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IO Mediation of Interstate Conflicts

Moving Beyond the Global versus Regional Dichotomy

Holley E. Hansen

Sara McLaughlin Mitchell

Stephen C. Nemeth

Department of Political Science

University of Iowa

Regional and global intergovernmental organizations have grown both in number and scope, yet their role and effectiveness as conflict managers is not fully understood. Previous research efforts tend to categorize organizations solely by the scope of their membership, which obscures important sources of variation in institutional design at both the regional and global levels. International organizations will be more successful conflict managers if they are highly institutionalized, if they have members with homogeneous preferences, and if they have more established democratic members. These hypotheses are evaluated with data on territorial (1816-2001), maritime (1900-2001), and river (1900-2001) claims from the Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) project in the Western Hemisphere, Europe, and the Middle East. Empirical analysis suggests that international organizations are more likely to help disputing parties reach an agreement if they have more democratic members, if they are highly institutionalized, and when they use binding management techniques.

Keywords: *international organizations; regional; global; conflict management*

Regional and global intergovernmental organizations (IOs) have grown both in number and scope, yet their role and effectiveness as conflict managers is not fully understood. While some scholars are critical of the ability of regional IOs to effectively manage interstate and intrastate disputes (e.g., Meyers 1974; Haas 1983), others point to the increasing frequency and success of conflict resolution by regional IOs (e.g., Chigas, McClintock, and Kamp 1996). From their early history (Pinder 1996) and particularly since the end of the Cold War, European regional

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organizations have taken an active role in managing regional conflicts (Chigas, McClintock, and Kamp 1996). Regional organizations have become increasingly likely to develop mechanisms for handling domestic and interstate disputes, even in regional organizations focusing primarily on economic issues (e.g., Peck 2001; Powers 2004). For example, the treaties and protocols of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) establish numerous provisions for conflict management, including the creation of an institutional cease-fire monitoring mechanism, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

Global organizations, on the other hand, are typically more centralized, institutionalized, and resource-rich, which may enhance the success of their conflict management activities. The United Nations, one of the most highly institutionalized and funded organizations, has been the most frequent (nonstate) mediator of interstate and intrastate conflicts since World War II (Bercovitch and Schneider 2000). However, conflict management efforts by global organizations may be hampered by conflict between major powers, as illustrated by the significant increase in peacekeeping missions following the end of the Cold War (Fortna 2003).

Furthermore, there is considerable variance in the institutional design of regional and global IOs, including differences in scope, membership, centralization, and institutionalization (Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal 2001). The scope of an institution and its membership requirements produce variance in the degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity of member states' preferences. Institutions that are widely inclusive and that are very broad in their scope, such as the United Nations or League of Nations, are likely to have more heterogeneous members than exclusive and narrowly focused organizations, such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). IOs with more heterogeneous members may be less effective at managing conflicts compared with more homogeneous IOs. IOs that are highly institutionalized, especially with respect to dispute resolution mechanisms, will be more effective at promoting cooperation among members and will have greater tools at their disposal for managing conflicts among member states. IOs may also be more active conflict managers in world politics if their membership is more democratic because democracies are amenable to using peaceful and third-party methods of conflict resolution (Maoz and Russett 1993; Dixon 1993, 1994; Raymond 1994; Mitchell 2002).

In this article, we compare the effectiveness of conflict management efforts by regional and global organizations. We argue that international organizations (global or regional) will be more effective conflict managers if they are highly institutionalized, if their members have similar foreign policy preferences, and if they have more democratic members. We test our theory with data on territorial (1816-2001), maritime (1900-2001), and river (1900-2001) claims from the Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) project in the Western Hemisphere, Western and Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. We find that international organizations are more likely to help disputing parties reach an agreement if they have more democratic members, if they are highly institutionalized, and when they use binding management techniques.

Preference similarity among IO members has no systematic effect. The success of conflict management by global organizations stems primarily from their higher levels of institutionalization and use of particular types of conflict management tools (arbitration and adjudication), while the success of regional organizations' mediation efforts can be attributed primarily to their democratic nature. Our theory and empirical analyses demonstrate problems with using a simple global/regional dichotomy in conflict management studies and identify a variety of institutional characteristics that can help guide further exploration.

Conflict Management by Regional and Global Organizations

The use of regional commissions and global organizations to resolve interstate conflict has a long history. A number of independent commissions were formed during the 1800s and early 1900s, including the Central Rhine Commission (1816), the U.S.-Canada International Joint Commission (1909), and the U.S.-Mexico International Boundary Commission (1889). The Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine was established in 1815 by the Congress of Vienna to mediate conflicts and negotiate agreements regarding trade and use of the Rhine; this early organization has been one of the most enduring regional organizations and has been central in the establishment of waterway regimes (Miller 1919).

Early literature suggested that regional organizations help reduce conflict by isolating and dividing local conflicts before they become intractable global issues (Burton 1962; Fisher 1964). Regional organizations lack the perceived impartiality that global organizations gain from their distance, cited as necessary for viable mediation (Moore 1987). On the other hand, regional organizations may be more effective at mediating conflict because their member states share common interests that make their actions more timely and effective. Wehr and Lederach (1991) argue that mediators who are "closer" to the disputants are more likely to promote trust-based mediation, which may be effective at creating more binding agreements.

A number of studies have questioned the accuracy of these claims and instead caution that regional organizations have only limited success at resolving the issues behind disputes (Nye 1971; Meyers 1974; Haas 1983). Nevertheless, regional organizations continue to increasingly participate in conflict mediation and prevention (Pinder 1996) and arguably have shown increasing success (Chigas, McClintock, and Kamp 1996). The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), an organization in which the membership explicitly chose not to include conflict management in its charter,¹ added conflict mediation to the organization (consultation and arbitration responsibilities) during the 1976 Bali Summit.

Like global organizations, regional organizations are likely to be most effective as conflict mediators when they are independent from their member states, they have sufficient resources to accomplish their goals, and their organizational charter includes more stringent methods of conflict mediation. Taking each of these factors

in turn, Meyers (1974) has argued that a lack of centralized authority is a principal reason why the Organization of African Unity (OAU) is only marginally successful at mediating conflict. This lack of independence has made the OAU dependent on member states voluntarily complying with agreements, and because of this, the OAU was only effective when both disputants in a conflict were member states and when leaders' positions were not threatened by rulings of the OAU.²

Organizational resources may include material (money, peacekeeping troops), informational (expertise or a centralized bureaucracy), or ideational (legitimacy and impartiality) resources (Nye 1971; Meyers 1974). While regional organizations often possess less material or ideational resources than many global organizations, they do have an advantage in information. As Peck (1998) discusses, regional organizations, because of their proximity to the conflict and to the disputants, are able to more efficiently assess potential conflicts and direct their limited organizational resources to more effectively prevent and mediate conflict. The similarity of preferences between regional disputants and regional IO mediators enhances the credibility of informative signals sent by the IO (Thompson 2006, 7). Organizations will be most successful at resolving disputes if they can provide expert knowledge and an experienced diplomatic corps and can process information from a variety of sources (i.e., states, NGOs, research institutions) to make more effective recommendations. Furthermore, organizations can increase compliance with agreements if they can more effectively monitor disputant behaviors and offer advice to the parties in the dispute (Peck 1998).

Finally, organizations with charters that include binding methods of conflict mediation, such as arbitration, are often more effective at resolving disputes (Nye 1971; Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom 2004; Mitchell and Hensel 2007). Bercovitch, Anagnoson, and Wille (1991) find that the more active a role the mediator takes in dispute resolution, the greater the chance of success of the mediation attempt. Organizations like the OAU may be able to provide "good offices" and act as a forum for state leaders and resolve interstate disputes in that matter, but they are likely to meet less success in creating and enforcing agreements than organizations such as the European Union, which can initiate binding adjudication between member states—with or without member state approval. Mitchell and Hensel (2007) find that active conflict management efforts by IOs are significantly more likely to produce successful agreements if they involve binding techniques, such as arbitration or adjudication. Compliance rates with agreements brokered through nonbinding IO techniques (e.g., mediation, good offices) are less successful than the parties' own bilateral efforts to resolve contentious issues.

