

# Oxymoron Organizing

Travels of the Idea of Energy-Efficient Oil Tankers

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Akademisk Avhandling

för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen i företagsekonomi som med tillstånd av Handelshögskolans fakultetsstyrelse vid Göteborgs universitet framlägges för offentlig granskning den 24 maj 2024, klockan 10.15 i sal E44, Handelshögskolan, Vasagatan 1, Göteborg.

Avhandlingen baseras på följande delarbeten:

1. Varvne, Hanna & Andrei, Mariana. (2024). Failing Forward: The Transformative Power of Writing in Interdisciplinary Ethnographic Research. Under revision: *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*
2. Varvne, Hanna & Eriksson-Zetterquist, Ulla (work in process). Exploring Sensemaking through Materiality in Oil Shipping. Working paper intended for: *Journal of Management Studies*
3. Viktorelius, Martin, Varvne, Hanna, & von Knorring, Hannes (2022). An overview of sociotechnical research on maritime energy efficiency. *WMU Journal of Maritime Affairs*.
4. Poulsen, Rene Taudal, Viktorelius, Martin, Varvne, Hanna, Rasmussen, Hanna Barbara, & von Knorring, Hannes (2022). Energy efficiency in ship operations - Exploring voyage decisions and decision-makers. *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*
5. Varvne, Hanna (2024). Anchoring unsustainable practices in rhetoric a study of just-in-time arrival of tanker ships. Under review: *Cleaner Logistics and Supply Chain*



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Language: English  
256 pages  
ISBN: 978-91-88623-34-8  
Doctoral thesis 2024

## **Oxymoron Organizing**

### Travels of the Idea of Energy-Efficient Oil Tankers

This study explores how the idea of energy-efficient travels is translated among organizations engaged in the shipping of oil, including shipowners, fuel companies, ports, and so forth. Contextualized in a Swedish setting, the study applies the translation model of organizational change, focusing on organizations engaged in the oxymoronic endeavor to operate energy efficient oil tankers. The findings from five appended papers are based on ethnographic materials, including interviews, observations, diaries, and documents that has been analyzed through an Actor-Network Theory lens, to provide insights into this dynamic process. Together with the compilation, the appended papers contribute to the outcome of the study, answering the question: *How does the idea of energy efficiency travel and translate among organizations engaged in the shipping of oil?*

The results demonstrate how energy efficiency has been linked from the outset to the theme of environmental sustainability. The study illustrates how this linkage – to sustainability as well as other concepts such as market dynamics – operates in practice. These ideas are translated and materialized – into regulations, contracts, technologies, and linguistic artifacts. When these objects and quasi-objects are further translated into organizational actions and attempts at actions, it becomes obvious that technological developments are more easily achieved than changes in daily practices, although these two are often closely linked.

The study provides new perspectives to energy management research through its discussion on energy-related terminology, such as efficiency and effectiveness, particularly within the context of ISO 50001 standards. Furthermore, it contributes to the translation model of organizational change by elaborating on the organizational field construct and highlighting the importance of technology. This view of technology's role in organizational change also provides insights to the gap between technological and organizational factors in energy efficiency efforts.

**Key words:** Oil Tankers, Energy Efficiency, Translation Model of Organizational Change, Actor-Network Theory

Printed in Sweden  
By Stema Specialtryck AB, 2024

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