

BRIDGING THE GAP:  
International Organizations  
As Organizations

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Bridging the Gap:  
International Organizations as Organizations

INTRODUCTION

The gap between the study of international organizations and the sociology of organizations is deep and persistent. Political science has witnessed a considerable development in the study of international organizations as a part of international relations or global politics. Sociology and psychology have been the scene of equally impressive developments in the study of modern organizations. What is curious here is the almost complete ignorance each set of studies has of the other. The ignorance in political science is slightly less than in sociology and psychology, where it seems almost complete.

At least since Weber's great studies, sociologists have been interested in the rise and spread of the modern bureaucratic form of organization. Merton, Presthaus, Selznick, Lipset, Bendix, and Coleman are only a few of the many who have followed Weber to produce significant insights into the origins and implications of this new form of organization. Yet to learn of the equally momentous rise of international organizations, or those that deliberately span state boundaries, one must turn to political science. A host of functionalists have described the rise of these organizations, usually looking hopefully for signs of a more integrated and peaceful world (Mitraný 1933 and 1966, Luard 1966 and 1977, Hill 1978, and Jacobson 1984). The Union of International Associations was founded as early as 1907 and for some years has published a Yearbook of International Organizations, with entries that number in the thousands. Wallace and Singer (1970) have advanced systematic analysis in this field considerably by identifying all international governmental organizations and their memberships since 1815.

Sociologists have scarcely noted that they exist. In his rich compilation of facts and theories on Organizations and Environments (1979), Howard Aldrich makes no mention of the United Nations, Multinational Corporations, or the myriad private associations and foundations that work in the specifically international environment. Nor does Scott (1987) deal with these organizations in one of the best recent texts in

organizational sociology. The new world systems perspective has led to extensive concern with multinational corporations, but this is not a concern with organizations per se, as that concern has been with the internationalization of production.

There have been a few deliberate attempts to use insights from organizational sociology in the study of international organizations. Haas (1964) drew on concepts from Weberian bureaucracy, human relations, and systems theories in sociology, but found these less than applicable, in large part, we believe, because he was focusing on what has been the dominant questions in international organizations: how can they create a more integrated world community?<sup>1</sup> Cox (1969) has drawn on Selznick's leadership work to produce some good insights into decision-making in international organizations. More recently Crane and Finkle (1981) and Ascher (1983) have drawn, respectively, on Selznick and Thompson, and March and Simon, and to a lesser extent Crozier, to understand distinctive conditions in the World Bank. The most recent work is that of Jonsson (1986), who bemoans the gap as we do. He follows Gordenker and Sanders suggestion and draws on work in interorganizational relations to provide a systematic and testable theory of linking-pin organizations. We shall return to some of these examples below. Here we merely wish to make the point that some political scientists have indeed drawn on at least limited segments of organizational sociology to examine international organizations. We can find no specific cases of the reverse. (They may indeed exist, of course, but they are certainly not prominent in the literature.)

The reasons for the ignorance are not easy to identify. Gordenker and Sanders (1978) have suggested that political scientists in the field ignore the work of sociologists because the latter have dealt primarily with business firms and governments, which they argue do not provide applicable models for international organizations. It is difficult to

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<sup>1</sup>. At the same time, Haas did draw on the more developed organizational insights of sociology, and in part because of this was led to develop a revision of functionalism that was less politically naive than Mitrany's classical functionalism. We shall argue below that this classical version operates with what is essentially a naive view of organizations as simple mechanical tools.

accept that judgement in the face of extensive studies of all manner of organizations. One need only scan the list of studies listed in the references of any recent textbook on organizations to see the great variety of organizations that have been subject to systematic analysis. Many of these could provide research leads in international organizations.<sup>2</sup> For example, in examining the dynamics of creating a regional, cross-state, planning and operating organization, Selznick's TVA study might have raised questions about cooptation, commitment, and goal narrowing in many United Nations development agencies. Like these, the TVA had to deal with local sovereignties, weak overall legal power, and limited fiscal and legal autonomy.<sup>3</sup> But this potential lead was not followed. Thus something other than an exclusive focus on government or business must explain why political scientists have not found organizational sociology useful for their analyses. There have yet been no attempts to explain why sociologists have so totally ignored international organizations. We suspect the reasons on both sides lie in more the organizational conditions that reflect the invisible colleges of the modern intellectual professions. Organizational sociologists, and for that matter psychologists have long been concerned with issues of organizational performance.<sup>4</sup> Political science, especially in international relations has been far more concerned with issues of

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<sup>2</sup>. It is true, however, that the largest volume of work is in the area "Human Relations" school work on factories and firms (Perrow, 1986).