Institutional Design and Third-Party Conflict Management

Our theoretical approach builds on recent work that emphasizes the rational design of international institutions. Institutions vary along several dimensions including rules

for membership, scope of issues covered, centralization of tasks, rules for controlling the institution, and flexibility of arrangements (Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal 2001). The efficacy with which IOs can promote cooperation between their member states depends to some degree on these design features of institutions. The debate over the efficacy of regional versus global IO conflict management efforts has tended to categorize organizations solely by the scope of their membership (global or regional). This dichotomization is problematic because it “black boxes” other important sources of variation in institutional design at both the regional and global levels.

Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom (2004) focus on several institutional design variables in their model linking international institutions and interstate bargaining. They argue that IOs “will have the greatest impact on dispute behavior in a limited number of ways related to mandate, member cohesion, and institutional structure” (p. 7). Like Fearon (1995), they develop a bargaining model that emphasizes information, concluding that information asymmetries are best reduced by IOs that have clear mandates for security, strong internal member cohesion, and strong institutional mechanisms for sanctioning and enforcement. In other words, private information about competitor states is best revealed by IOs that can use effective costly signaling, which they argue is strongest in cohesive, security-based IOs that are highly institutionalized. Dyadic analyses from 1950-1991 show that interventionist IOs significantly reduce the onset of militarized disputes, while minimalist and structured IOs have no effect. They also find that greater preference heterogeneity among IO members increases the likelihood for militarized conflict. Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom’s (2004) theoretical argument and supporting empirical evidence is important because it suggests that the effect of IO memberships on cooperation varies depending on institutional structure.

We build on this research by identifying three important characteristics of international organizations that influence the relative success of their conflict management activities: (1) institutionalization, (2) members’ preference homogeneity, and (3) members’ democracy levels. Our analyses focus on *direct* attempts by IOs (global and regional) to resolve contentious interstate issues, rather than the passive influence of shared IO memberships on conflict management activities (Mitchell and Hensel 2007). Focusing on variance in these institutional design features gives us greater leverage for explaining differences in success rates between conflict management efforts by global and regional organizations.

Institutionalization

First, international organizations with higher levels of institutionalization are more proactive and effective at managing interstate conflicts, especially conflicts between members. Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom (2004, 18) create a 3-point scale to capture an IO’s institutionalization level.

1. *Minimal organizations* contain plenary meetings, committees, and possibly a secretariat without an extensive bureaucracy beyond research, planning, and information gathering.
2. *Structured organizations* contain structures of assembly, executive (nonceremonial), and/or bureaucracy to implement policy, as well as formal procedures and rules.
3. *Interventionist organizations* contain mechanisms for mediation, arbitration and adjudication, and/or other means to coerce state decisions (such as withholding loans or aid), as well as means to enforce organizational decisions and norms.

Interventionist organizations by their very nature are more active as global and regional conflict managers because of their explicit focus on peaceful dispute resolution mechanisms. These organizations' charters often include multiple provisions for dispute settlement procedures. For example, the charter of the Organization of American States (OAS) emphasizes the peaceful settlement of disputes in Article 3 (controversies are to be settled peacefully) and Article 24 (encourages use of direct negotiation, good offices, mediation, investigation and conciliation, judicial settlement, and arbitration to resolve conflicts). Similar articles can be found in numerous charters or treaties associated with both regional and global institutions, ranging from the League of Nations and United Nations to the Arab League, African Union, and ASEAN.

In addition to promoting dispute resolution actively through the very design of their treaties, interventionist organizations are typically resource-rich and have highly centralized and extensive bureaucracies (Abbott and Snidal 1998). These executive and bureaucratic branches give them better leverage for revealing disputants' private information (which impedes peaceful settlement) and help parties carry out agreements that are reached. The United Nations (UN) Secretary General, for example, played an important role in helping Nigeria and Cameroon carry out the terms of the Bakassi peninsula territorial settlement reached by the International Court of Justice (Mitchell and Hensel 2007). Global organizations, like the UN, are often highly structured and institutionalized, which may give them an advantage for brokering durable peace settlements.

Table 1 compares all global and regional organizations that have intervened actively to help resolve territorial, maritime, or river claims in the Western Hemisphere, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and Middle East from 1816 to 2001.³ We can see that the mean institutionalization score for global organizations (2.62 of 3) is significantly higher than the mean level for regional organizations (1.98; $F = 170.2$, $p < .001$). If institutionalization is a key design feature for conflict management success, then global organizations have an edge.

Hypothesis 1: Conflict management efforts by highly institutionalized international organizations are more likely to be successful than conflict management efforts by less institutionalized international organizations.

Table 1
Comparison of Regional and Global Organizations

Characteristic	Global Organizations	Regional Organizations	One-Way ANOVA Test
Democracy life (years > 6)	9.40	36.40	$F = 746.89$ ($p < .001$)
Preference similarity (dyadic; -1 to 1)	0.69	0.72	$F = 219.37$ ($p < .001$)
Institutionalization (1 to 3)	2.62	1.98	$F = 170.20$ ($p < .001$)

As noted above, the types of conflict management techniques used by IOs may produce varying success rates. We expect binding settlement efforts to be more successful because they raise the reputational costs for renegeing, they mitigate informational asymmetries more easily, and they are often carried out with institutional assistance (Mitchell and Hensel 2007). To account for this possible relationship, we create an interaction term for an IO's institutionalization level and the use of binding conflict management (arbitration, adjudication).

Preference Homogeneity

Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom (2004) also argue that informational asymmetries in bargaining are better addressed by IOs that are composed of members with more homogeneous preferences. As preferences diverge among IO members, individual state members have incentives to reveal information selectively to favored disputants, which reduces the chances for successful intervention (Touval 1982; although see Kydd 2003). In other words, organizations with fairly homogeneous members can provide unbiased information more easily than organizations with diverse preferences among their membership. This fits with earlier arguments about regional organizations being more effective conflict managers because their member states share common interests and because they can "understand" conflicts in their neighborhood (Moore 1987). Such preference similarity minimizes the distance between the IO and disputants' preferences and enhances the possibility for trust-based mediation (Wehr and Lederach 1991).

Hypothesis 2a: As the average preference similarity among international organization members increases, conflict management efforts by the organization are more likely to be successful.

A competing perspective is offered by scholars who focus on the advantages of preference diversity within an organization for creating issue linkages. Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal (2001) argue that an IO's issue scope increases when there is greater heterogeneity among members, which typically occurs in organizations

with a large number of members. “When actors have heterogeneous interests, issue linkage may generate new opportunities for resolving conflicts and reaching mutually beneficial arrangements. . . . Linkage not only allows states to increase efficiency but may also allow them to overcome distributional obstacles” (Koremenos, Lipson, and Snidal 2001, 786). Focusing on the informational properties of IOs, Thompson (2006) makes a similar argument about the advantages of heterogeneous preferences among IO members. He maintains that IOs can provide two types of information, intentions information and policy information. Intentions information serves to reduce uncertainty about disputants’ preferences, consistent with Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom’s (2004) model. Policy information, on the other hand, refers to “the production of policy information by specialized agents” (Thompson 2006, 5). IOs typically collect detailed information when they serve as conflict managers, especially when binding procedures such as arbitration and adjudication are used (Mitchell and Hensel 2007). Like congressional committees with specialized policy information, international organizations with more heterogeneous members are better able to transmit credible information to disputants, which “explains why regional organizations, with less diverse memberships and more parochial interests, produce a legitimation effect of lesser magnitude” (Thompson 2006, 9). According to this view, international organizations with more diverse member states are perceived more credibly as neutral and fair mediators and experience greater mediation success.

