. 17). Indeed, asserting itself as an expert organisation, the IOM identifies trends in migration management, produces data on mobility, drafts reports and proposes policy recommendations. The contributions give stark examples of the political interests underpinning this 'expert' knowledge production: Kluczewska (Chapter 8) details how Tajik migrants returning from Russia are posited as potential security threats, to appease US-based donors interested in funding anti-radicalisation initiatives (in line with the security interests of the United States). Tamimi, Cuttitta and Last (Chapter 9) show how the Missing Migrants project has become a way for the IOM to appropriate, depoliticise and ultimately capitalise on migrant deaths; Robinson (Chapter 6) critically enquires into how the Migration Governance Index enables the IOM to position itself as an expert organisation on 'good' migration governance. The examples show how the IOM proactively shapes global conversations—in politics as well as research circles—around border and migration governance, in the interest of the states commissioning and funding their research. Meanwhile, while claiming their reporting to be politically 'neutral', the IOM has remained silent on how the policies of states in the Global North cause migrant deaths and human rights violations. Such silences produced through knowledge production should also be a matter of concern for us as scholars—a matter I shall return to below.

The volume should be of interest for migration and mobility scholars, for researchers of humanitarianism and international relations and for the IOM itself. It invites to further critical investigations of the IOM and of other international organisations within the expanding global industry of migration governance: investigations that, at best, may enhance the transparency and accountability of their operations. Doing so would, however, require a more profound analysis of the global inequalities that are reflected in but also perpetuated by the operations of the IOM; although the volume asserts and shows how the IOM operates in the

interest of a global capitalist 'ruling class,' the racialised inequalities (see **Besteman 2020**) that the organisation maintains and reproduces remain largely unaddressed. Moreover, most contributions focus on the potential impact the IOM might have on international migration governance, whereas I would have liked to see more discussion of how its operations affect those people on the move who are directly impacted (and effectively *moved*) by the discourses, actions—and, as Miramond (Chapter 11) aptly points out—silence of the IOM. There are few exceptions: the grounded, empirical accounts of the operations of the IOM offered by Miramond (Chapter 11), and Kluczewska (Chapter 8) capture how the IOM effectively partakes in the trafficking of migrants identified as 'vulnerable' rather than supporting them and produces reports that justify the securitisation of impoverished return migrants, respectively. More such grounded investigations about what the IOM effectively *does* and how it maintains structures that systematically deprive poor, racialised persons—including the 'vulnerable' populations they make certain claims to protect (Mahon, Chapter 3 and Miramond, Chapter 11)—of their mobility rights are required. These, I believe, are problematic areas that warrant further attention in future research while remaining cautious that research is not all that is required (and not all research is required, either). In this volume, the excellent problematisations of the role of IOM in knowledge production should also serve as a reminder that we as researchers are by no means external to the migration industry (**Andersson 2016**; **Cabot 2019**). Much like the IOM, we increasingly depend on short-term and ad hoc funding and are expected to produce policy-relevant outputs, which risks compromising critical research. We, too, partake in maintaining colonial hierarchies that prioritise a northern-centric view on global (im)mobility and power structures (**Grosfoguel, Oso & Christou 2015**). Therefore, calls for more research on international migration governance must be complemented with an inquiry into what kind of knowledge is produced and to the benefit of whom. This includes interrogating the positionality of researchers and discussing how the projectisation of academic research influences the knowledge that is produced and the perspectives prioritised. With migration regimes becoming increasingly repressive across the globe, there is a need for knowledge practices that represent and are accountable to people on the move, rather than to states.