<sup>3</sup>. We do not wish to imply a strict parallel between sovereignty of the states in the US and Nation State members of the United Nations. The Federal government in the US has far greater central power than does the UN, especially in taxation and legal prerogatives. Nonetheless, sovereignty, as we shall argue below, is a variable rather than a dichotomous attribute, and the American states in the early 1930s had a considerable amount of autonomy, if not full sovereignty, in decision-making. And it was precisely in dealing with this local autonomy that Selznick found an explanation for some of the TVA's most important characteristics. Further, like the UN, the TVA is in many respects what Jacobson calls a meta-bureaucracy, an organization that deals not with individual clients but with organizational members.

<sup>4</sup>. This emphasis on organizational performance may explain why there seems to be so much more cross-fertilization in organizational studies between sociology, public administration, business, and psychology than between any of these and international organizations.

national power, especially as it is used for and against other nations states. This "realist" position seems to imply that such organizations are creatures of the state, and thus are not of great interest in themselves.

Whatever the reason for the gap, it can only be regretted. In general, ignorance in any form in the social sciences is something that cannot be accepted for long. More specifically, each side of the gap would stand to grow through more effective bridging efforts. Gordenker and Sanders have suggested that a more abstract body of theory would be most welcome in international organizations, because it has been marked by much normative and teleological thinking. In effect, more abstract organizational theory might help to make the study of International Organizations more objective and scientific. For sociology, an examination of international organizations would add greatly to our understanding of how environments and organizations interact and shape each other, and how the patterns of interaction affect such things as internal organizational processes, or organizational outcomes. Further, in attempting to link together international governmental organizations, (IGOs), international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), and multinational corporations (or business international nongovernmental organizations, BINGOs) in a single theoretical framework, we might be forced to develop a more effective taxonomy of environments, which would advance greatly our general understanding of what they are. At a more micro level, we could raise questions about the relation between culture and organization, and about the relative capacity of each to affect behavior in organizations that must deal in multinational situations or with multinational staffs. There is interesting work going on in this field in management and business<sup>5</sup>, but it has as yet had only limited impact on organizational sociology, and it does not appear to have been used to examine the new and burgeoning UN's international civil service.

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<sup>5</sup>. Laurent (1983) and Hofstede (1983) represent a large and rapidly growing body of business literature that provides good insights for organizational sociology. Much of this appears in the journal, International Studies in Management and Organization There is also much interesting work coming out of the experience of multinational corporations, appearing in the Journal of International Business, see for example Doz and Prahalad (1984) and Egelhoff (1984).

Here we wish to take some steps to bridge the gap, largely by identifying areas from organizational sociology that can be usefully applied to the study of international organizations. Our hope is that this will as well provide a feedback to the sociology of organizations.<sup>6</sup> We argue that a critical source of the lacunae between the two fields derives from their difference in the concern for the issue of organizational performance, which we trace to the early formulations of Functionalism. To make this case, we examine the Functionalist orientations in Sociology and International Relations. From this we select two major concepts from organizational sociology -- environments and technology -- which have emerged as critical correlates of performance. Finally, we deal with organizational goals and structures, two concepts that are central to organizational analysis, but less central to the issue of performance. In the conclusion we suggest greater attention to issues of performance in international organizations, and suggest propositions and a general strategy for testing the propositions.

RELATED CONCEPTS: FUNCTIONALISM, REGIMES, AND ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY

The Two Functionalisms: IO and Sociological

Although Weiss (1975) sees roots in Henri Saint Simon, David Mitrany is generally accepted as the father of functional theory in international organizations (Jacobson 1984). From his earlier writings during the second world war, through his latest, he proposed a normative aim and a teleological process for international organizations. The aim was to be peace, through an integrated world community that could make war unnecessary, impractical, or impossible. The aim was also to be welfare, patterned on the development of the modern welfare state. For this, international organizations should focus their attention on technically specialized functions, especially in providing welfare for individuals and groups. The focus on specific functions would bring into play technical rather than political considerations, which would be less conflictual because they could be solved by rational calculation.

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<sup>6</sup>. In fact in this essay we shall deal primarily with the utility of sociological perspectives for the study of international organizations, leaving for another essay a deeper concern with the utility of international organizations for the sociology of organizations.