Hypothesis 2b: As the average preference similarity among international organization members decreases, conflict management efforts by the organization are more likely to be successful.

In Table 1, we can see that global organizations in our sample have significantly lower mean levels of member preference similarity (0.69) than regional organizations (0.72, $F = 219.37$, $p < .001$).⁴ Both group means are closer to one than zero, which implies that most organizations that actively manage interstate conflicts have fairly similar members, although there is quite a bit of variance in these scores, ranging from $-.09$ to 1.0 for global organizations and $.16$ to $.97$ for regional organizations.

Democracy

Democracies behave differently than nondemocracies, from fighting wars to negotiating treaties (Towle 2000). The democratic peace literature has spent considerable time exploring the reasons behind these differences focusing on democratic institutions (Morgan and Campbell 1991; Maoz and Russett 1993; Leeds and Davis 1999; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003) and democratic norms (Dixon 1993, 1994; Raymond 1994; Risse-Kappen 1996; Mitchell 2002). The normative approach

suggests that democratic dyads are more likely than other types of dyads (non-democratic or mixed dyads) to resort to third-party mediation to help resolve disagreements. Simmons (1999) argues that democracies subscribe to a common tradition of legal principles that make them more likely to accept the role of an outside mediator in resolving international disputes. Pennock (1979) contends that democratic political culture promotes norms of tolerance and compromise as a way of resolving disagreements, a value that democracies then extend to the international arena in dealings with other democracies. Democracies' legalistic culture may also translate into greater acceptance of binding forms of third-party conflict management, such as arbitration and adjudication (Raymond 1994; Russett and Oneal 2001). Democracies may turn to international organizations for binding settlement at least partially because democracies accept the norm that disputes should be resolved through legalistic channels, and international organizations are viewed as bodies representing international law (Treves 2002). Regardless of the specific norms being transmitted, the general explanation is that democracies accept third-party dispute resolution when dealing with other democracies, but not autocracies, because democracies can trust each other to abide by agreements struck (Weinstein 1969; Gaubatz 1996; Leeds 1999; Pevehouse and Russett 2006).⁵

International organizations play an essential role in the liberal peace process (Russett and Oneal 2001). First, global and regional organizations help promote democratization in their member states. International organizations that list domestic liberalization as a condition of membership—and enforce these conditions—bind new elites to democratic reform and communicate this willingness to other actors in a society, thereby promoting democratization (Mansfield and Pevehouse 2008 [this issue]). IOs provide resources that can be used by elites to “bribe” opposition groups to democratic government by offering incentives for cooperation (Pevehouse 2002). In addition, regional organizations, such as the OAS' Unit for the Promotion of Democracy and the Council of Europe's Programmes for Assistance to Central and Eastern Europe, provide technical assistance to develop democratic institutions and offer assistance in running elections (Peck 2001). Regional organizations serve to promote democracy in their member states, which indirectly contributes to a more peaceful region as these democratic states are more likely to pursue forms of peaceful conflict resolution in their dealings with each other.

Second, and of more interest to this study, democracies have increasingly turned to regional organizations to resolve disputes (Pinder 1996). Over time, regional organizations have developed mechanisms for handling domestic and interstate disputes including providing good offices and serving as mediators. As Peck (2001) discusses, the OAU at a 1993 summit in Cairo established a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution. This included forming a Central Organ⁶ to respond to crises and a Conflict Management Center to provide information on the threats of conflict. While the OAS has more recently focused on programs such as ProPaz to resolve internal disputes (www.oas.org), its charter includes

a number of mechanisms for peaceful conflict resolution among its membership as noted above.

How does the democratic makeup of an IO influence conflict management success? First, international organizations may become more likely to become involved in settling disputes in response to *demands* from democratic member states. As discussed previously, democracies are more likely than nondemocracies to turn to more legalistic third-party mediation to resolve claims (Pennock 1979; Raymond 1994; Simmons 1999). Democracies that belong to a common organization, therefore, may turn to this organization to provide resources and a forum for more legalistic dispute resolution.

Second, democratic members may also promote more active IO conflict management through their socialization of nondemocratic IO members. International organizations play an important role in norm socialization (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998), and strongly democratic organizations may perform a key role in transmitting norms of peaceful dispute resolution techniques among their member states (Dixon and Senese 2002; Mitchell 2002). Key democratic states may act as norm entrepreneurs to promote the use of third-party mediation as an acceptable form of dispute resolution within their region. As these norms become more accepted, they become institutionalized in international and regional organizations. These institutions can create a norm cascade by socializing other states to the norm behavior; over time, norms become internalized by all actors in the system.⁷ International organizations created by democratic entrepreneurs may have design features that are democratic. Risse-Kappen (1996), for example, argues that NATO's procedures for military cooperation are very democratic because most NATO members were highly institutionalized democracies when the treaty was signed. Democracies are more likely to develop highly institutionalized agreements as a way to lock in long-term commitments (Ikenberry 2001). Regime similarity may also enhance the constitutive effects of IOs, producing a convergence of member states' interests and identities over time and reducing the heterogeneity of member states' foreign policy preferences. In the long run, this reduces the number of new contentious issues that arise between member states.

Democracies have greater credibility in making agreements, and so as an organization has more democratic members, these members are more likely to accept decisions made by this body. Second, an increase of democracies may have an indirect effect on compliance among nondemocratic members. In line with Mitchell (2002), as democracies become more predominant in an international organization, then democratic norms of dispute resolution become the typical behavior in the organization, and so even nondemocratic members are more likely to behave like their democratic counterparts. Organizations formed by democratic states with longer democratic histories should be more likely to create mechanisms for third-party conflict management in the charter. Well-established and more powerful democracies are better able to act as norm entrepreneurs, and thus as IO members'

history of democratic government grows, the organization should mediate conflicts more frequently and experience greater conflict management success.

Hypothesis 3: Conflict management efforts by international organizations with more established democratic members are more likely to be successful.

Table 1 compares global and regional organizations with respect to the number of years that the least democratic IO member has scored six or higher on the Polity IV democracy scale. In our sample, regional organizations have more seasoned democratic members with an average democracy life of thirty-six years, compared to nine years for members of global organizations ($F = 746.89, p < .001$). If organizations with more democratic members are advantaged for successfully managing interstate conflicts, then regional organizations may succeed more often.

Research Design

Our analyses focus on the *success* of regional and global IO conflict management efforts, although we use selection models to address the question of when IOs choose to get involved as conflict managers. The data analyzed in this article are compiled by the ICOW Project, which includes data on interstate claims over territory, maritime zones, and cross-border rivers.⁸ Territorial claims are coded by the ICOW project from 1816 to 2001, while maritime and river claims are coded from 1900 to 2001. Analyses use version 1.1 of the ICOW data, which includes territorial claim data for the Western Hemisphere and Western Europe; maritime claim data for the Western Hemisphere, Eastern Europe, and Western Europe; and river claim data for the Western Hemisphere, Western Europe, and the Middle East.

The ICOW project collects information on the salience of each contentious issue and on all attempts to settle each claim peacefully or through militarized force. Territorial claims involve questions of sovereignty over a specific piece of land (including islands), maritime claims occur when states disagree about the ownership or usage of a maritime area, while river claims arise over the usage and/or navigation of a river that crosses state boundaries. The most important requirement for systematic data on issues is explicit evidence of contention involving official representatives of two or more nation-states over the issue type in question. With the ICOW territorial claims data, for example, this means evidence that official representatives of at least one state make explicit statements claiming sovereignty over a specific piece of territory that is claimed or administered by another state. It is also important that official government representatives or individuals authorized to speak for the government initiate the claim.

