

INTRODUCTION TO SYMPOSIUM ON STAVROS GADINIS, “THREE PATHWAYS TO GLOBAL STANDARDS: PRIVATE, REGULATOR, AND MINISTRY NETWORKS”

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AJIL Unbound is pleased to present this symposium on Stavros Gadinis’ article *Three Pathways to Global Standards: Private, Regulator, and Ministry Networks*¹, which appears in the January 2015 issue of the American Journal of International Law. Gadinis unpacks the widely deployed network concept to argue for a more refined characterization and presents a new typology that advances our understanding of global network governance. His key characteristic, as the title of the article suggests, is the type of actor central to the network, and Gadinis elucidates the qualities of each of his three types. Private, regulator, and ministry networks, he argues, each have different goals, operating environments, and modes of interaction, thus behaving differently. Private networks are embedded in the market; regulatory networks are driven by expertise; and ministry networks are beholden to the political concerns of the states in which they are embedded. Using an array of methodologies, and focusing on three key networks as case studies, Gadinis provides empirical support for his theory and speculates on the normative implications of the analysis.

Each of the three authors of comments in this Symposium calls into question Gadinis’ particular typology in some way. As Robert Ahdieh notes in his comment,² Gadinis has done a great service by disaggregating networks. But once one disaggregates, there will likely be alternative ways of categorizing the phenomenon. Different networks may even defy categorization. Drawing on the prior literature on network governance, Paul Stephan³ is not so sure that “ministry network” is a genuine category, since it is functionally similar to a classic international organization. Stephan also goes on to make the point that a full empirical analysis would require some attention to failed networks, or areas in which we would expect cooperation but where none materializes. Gesturing to network theory, Fleur Johns’ comment⁴ takes a different angle, challenging the reification of networks inherent in Gadinis’ approach. She challenges the idea that networks have agency and sees the virtue of the network concept as its highlighting inter-relationships and connections rather than fixed actors. She then goes on to critique the assumptions embedded in Gadinis’ typology and characterizations. What the comments leave us with is the impression of an important article that will continue to shape debate on global networks for some time.

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¹ Stavros Gadinis, *Three Pathways to Global Standards: Private, Regulator, and Ministry Networks*, 109 AJIL 1 (2015).

² Robert B. Ahdieh, *Enter the Fox—Lumping and Splitting in the Study of Transnational Networks: A Response to Stavros Gadinis*, 109 AJIL UNBOUND 29 (2015).

³ Paul B. Stephan, *Standards, Networks, and the Political Economy of International Lawmaking: A Response to Stavros Gadinis*, 109 AJIL UNBOUND 34 (2015).

⁴ Fleur Johns, *Starting and Stopping Points: A Response to Stavros Gadinis*, 109 AJIL UNBOUND 39 (2015).