The result will be enhanced welfare and a more integrated world community.

These functionally-specific organizations would lead to greater world integration through two processes. Involvement in these organizations would produce both cognitive and value changes. People (presumably both elites and a sufficient proportion of the population to provide a social base for elites) will come to see the real complexity of the international scene and will not be swayed by simple-minded solutions to the problems. Further, the value change implies an erosion of the more limited national loyalties that are brought into play in war, and in some sense are assumed to be a basis for war. Second, involvement in the international organizations would increase the interests of participants in their continuation. It would "enmesh" them in beneficial exchanges and thus raise the costs of breaking the exchange through the declaration of war.

Although the vision of functionalism has been very much elaborated, and revised in neo-functional models, the basic paradigm remains alive and well in the literature. The aim is world peace and human welfare, and international organizations can help produce this through building a more integrated world community. The causal connections in this process also remain much the same: enmeshment and cognitive/value change. Though his political work creating the European coal and steel community stimulated a neo-functionalist revision in the works of Haas, Schuman expressed the basic functionalist "enmeshment" argument clearly when he proclaimed that the newly created community would make future wars between France and Germany "...not merely unthinkable, but impossible." (Harrison, 1978)

In one of the most comprehensive and coherent recent analyses of the network of international organizations, Jacobson (1984) presents a more cautious and guarded vision, but the hope and the theorized mechanisms remain the same. For example, Jacobson reanalysed Wallace and Singer's (1970) data and found a more hopeful sign than they had found that international organizations were indeed working to protect



the integrity of states and to avoid violent conflicts (p 196).<sup>7</sup> There has also been global economic development, in part attributable to the international government organizations. This in turn leads to greater welfare, and enmeshment through economic exchanges. Jacobson also cites Inkeles, who argues that these changes would surely produce a greater homogeneity of values and attitudes in the world, with the implication that this, too, leads to increased integration and a reduction of the chance of war.<sup>8</sup>

Although international organization (IO) political scientists are quick to point out that their functionalism is not the same thing as the sociologists' functionalism, there are important similarities. The IO enmeshment idea finds a parallel in Durkheim's view that modern, organic, solidarity arises through functional interdependence, though Durkheim did not draw the same conclusions about conflict and harmony. The IO teleology finds a parallel in Parsons' formulations, portraying modern industrial-capitalist, market-oriented, pluralist democratic society as a state toward which all social forms were converging. The importance IO functionalism attaches to value change and international loyalty as a source of peace finds its parallel in the sociological functionalist view of normative integration as the ultimate source of

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<sup>7</sup>. He also cites Haas, however, who argued that the "international regime" may have suffered some disintegration since 1965.

<sup>8</sup>. Functionalists theories have not been subjected to as much testing as they might have been, although some tests have been made. Jacobson (1986) presents another with positive results, but the logic of the causal connections continues to cause some trouble. For example, the connection between group loyalty, integration, and conflict has not been spelled out and tested in functionalist theory, though substantial evidence exists to question the assumed causal direction. The Communists were not the only ones to be disillusioned when German and French proletarian brothers took to the trenches in 1914 to slaughter one another in massive numbers. Many Third World pan-ethnic nationalist movements fractured along ethnic lines after independence was won. We see only one of the more tragic cases of this problem in Sri Lanka today. One of the assumptions that must surely be questioned is the stability of group loyalties, and the speed with which they can change. Japanese Americans in Hawaii produced a massive switch of allegiance after December 7, 1941. Perhaps the most extreme case of the instability of group identities and loyalty, however, is found in Nazi Germany. Germans Jews were by most accounts among the most integrated of all European Jews, but that did not prevent the holocaust.

social solidarity. And, of course, both functionalist perspectives focus much attention on actual behavior patterns, as opposed to constitutions or purely legal prescriptions. This represented a substantial advance in the thinking of international organizations (Taylor 1978), though it may be seen to have a longer heritage and to represent less discontinuity in sociology.