The ICOW data is well suited for testing our hypotheses because it provides information about different types of conflict management strategies (e.g., bilateral talks, good offices, inquiry, conciliation, mediation, arbitration, and adjudication),

information about any third-party actors involved (states, IOs, NGOs), as well as information about the outcomes of each peaceful attempt to settle the issue. Even though the data set focuses on issue disagreements, it also provides information about the ability of claimants to reach cooperative bargains peacefully, as well as substantive information about the type of agreement that is reached (functional, procedural substantive),⁹ and information about who gets what in the agreement (challenger gets more, even concessions, target gets more). ICOW also collects information on the outcomes of peaceful attempts to settle contentious issues, coding whether agreements are struck, whether claimants ratify and/or comply with the agreements' terms, and if the agreement ends the overall issue claim.

Our primary unit of analysis is a peaceful settlement attempt, such as a mediation effort or bilateral talks. In the Western Hemisphere, Europe, and the Middle East, ICOW has recorded 1,690 peaceful settlement attempts over territorial, maritime, and river claims. International organizations have been involved actively as conflict managers in 160 (9.5%) of these attempts. It is possible that IOs intervene in the most salient issue claims, which could reduce the chances for successful settlement. Conversely, states may turn to IOs when the conflict is ripe for resolution and the parties are ready to settle the issues at stake. In the latter case, IOs would have an advantage in producing successful settlements. To account for these potential selection effects, we use a two-stage Heckman model that captures both conflict management activities by IOs and their success rates. The Heckman (censored probit) model uses a two-stage estimator to account for nonrandom selection procedures (Heckman 1979; Reed 2000). The model estimates the effect of each covariate on the selection process and the outcome process and calculates the correlation, ρ , between the two processes' disturbances. The dependent variable for the first stage equals one if an IO served as a third-party conflict manager (160 of 1,690).¹⁰ The dependent variable for the second stage, designed to capture success, equals one if the parties reached an agreement in the negotiations (96 of 160, or 60 percent).

IO Institutionalization

We created a list of all international organizations that have actively intervened in ICOW issue claims and coded each organization's institutionalization level on a 3-point scale from low (*minimalist*) to medium (*structured*) to high (*interventionist*). If the IO was included in Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom's (2004) data set, we used their institutionalization coding; if not, we made a judgment call based on our own research. There are a total of twenty-three IOs that served as conflict managers in the two data sets. Four of these twenty-three IOs are minimalist, seven are structured, while twelve are interventionist. Eleven of the total twenty-three IOs are global organizations (four structured, seven interventionist), while twelve are regional (four minimalist, three structured, and five interventionist). As noted above, we interact institutionalization with a measure for binding settlement attempt because

IOs have much higher levels of success with binding techniques. As expected, all binding attempts have been carried out by IOs that have some degree of institutionalization (2 or 3 on the institutionalization scale). Our combined measure equals zero for nonbinding attempts by IOs scoring 1 on the institutionalization scale, one for binding attempts by IOs scoring 2 on the institutionalization scale, and two for binding attempts by IOs with the highest level of institutionalization.¹¹

IO Democratic History

We use member states' democracy scores from Polity IV (Marshall and Jaggers 2005) to measure the democratic nature of an international organization. This variable is an 11-point (0-10) scale evaluating each state's competitiveness of political participation, the openness and competitiveness of executive recruitment, and constraints on the chief executive. To generate the organization's democracy level per year, we first created a case for every IO state member in each year the IO was in existence. We then recorded the number of years each state had a democracy score six or higher, which we refer to as democracy life. We then collapsed these democracy life scores by identifying the minimum score for each IO year. The minimum score is used to reflect the weakest link principle (Dixon 1993; Russett and Oneal 2001), namely, that IOs with more established democratic members should actively promote norms of third-party conflict management. The mean for the minimum democracy life score for the entire sample of IO years is 22.3 with a standard deviation of thirty-six years.

IO Member Preference Similarity

To assess the similarity of IO member preferences, we use the weighted global S measure of alliance portfolio similarity (Signorino and Ritter 1999). This measure uses the Correlates of War (COW) alliance data set and records the existence of shared alliance partners for each pair of states in a given year using the COW typology of alliance types (defense pacts, nonaggression/neutrality, entente, no alliance). This variable measures the extent to which two states share similar alliance portfolios, with higher S values representing more similar preferences. We aggregate this measure using a dyad-year IO data set. As the average dyadic S score for an IO moves toward 1, this indicates a greater homogeneity of preferences among member states. The average dyadic S score for all IO years is 0.71 with a standard deviation of 0.22; the range is -0.09 to 1.0.¹²

Control Variables

We use several control variables to model the selection of IOs as conflict managers (stage 1 in the Heckman model). The first variable is the salience, or importance, of

each issue claim to the claimants. Conflicts that are highly salient to one or both claimant states are more difficult to resolve and more likely to lead to militarized conflict (Hensel 2001; Hensel et al. 2008). In the territorial, river, and maritime claims data, salience is measured through a variety of indicators, each addressing an aspect of the claimed issue that should increase its value to one or both sides. We combine six dichotomous indicators of salience for each issue type to create an overall index. Each indicator contributes up to two points to the salience index, one point per claimant state for which the indicator is present, producing a total range from zero to twelve.¹³ More salient issues should attract more frequent settlement attempts by IOs.

Our next control variable addresses the extent of the settlement attempt. The ICOW project codes four specific topics covered by peaceful attempted settlements. Two comprise efforts aimed at general settlement—negotiations meant to settle the entire claim and negotiations over a smaller part of the claim. The other two constitute procedural and functional efforts—negotiations over procedures for future settlement of the claim¹⁴ and over the use of the claimed territory, river, or maritime area without attempting to settle the question of ownership.¹⁵ We create a dummy variable, procedural/functional, representing whether the settlement attempt was procedural or functional. Our expectation is that because these settlements do not resolve the larger issues at stake, they should be less likely to involve IOs.

How states bargain over contentious issues might be influenced by their capabilities, with more powerful states having stronger bargaining power. As the challenger's relative capability increases, it should be less likely to accept IO involvement in the settlement process because it can achieve better bargaining outcomes in a bilateral negotiation setting.¹⁶ We measure the level of power parity between the challenger and target as a dummy variable that equals one when the weaker side has 80 percent of the stronger side's total capabilities and zero otherwise. Our capabilities measure comes from the COW Project (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972) and captures each country's global share of demographic (total and urban population), military (spending and personnel), and economic capabilities (iron and steel production, energy consumption). Our expectation is that IOs are more likely to serve as third-party conflict managers in situations of power parity because the parties will have more difficulties reaching agreements on their own. This expectation finds support in mediation research, which demonstrates that disputants find mediation more acceptable when they are evenly matched (Wall and Lynn 1993).

We also control for a more passive effect of IO memberships, using a count of multilateral treaties and institutions calling for the peaceful settlement of disputes that both states in a claim have signed and ratified (Mitchell and Hensel 2007). Peaceful conflict management practices should be influenced most strongly by IOs that explicitly promote such practices in their charters. Membership in qualifying institutions is measured through the ICOW Project's Multilateral Treaties of Pacific Settlement (MTOPS) data set, which records the signature and ratification of all

multilateral treaties and institutions (at either the global or regional level) that explicitly call for the pacific settlement of political disputes among members.¹⁷

We also control for the claimants' democracy scores with the expectation that IOs will manage conflicts more actively as the lowest democracy score in the dyad increases. We calculate the challenger and target's democracy minus autocracy score (-10 to +10) using the Polity IV data set and record the lowest regime score in the dyad. Finally, we include dummy variables for issue type, treating territorial claims as the omitted category, because IO involvement varies across issue types. We turn now to a discussion of our empirical analyses.

Empirical Analyses

We begin with a simple comparison of efforts by global and regional organizations to manage contentious issue claims, using the ICOW data set. In Table 2, we use all 1,690 settlement attempts for our analyses (1816-2001); this includes bilateral talks and all forms of third-party conflict management (global IOs, regional IOs, and other third parties).¹⁸ In this analysis, we report information on four measures of conflict management success for a given settlement attempt: (1) whether a given settlement attempt produced an agreement (939 of 1,688, 56 percent), (2) whether the two sides carried out the agreement in five years or within the time frame stipulated in the agreement (714 of 939, 76 percent), (3) whether the agreement reached ends the overall issue claim (220 of 939, 24 percent), and (4) whether the challenger state made greater concessions than the target state in the agreement (143 of 939, 15 percent). We then separate organizations into global and regional groups based on the scope of membership (inclusive versus exclusive).¹⁹

We can see that in the Western Hemisphere, Europe, and the Middle East, global organizations generally have better success rates than regional organizations. IO involvement (global or regional) does not improve the prospects for reaching agreement, but global IO involvement clearly produces more successful agreements. Claimants are more likely to comply with agreements brokered with global IO assistance (89 percent compliance rate), the agreement is more likely to end the overall issue claim (50 percent claim end), and the challenging state is more likely to make minor or major concessions to the target state (41 percent). Regional organizations also experience success in enhancing compliance rates (86 percent) and producing agreements that end the issue at stake (34 percent). The rate for agreements that end an issue claim is lower for regional organizations than global organizations (34 percent vs. 50 percent), although both are more successful than bilateral (20 percent) or non-IO (28 percent) third-party settlement attempts. The chi-square tests for independence indicate that these differences are statistically significant for all success measures except reaching agreements. As noted earlier, we believe that the differences between global and regional IO conflict management success can be attributed to the three theoretical variables we identified:

Table 2
The Effectiveness of Conflict Management Attempts, 1816-2001

	<i>N</i>	Yes	%
Reach agreements			
Bilateral talks	1,155	655	57
Global organizations	81	44	54
Regional organizations	97	56	58
Other third party	355	184	52
Total	1,688	939	56
$\chi^2 = 2.85$ ($p = .42$)			
Comply with agreements			
Bilateral talks	655	495	76
Global organizations	44	39	89
Regional organizations	56	48	86
Other third party	184	132	72
Total	939	714	76
$\chi^2 = 8.65$ ($p = .03$)			
Agreement ends issue claim			
Bilateral talks	655	128	20
Global organizations	44	22	50
Regional organizations	56	19	34
Other third party	184	51	28
Total	939	220	24
$\chi^2 = 28.16$ ($p < .001$)			
Greater challenger concessions			
Bilateral talks	655	76	12
Global organizations	44	18	41
Regional organizations	56	11	20
Other third party	184	38	21
Total	939	143	15
$\chi^2 = 34.18$ ($p < .001$)			

institutionalization, preference similarity, and democracy. Global IOs have higher levels of institutionalization, but lower average democracy and preference similarity mean scores compared with regional organizations.

Our main empirical model is presented in Table 3, model 1.²⁰ The first stage of the model codes whether the peaceful settlement attempt actively involved an IO conflict manager. All of the control variables are significant predictors of IO conflict management, demonstrating that IOs are more likely to get involved in more salient issue claims between relative equals and that democracies and IO members are more likely to turn to IOs for assistance. As we can see in Table 4, there is considerable variation in IO involvement across issue types, with the least overall salient issues (rivers) having the highest likelihood of IO management (.14) in comparison to maritime (.12) and territorial issues (.05). However, once we control for this

Table 3
IO Conflict Management and Reaching Agreements

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	β	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>SE</i>
Reach agreement						
Minimum IO	0.008	(.003)**	0.000	(0.004)		
democracy history						
Mean IO preference	1.050	(.769)	-1.086	(0.968)		
similarity						
Institutionalization \times	0.561	(.166)***			0.580	(.158)***
Binding						
Global IO			-0.289	(0.312)		
Regional IO					0.586	(.226)***
Constant	-1.958	(.771)**	0.593	(1.073)	-1.336	(.423)***
IO conflict						
management						
Shared IO	0.045	(.018)**	0.047	(0.019)**	0.043	(.018)**
memberships						
Issue salience	0.049	(.023)**	0.054	(0.023)**	0.048	(.023)**
Power parity	0.335	(.148)**	0.325	(0.153)**	0.357	(.147)
Minimum	0.023	(.007)***	0.023	(0.007)***	0.024	(.007)***
democracy-autocracy						
Procedural/functional	-0.487	(.109)***	-0.482	(0.110)***	-0.491	(.109)***
River claim	0.510	(.137)***	0.485	(0.141)***	0.501	(.136)***
Maritime claim	0.430	(.115)***	0.422	(0.117)***	0.424	(.115)***
Rho	0.606	(.224)*	0.352	(0.313)	0.600	(.223)*
Constant	-1.984	(.201)***	-2.025	(0.202)***	-1.969	(.202)***
<i>N</i>	1,463	(126)	1,463	(126)	1,463	(126)
Log likelihood	-465.005		-470.443		-464.585	

Note: IO = intergovernmental organization. \dot{C} * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$.

across-issue variation, the within-issue salience measure is still positive and significant, suggesting that IOs are going to the hot spots more frequently for a given issue type. Shared IO memberships in peace-promoting organizations have the largest substantive effect, more than quadrupling the probability of IO involvement (from .04 to .18). Issue salience is also relevant, as the most salient contentious issues are three times more likely to experience IO conflict management (from .03 to .10).

In the second stage of the model, we use the indicator of reaching agreement to evaluate the success of IO management attempts.²¹ Hypothesis 1 finds empirical support, with binding conflict management efforts by highly institutionalized IOs significantly more likely to produce agreements over territorial, maritime, and river claims than management efforts by minimalist IOs. Table 4 shows that the least

Table 4
Predicted Probability of IO Settlement Attempt and Reaching Agreement

Variable	Probability of IO Settlement Attempt	Probability of Reaching Agreement
	Probability (Change)	Probability (Change)
Minimum IO democracy history		
0 (minimum)		.62
15.3 (mean)		.67 (+ .05)
173 (maximum)		.98 (+ .36)
Mean IO preference similarity		
.341 (minimum)		.46
.793 (mean)		.69 (+ .23)
1 (maximum)		.78 (+ .32)
Institutionalization × Binding		
0 (minimalist, nonbinding)		.57
1 (structured, binding)		.81 (+ .24)
2 (interventionist, binding)		.94 (+ .37)
Shared IO memberships		
0 (minimum)	.04	
2.7 (mean)	.06 (+ .02)	
11 (maximum)	.18 (+ .14)	
Issue salience		
0 (minimum)	.03	
7.3 (mean)	.07 (+ .04)	
12 (maximum)	.10 (+ .07)	
Power parity		
0 (preponderance)	.06	
1 (parity)	.11 (+ .05)	
Minimum democracy		
-10 (minimum)	.04	
0.04 (mean)	.07 (+ .03)	
10 (maximum)	.10 (+ .06)	
Functional/procedural		
0 (no)	.10	
1 (yes)	.04 (-.06)	
River claim		
0 (no)	.06	
1 (yes)	.14 (+ .08)	
Maritime claim		
0 (no)	.05	
1 (yes)	.12 (+ .07)	

Note: IO = intergovernmental organization.

institutionalized IOs have a rate of success for reaching agreements (0.57) that is not far away from the entire sample of agreements reached in peaceful settlement attempts (0.56). Structured organizations with assemblies, bureaucracies, and formal

rules experience greater success in their conflict management efforts, raising the likelihood of agreement from 0.51 to 0.81. The most institutionalized IOs, or interventionist organizations, are extremely successful as conflict managers producing a very high rate of agreement at 0.94. While Mitchell and Hensel (2007) find a distinction between binding and nonbinding efforts by IOs, our results demonstrate that the institutional characteristics of the organization influence their success rates. Even when focusing on binding techniques, less institutionalized IOs experience significantly lower rates of success in producing agreements. Thus, among potential IO conflict managers, the most highly institutionalized organizations have a clear advantage for getting disputing parties to reach agreement, especially when they use binding techniques.