Although there are some similarities in the two functionalisms, the impact on their respective organizational analyses has been radically different. Gordenker and Sanders see a persistent normative and teleological orientation the internationalists functionalism. Organizations are the tools that will lead to greater peace and prosperity. Sociological functionalism<sup>9</sup> has produced a more skeptical, even cynical, view of organizations, giving the field something of an "expose" character.<sup>10</sup> Organizational sociology begins with a Weberian view of organizations as rational collectivities with limited goals, and an orientation to action. They also involve power. People and groups create organization to produce something that they can themselves control. The production requires the imperative specification and coordination of tasks, involving hierarchy, specialization, and authority and responsibility based on rational calculation and technical expertise. For Weber, and for the followers as well, this "impersonal and rational" bureaucratic form of organization is the most powerful form the world has ever seen. To this point, there is probably little dis-

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<sup>9</sup>. Functionalism in sociology, of course, has undergone a considerable transformation. The authors listed here can be considered functionalists because of their training under Merton and Parsons, but as Gouldner (1970) and others have noted, this brand of functionalism has evolved into many different, and sometimes antagonistic strains. They approach a conflict perspective, but were not by any means fully articulated as such. The specifically conflict perspective in organizational analysis has been quite weak, developed only in a few works: Benson (1977), Goldman & Van Houten (1977), and Clawson (1980). Westhues (1976) has argued that organizational and class perspectives are really different "paradigms" in the social sciences, which move in quite different directions and do not really confront one another.

<sup>10</sup>. The term is Perrow's (1986, p 157), and the perspective draws heavily on the insights of Selznick, which are summarized effectively in that volume. We also draw heavily on Selznick in the discussion that follows.

agreement between the two functionalisms, though the international type has not specified organizational conditions to this degree.

In the sociological view, however, the organization is not a simple mechanical tool. It interacts with an environment, and contains members who seek to use the organization for their own ends, often struggling with others over both the content and the allocation of the product. The outcome of these dynamics produces a distinctive character as organizations move through time. They usually develop a commitment to a specific technology, for example, and most important, they come to be infused with value. For Selznick this amounted to the institutionalization of organizations. They are, in effect, transformed from simple tools of their creators into collectivities that are at least partly ends in themselves. Organizations are tools, to be sure, but in Selznick's classic phrase, they are recalcitrant tools of action. Histories, environmental interactions, and internal conflicts give them a specific set of constraints. They also give organizations a specific set of powers, but these are not always the powers their creators intended. If functionalism in international organizations has sought to show how the rise of these organizations will serve altruistic ends by producing a more enmeshed and value homogeneous international community, in the sociological analysis, it has sought to show how organizations often serve narrow interests, of either creators or other members, behind masks of altruistic public interest.

From this sociological perspective, IO functional analysis must be seen as operating with an essentially simple and mechanical view of organizations. For Mitrany, organizations appear to be simply tools acting precisely and accurately at the command of their creators. Further, subsequent analyses of functionalist theories have implicitly assumed that all international governmental organizations are essentially alike. There is little perception that organizations differ either across time or from one another, in performance, or in the effectiveness or efficiency with which they achieve their ends. Nor is there any perception that organizations differ in what they are trying to achieve. This is especially evident in the quantitative cross-national tests of functionalist theory (Wallace and Singer 1970, Jacobson 1986).

These have usually simply used the number of international organizations (in a given year, or to which a country belongs) as an indicator of enmeshment. Thus the International Postal Union becomes the equivalent of the UN, NATO, or the EEC. Organizations that have high reputations for effective action, like UNICEF or some of the more effective non-governmental organizations, are the equivalent of those that are near moribund.

Finally, IO functionalism appears to assume that all organizations are alike in their positive contribution to enmeshment and thus to a more stable and peaceful international system. At least two different counter propositions can be raised here. First, it would be quite logical to derive from functionalism propositions about variance in organizational performance. If international organizations increase both enmeshment and value change, it could be proposed that those organizations that are more effective in achieving their assigned ends have a stronger positive impact on enmeshment and value changes than do those with lower levels of performance. Second, it is possible that organizations differ radically in the extent to which they aim, or inadvertently work, toward promoting stability, peace, or integration in the international system. Some organizations may in fact promote conflict and disintegration in the system, and for these, variance in performance might be negatively associated with international integration. To pursue questions of this character, however, it is necessary to approach international organizations with somewhat more specialized and powerful conceptual tools. These are concerned especially with the issue of organizational performance, but before we move to those tools we must say a word about another related development.

#### Regimes and Organizational Theory

One of the important recent developments in international relations is the observation of increasing interdependence. This leads, by not terribly clearly articulated or tested logic, to the proposition that international relations are coming to be, or are in part, governed by norms or principals that, like the rules of societal institutions or social structures, have a fundamentally moral character. They are not simply coldly calculated or rational contractual agreements. Rather

they are norms, rules that are value-laden and induce among actors an obligation to comply. International relations are governed in part by moral norms or principals, called regimes (Keohane and Nye 1972, 1977, and Krasner, 1983).