Recall that two competing hypotheses were presented with respect to the effects of preference homogeneity in an IO. Hypothesis 2A predicted that increasing levels of homogeneity or preference similarity among member states would enhance the success rates of IO conflict management efforts because they could provide unbiased information more easily, and they had a better understanding of conflicts in their neighborhood. Hypothesis 2B, on the other hand, predicted that more heterogeneous organizations were better suited to managing conflicts because their diversity improves the credibility of information sent by the IO to disputants. The results in Table 3, model 1 do not provide support for either hypothesis.²² While regional IO members share more similar foreign policy preferences on average than global IO members, we find no systematic effect of preference similarity on IO conflict management success. The substantive results in Table 4 show an increasing effect of IO preference similarity, consistent with hypothesis 2A, but the lack of statistical significance raises doubts about these effects.

Hypothesis 3 finds empirical support in Table 3, model 1. As the IO members' minimum democratic history increases, peaceful settlement attempts by IOs are significantly more likely to produce agreement. If the minimum democratic history is zero, meaning one or more IO members are autocratic, the probability of reaching agreement is .62, a rate slightly higher than the overall sample. If the minimum democracy history is fifteen years, this improves the chances for agreement by 5 percent (0.62 to 0.67). The most democratic organizations in the sample almost always produce agreements, with a probability of .98.

Given that regional organizations tend to have more democratic member states with more closely aligned foreign policy preferences, they may experience greater success in helping local disputants reach agreements over contentious issues.²³ Evidence for this claim is provided in table 3, model 3, where the variables that proxy regional effects (IO democratic history, IO preference similarity) are removed and a regional dummy variable is included. The regional IO dummy variable is positive and significant, demonstrating that democratic history and preference similarity help to account for the success of regional IOs' conflict management efforts.²⁴

In Table 3, model 2, we conduct a similar exercise to examine the effects of global organizations by removing the key variable associated with global IOs, the interaction of institutionalization and binding management techniques. In this model, inclusion of the global dummy variable actually washes out the effect of all other variables, and the global dummy variable is not significant. This suggests to us that institutionalization is not the only factor that helps to account for successful conflict management by global IOs. However, the three theoretical factors we have identified give us quite a bit of leverage for explaining why some IO conflict management attempts succeed more than others. Binding attempts by highly institutionalized IOs are more successful, and IOs that are more democratic experience more success on the interstate conflict management scene.

Finally, there is evidence that a selection effect is operating in the process of conflict management by IOs. The rho parameter, capturing the correlation between the disturbance terms in the two stages of the selection model, is statistically significant in model 1 ($p = .0589$). The estimated rho parameter is positive, suggesting that unobserved factors that promote IO involvement in the conflict management process also bolster their chances for success.

Discussion

Our empirical findings suggest that it is fruitful to move beyond a regional/global IO categorization and to identify institutional characteristics that vary across organizations. Our results demonstrate that IOs are not uniformly suited to promote cooperation and manage interstate conflict. More highly institutionalized and democratic IOs experience greater success in brokering agreements over contentious issues. While we focus on three theoretical factors, other scholars have identified variance in the relationship between shared IO membership and cooperation as well. Hafner-Burton and Montgomery (2008 [this issue]) find that members of preferential trade agreements (PTAs) often impose economic sanctions on other PTA members. Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom (2004) found that IOs reduce the chances for militarized conflict only if they are highly institutionalized and have a security mandate. Previous research has also suggested that the durability of IOs depends on major power contention, institutionalization, size, and age. In short, the relationship between IOs and cooperation is more nuanced than the liberal peace literature suggests (Russett and Oneal 2001).²⁵

Factors other than institutionalization, democracy, and preference similarity may influence the success rates of conflict management by IOs. In Table 5, we examine the robustness of our results to the addition of variables capturing major power contention, IO age, and IO power. Model 1 replaces the dyadic preference similarity score with a measure of preference similarity between the IO's major power members. This variable has a stronger effect than preference homogeneity for all IO members; conflict management attempts by IOs are more likely to produce agreements if the major

Table 5
Alternative Explanations

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	β	SE	β	SE	β	SE	β	SE
Reach agreement								
Minimum IO democracy history	0.006	(0.003)**	0.009	(0.005)*	0.008	(0.004)**	0.008	(0.005)*
Mean IO preference similarity			1.448	(1.082)	1.359	(0.797)*	1.305	(0.802)
Institutionalization \times Binding	0.494	(0.139)***	0.601	(0.179)***	0.599	(0.170)***	0.591	(0.170)***
Major power preference similarity	0.821	(0.347)**						
Number of major powers in IO			0.014	(0.067)				
IO age					0.002	(0.005)		
IO median CINC score							0.213	(4.263)
Constant	-1.817	(0.399)***	-2.332	(1.154)**	-2.300	(0.839)***	-2.167	(0.800)***
IO conflict management								
Shared IO memberships	0.050	(0.018)***	0.047	(0.018)***	0.047	(0.018)***	0.047	(0.018)***
Issue salience	0.037	(0.023)	0.045	(0.023)*	0.044	(0.023)*	0.045	(0.023)*
Power parity	0.331	(0.149)**	0.337	(0.149)**	0.336	(0.149)**	0.338	(0.149)**
Minimum democracy – autocracy	0.021	(0.008)***	0.022	(0.007)***	0.022	(0.007)***	0.022	(0.007)***
Procedural/functional	-0.465	(0.112)***	-0.476	(0.109)***	-0.474	(0.109)***	-0.476	(0.109)***
River claim	0.530	(0.135)***	0.512	(0.137)***	0.516	(0.137)***	0.514	(0.138)***
Maritime claim	0.298	(0.119)**	0.426	(0.116)***	0.426	(0.115)***	0.426	(0.116)***
Rho	0.706	(0.198)**	0.600	(0.232)*	0.622	(0.228)**	0.600	(0.235)*
Constant	-1.919	(0.201)***	-1.970	(0.201)***	-1.966	(0.200)***	-1.969	(0.201)***
N	1451	(114)	1461	(124)	1461	(124)	1461	(124)
Log – Likelihood	-431.808		-459.582		-459.533		-459.601	

Note: IO = intergovernmental organization; CINC = Composite Index of National Capability. $\hat{C}^*p < .10$, $**p < .05$, $***p < .01$

power members of the organization share similar foreign policy views ($p = .018$). These results are somewhat at odds with the finding that major power contention increases the chances for interstate conflicts, although our analyses focus on peaceful attempts to manage conflicts, not militarized ones. Model 2 presents another measure of major power influence in an IO, the number of major power members. The effect of this variable is not statistically significant, although the population of IOs with many major power members is smaller because these IOs tend to fail more quickly. Only sixteen of the total conflict management attempts by IOs in the ICOW data set involve IOs with more than five major power members.

Model 3 enters the effect of IO age to account for the possibility that global organizations have had more frequent opportunities to serve as conflict managers. In our model, IO age is not significant, which suggests that even though some organizations are more likely to persist after decades of existence, their increased age does not give them additional advantages for successfully managing conflicts. Model 4 controls for the average capabilities of IO members, recording the median Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) score for IO members. More powerful IOs may experience greater conflict management success, although the analysis shows no significant effect of IO median CINC score.²⁶ Regional IOs have significantly higher member capabilities ($\bar{X} = .02$) compared with global IOs ($\bar{X} = .002$, $F = 306.4$, $p < .001$). In other words, the institutional characteristics of the IO, rather than the capabilities of its members facilitate agreement. The negative sign and the weakness of this finding may indicate that multiple major powers negatively affect the durability of IOs. The more major powers within the organization, the more likely their extant rivalries play out within the organization and the more likely excluded major powers are to attempt to undermine the institution. These conflicts are likely to be particularly intractable.

In Table 6 we provide information about each IO in the data set including the number of conflict management attempts; the success rate of those attempts; and the modal scores for institutionalization, preference similarity, and democracy.²⁷ An examination of the cases further reveals the false nature of the global-regional dichotomy, as success rates vary from 0 to 100 percent in both global and regional IO categories. Consistent with hypothesis 1, highly institutionalized IOs are most effective if they use binding management techniques, especially adjudication, as the success rates for global and regional courts are very high. The World Court (Permanent Court of International Justice/International Court of Justice) has a success rate close to 100 percent, as does the European Court of Justice. On the other hand, nonbinding conflict management attempts, such as good offices or mediation by highly institutionalized global organizations, are much less effective. For example, attempts by the United Nations Secretary General to manage territorial, maritime, and river issues have produced agreements only 7 percent of the time. These results suggest that institutionalized mechanisms alone are insufficient for effective conflict management and that other mechanisms are important.

Table 6
Summary of IO Conflict Management Cases

International Organization Name	Number of Attempts	% Success	Institutionalization	Preference Similarity	Democracy
League of Nations	2	50	Medium	Medium	Medium
League of Nations Council	3	100	Medium	Medium	Medium
League of Nations Judicial Committee	1	0	Medium	Medium	Medium
Permanent Court of International Justice	3	100	High	Medium	Medium
United Nations	12	58	High	Low	Low
United Nations Secretary General	14	7	High	Low	Low
United Nations Security Council	5	40	High	Low	Low
United Nations Peacekeeping Organization	1	0	High	Low	Low
International Court of Justice	17	94	High	Low	Medium
Hague/Permanent Court of Arbitration	1	100	Medium	Medium	Medium
Judicial Committee of the Imperial Privy Council	1	100	High	Low	Medium
North Atlantic Treaty Organization	4	50	Medium	High	High
Organization for Economic Development	1	100	Medium	Low	Medium
Vatican	10	70	NA	NA	NA
Organization of American States	30	70	Medium	High	Medium
Inter-American Peace Committee	2	100	Medium	High	Medium
Inter-American Conference on Conciliation and Arbitration	3	33	High	Medium	Medium
U.S.-Canada International Joint Commission	5	60	Low	Medium	High
U.S.-Mexico International Boundary Commission	9	67	Low	Low	High
Central American Court	2	100	High	High	Medium
Central American Court of Justice	1	0	High	High	Medium
Caribbean Community	2	0	Low	High	Medium
Paris Peace Conference I	11	73	Low	Medium	Low
Paris Peace Conference II	2	100	Low	Low	High
European Economic Community/European Union	10	20	High	Medium	High
European Court of Justice	3	100	High	Medium	High
Central Rhine Commission	1	100	Medium	Low	Medium
Organization for Democracy and Economic Development	1	0	Medium	High	Low
Baltic Assembly	3	0	Medium	High	Medium

For example, institutionalized IOs might be more successful with binding techniques because they raise the reputation costs for reneging on agreements; they reduce uncertainty about disputants' preferences, capabilities, and resolve; and they have more resources at their disposal (Mitchell and Hensel 2007).

The selection model discussed above suggests a general pattern whereby more democratic IOs are more effective at conflict management. Some organizations that fit this pattern as seen in Table 6 include the Organization of American States, with a 70 percent success rate, and the U.S.-Mexico International Boundary Commission, with a 67 percent success rate. On the other hand, two of the most democratic IOs in the data, the European Union and NATO, have surprisingly little success when managing contentious issues. All fourteen cases involve maritime claims in Europe with a very low chance for militarized escalation. Maritime conflicts are arguably the newest contentious issue in the ICOW data, arising on a large scale only after World War II. Furthermore, these conflicts arise from disagreements over maritime boundaries, and while there have been numerous conventions to clarify these boundaries (e.g., United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea), contention over maritime space remains. These results indicate that while democratic IOs might be successful at reducing militarized conflict between their member states (Pevehouse and Russett 2006), they are not always advantaged as conflict managers in the interstate system.

Conclusion

Our article addresses a long-standing debate in the conflict management literature about the efficacy of international organizations as mediators and the differences in success rates between regional and global organizations. We assert that it is problematic to use a global/regional dichotomy because it obscures other sources of institutional variance within and across global and regional IOs. We compare the success of regional and global organizations in their roles as third-party conflict managers focusing on three key IO characteristics: institutionalization, average dyadic member preference similarity, and average member democracy history. Using a two-stage Heckman model for IO conflict management (stage 1) and reaching agreements (stage 2), we find that IOs are more likely to get involved in more salient issue claims between relative equals and that democracies and IO members are more likely to turn to IOs for assistance. With respect to success, we find that IOs are more likely to help disputing parties reach an agreement if they have more democratic members, if they are highly institutionalized, and when they use binding management techniques.

Our theory and analyses demonstrate the advantages of creating a virtuous cycle between theory and evidence in the study of international organizations. Much of the debate about global versus regional IOs stems from empirical evidence about

specific institutions (e.g., UN, OAS, OAU), while our analyses focus on a broad set of IO conflict management cases. This gives us greater leverage for measuring institutional features that vary across IOs and also keeps the analysis fairly simple by focusing only on two dozen institutions. Rational design theoretical models tend to focus on a broad class of IOs and examine multiple forms of interstate cooperation. We apply the logic of these models to a specific function that IOs perform as conflict managers, which helps to refine the conceptualization and measurement of cooperation and be more precise about the complex contingencies of causes and effects. The results demonstrate the advantages of resolving puzzling findings by thinking more carefully about the sources of variance across cases theoretically and moving toward a more complete science of international organizations.

Notes

1. According to Sabur and Kabir (2000), the founding Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members blamed the earlier failures of the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) and the Malaysia-Philippines-Indonesia (MAPHILINDO) organization on member state conflicts. Because of these earlier failures, the ASEAN members developed a norm of resolving conflicts among member states by bilateral negotiations outside of ASEAN.

2. Nye (1971) provides an interesting contrast between the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The OAS is composed of one hegemon and a number of fairly wealthy states that are able to provide funding and experts for organizational work, as compared to the OAU, which has no hegemon and includes some of the poorest states in the world. Alternatively, the OAU has prestige and status among African leaders (Meyers 1974) and is seen as a legitimate forum for mediation of interstate conflict between African leaders. This perceived legitimacy is lacking in the OAS, which has sometimes been viewed as a tool for U.S. foreign policy. However, as Meyers (1974) points out, the OAU's ability to provide "good offices" and legitimacy in its dealings does provide some benefit but is unable to overcome the material and informational resource shortage. OAS dispute settlement is in many ways advantaged by the material and informational resources of the organization.

3. The Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) data set is described in more detail in the Research Design section. For the difference of means tests, the unit of analysis is the intergovernmental organization (IO) year spanning all years of the IO's existence.

4. We use the *S* measure of alliance portfolio similarity developed by Signorino and Ritter (1999), which ranges from -1 (*divergent preferences*) to $+1$ (*similar preferences*). For each pair of states in each IO, we calculate the annual dyadic preference similarity score and then aggregate these by IO year.

5. Lipson (2003) offers a contrasting viewpoint, arguing that the transparency of democratic regimes allows them to bargain more efficiently, which should enhance the parties' own efforts to resolve their disputes bilaterally (Dixon 1998).

6. The Central Organ functions as a "kind of Security Council of the OAU" (Peck 2001, 575).

7. Mitchell (2002) has traced the role that democracies played in promoting the norm of third-party conflict management. Initially, the United States and Great Britain practiced arbitration as a way to settle disputes and later offered services as mediators for disputes between other states. The United States turned to arbitration in settling boundary water disputes with Canada and later Mexico and served an important role in the creation of the Pan American Conference, which in 1928–29 took an active role in preventing conflict between Bolivia and Paraguay (Murdock 1929; Woolsey 1929). Interestingly, at that time, both Bolivia and Paraguay were nondemocracies.

8. Version 1.1 of the ICOW data is available at <http://www.icow.org> via the ICOW Data Archive link. The Web site provides documentation describing the data, as well as published and working papers using the data. For published studies using the ICOW data, see Hensel (2000, 2001); Mitchell (2002); Hensel and Mitchell (2005); Kadera and Mitchell (2005); Hensel, Mitchell, and Sowers (2006); James, Park, and Choi (2006); Mitchell and Hensel (2007); and Hensel et al. (2008).

9. The coding of *peaceful* attempted settlements includes negotiations meant to settle part or all of issue under contention ("substantive" settlement attempts), negotiations over procedures for future settlement of the claim ("procedural" settlement attempts, such as a treaty submitting the claim to arbitration by a specific third party or an agreement to meet for new negotiations at some specific time), and negotiations over the use of the claimed area or river without attempting to settle the question of ownership ("functional" settlement attempts, such as a treaty of free navigation along a disputed river border). Any other types of negotiations (e.g., talks over a cease-fire to stop an ongoing crisis or war that do not include any functional or procedural elements beyond stopping the fighting) are excluded.

10. Several of these IO attempts involve the Vatican, which we do not include in the analyses below, which reduces our sample size of IO settlement attempts. For an analysis of the indirect network effects of IO membership, see Dorussen and Ward (2008 [this issue]).

11. Inclusion of the institutionalization measure alone produces insignificant results because binding IO attempts are more successful, while nonbinding IO attempts are less successful.

12. We created histograms of this measure for all IO years, as well as histograms for global and regional IOs separately. For the overall sample, the data are clustered on the upper end of the distribution, indicating that states with similar preferences join IOs, that IOs enhance the similarity of members' preferences, or that both processes are potentially at work. For global organizations, the mean similarity scores among members are lower and more frequently distributed on the lower end of the distribution. Regional organizations, on the other hand, have a much higher mean, and the distribution is skewed more heavily toward one. The plots of these distributions are available from the authors upon request.

13. For territorial claims, the six indicators used to construct the general measure of territorial claim salience include (1) territory that is claimed by the state as homeland territory, rather than as a colonial or dependent possession; (2) territory located on the mainland rather than an offshore island; (3) territory that is contiguous to the nearest portion of the state; (4) territory that is known or suspected to contain potentially valuable resources; (5) territory with a militarily or economically strategic location; and (6) the presence of an explicit ethnic, religious, or other identity basis for the claim. The six indicators used to measure river claim salience are (1) river location in the state's homeland territory rather than in colonial or dependent territory, (2) navigational value of the river, (3) level of population served by the river, (4) the presence of a fishing or other resource extraction industry on the river, (5) hydroelectric power generation along the river, and (6) irrigational value of the river. The six indicators for maritime claim salience are (1) maritime borders extending from homeland rather than colonial or dependent territory, (2) a strategic location of the claimed maritime zone, (3) fishing resources within the maritime zone, (4) migratory fishing stocks crossing into and out of the maritime zone, (5) the known or suspected presence of oil resources within the maritime zone, and (6) relation of the maritime claim to an ongoing territorial claim (involving maritime areas extending beyond either claimed coastal territory or a claimed island).

14. We refer to these as procedural settlement attempts. For example, the parties may agree to submit the claim to third-party arbitration as Chile and Argentina did in 1979 when accepting Papal mediation of the Beagle Channel dispute.

15. We refer to these as functional settlement attempts. For example, Britain and Argentina have signed a number of functional agreements related to fishing and oil off the coast of the Falkland Islands, but these agreements do not resolve the sovereignty issue.

16. The challenger is the state challenging the existing territorial, river, or maritime status quo, or what is typically referred to as the revisionist state in the international relations literature.

17. Relevant global treaties include the charters of the League of Nations and United Nations, declarations accepting the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice or

International Court of Justice, the 1899 and 1907 Hague treaties on the peaceful settlement of disputes, and the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Relevant regional treaties in the Western Hemisphere include the charters of the Organization of American States and the Rio Pact (Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance) as well as the 1902 Treaty on Compulsory Arbitration, 1923 Gondra Treaty, 1929 General Convention on Inter-American Conciliation and General Treaty of Inter-American Arbitration, 1933 Saavedra Lamas Pact, 1936 Treaty on Prevention of Controversies, 1936 Inter-American Treaty on Good Offices and Mediation, and 1948 American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (Pact of Bogotá). This data set is available at <http://data.icow.org>, including documentation that lists the excerpts of the treaty or charter that call for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

18. Two cases are missing information on agreement because the settlement attempt is ongoing.

19. If members of the IO come from more than one region, we consider the organization to be a global one. On the basis of our criteria, NATO is a global organization.

20. We checked the robustness of our baseline selection model in several ways. First, we included the measures for parity and regime type in the outcome stage, finding that IOs are more effective at brokering agreements between democracies, consistent with much of the published working linking democracies and IOs (Russett and Oneal 2001). Power parity has no effect on whether agreements are reached with IO assistance. Second, we moved each control variable from the selection model into the outcome model in two forms. We included each of these variables in both stages (e.g., parity in the selection model and parity in the outcome model). We also dropped each control variable from the selection stage, while including it in the outcome stage. Our results for IO democracy history and institutionalization are significant and positive across each of these specifications. The only exception is the variable for shared IO memberships, which renders IO democracy history insignificant in the outcome stage because it is correlated with shared IO memberships at 0.49. Third, logit models were estimated separately for each stage. The logit results for the selection stage are similar to the results in Table 3. However, the logit results for the outcome stage are different, consistent with the selection effect; IO democracy has no effect in the logit model. These results are available from the authors upon request.

21. In Table 2, there was not a significant relationship between global IO involvement and agreement, nor regional IO involvement and agreement. Thus, we think using this measure of success makes sense because the global/regional dichotomy is not picking up differences in success rates across IOs, which our theoretical variables are designed to capture.

22. We tried an alternative measure of preference similarity based on UN voting behavior (Gartzke and Jo 2002). This measure is less ideal because pre-1945 settlement cases are omitted, reducing the total number of IO-mediated cases to 75. This alternative similarity measure is not statistically significant, and the results for institutionalization and IO democracy are unchanged.

23. When looking at the mandate of the IOs that serve as active conflict managers, the vast majority of global organizations have multiple mandates, such as security and economic mandates. Among regional organizations, the majority are coded as having neither security nor economic mandates (Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom 2004). Only one IO has a pure economic mandate (Caribbean Community, or CARICOM). Mansfield and Pevehouse (2008) find that stable democracies tend to join political and standards-based IOs, while democratizing states prefer joining economic IOs. The lack of management by economic IOs in our data explains why democratic history has a strong effect on conflict management success. In other words, more mature democracies tend to be members of IOs with multi-issue mandates, and these organizations manage conflicts more frequently.

24. We also estimated the selection models with regional dummy variables in the outcome or selection stage. We find that the regional dummy variables are not significant in the selection stage. We get positive and significant results in the outcome stage, demonstrating that agreements are more likely to be brokered with IO assistance in the Americas and Europe than in the Middle East. Inclusion of these regional dummies does not alter the findings for our key theoretical variables.

25. von Stein (2008 [this issue]) examines the effect of flexibility provisions on treaty ratification, showing that treaty design influences the likelihood that states ratify the treaty's terms.

26. One reviewer pointed out that our measure of IO democracy might be problematic because it treats all members the same. We tried an alternative measure that multiplied IO members' Composite Index of National Capability (CINC) and Polity scores. The results are similar to the baseline model, showing that an IO with a longer democratic history experiences greater success in getting parties to agreement, even when controlling for member states' capabilities.

27. We describe these categories in simple terms as low, medium, and high, reporting the modal category if the measures change over time. A value below the 25th quartile for a variable is treated as low, values between the 25th and 75th quartiles are coded as medium, while high scores are above the 75th quartile.

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