From a sociological perspective this is a familiar observation. It is similar to Durkheim's discovery, or argument, that any contractual arrangement depends upon an underlying set of non-contractual norms that alone permit contracts to be made. These are the "facts" that are sui generis social facts. They represent an underlying collective conscience, a set of ideas of what is right and good that is broadly shared by the members of a "society". Durkheim (1893 and 1966) made the point of the underlying normative system, and many others have elaborated it (Fisher and Strauss 1978). Society is a moral order. Its rules induce an obligation to comply, and deviance, always implied by the very concept of a rule, induces a sense of moral outrage. The idea of regimes simply extends this intranational, or societal, concept to the international arena.

There is, of course, considerable vagueness, or imprecision (Strange, 1983), in the concept. For the initiators, and their followers, the central point is agreement on a set of value-laden rules, or norms and principals. From that point, there is much avoidance of specification of parameters, content, or dimensions of variance. When one begins to consider where such agreements or regimes come from, Young (1983) can observe that they can arise spontaneously; they can be negotiated into being; or they can be imposed by a superior national government, a hegemon in the rhetoric of international relations.<sup>11</sup> Young even goes so far as to suggest that there is a lower incidence of negotiated regimes in international than in domestic society (1983, p 103) and that the incidence will be related to the centralization of authority and power in society. This implies that regimes can readily be identified and distinguished from one another so that they can be

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<sup>11</sup>. Suggesting that regimes can be imposed raises questions about the "obligation" to comply, which is part of Krasner's definition. Young does not deal with this issue, but it may constitute a point at which his use of the concept is at considerably divergent from that of the originators.

counted. Few sociologists would be so bold in thinking about institutions or social structures at the societal level, and one might well question whether greater precision can be expected at the international or intersocietal level.

Whether the concept of regimes will prove more fruitful, or, as Strange proposes, it is merely a fad, and a pernicious one at that, the question arise of the place of international organizations in the concept of regimes. Again, from a sociological perspective we can make a few suggestions. Two causal directions, and a persistent view of dynamics rather than statics can be proposed. From one direction, if regimes represent underlying normative structures, they may constitute different arenas in which international organizations can be readily created. Regimes permit the creation of international organizations. Regime strength, scope and permanence would then predict the creation, perseverance, and even the effectiveness of international organizations. Further, a perhaps more important, as regimes strengthen, more, and more effective international organizations should be found emerging from them. Or as regimes weaken and the agreement erodes, the international organizations that depend and rest upon them will also weaken and show lower levels of survival and effectiveness.

From a different direction, similar to the IO Functionalist position, international organizations will promote the emergence of regimes. Here international organizations create regimes. We shall later argue that the UNFPA helped to create agreement in the international community on the importance and possibility of considering population as a programmable variable in national and international settings. Further, the greater the incidence and persistence of international organizations, the greater stronger and broader will be regimes. The two directions need not be mutually exclusive, of course, but in each the proposition holds that there is a dynamic relation between regime characteristics and both the formation and performance of international organizations. Stronger regimes should be associated with greater incidence and effective of international organizations; or more effective international organizations will build stronger regimes, and the causal directions can flow both ways.

Our view at this point is that the concept of regime might be a useful sensitizing concept, leading us to ask how much of what kind of underlying international agreement exists, and how this affects the performance of international organizations. At the same time, we are not very hopeful for the development of clear, independent, operational definitions of that agreement so that it can become a concept used for prediction. It is more likely to emerge as a post hoc explanatory condition rather than a variable from which one can make predictive propositions. In any event, regimes, too, lead us to think about the performance of international organizations, and that is a topic on which the sociology of organizations might prove useful.

Some of the major advances in organizational sociology have come through two strategic developments. One is a focus on organizational performance -- effectiveness or efficiency. This has provided the field with a dependent variable, giving rise to the second major development: the recognition of an interrelated set of conditions that affect performance. Organizational environments, technology, structure, and goals have been found to interact to affect the character and performance of organizations. Attempts have been made to treat these conditions as variables, but it would be better to see them as sensitizing concepts. As Scott (1987) has shown all of these concepts have provided important insights, but all have also been found to have many dimensions of variance. They are not easy to operationalize, and ultimately, they are rather difficult to pin down as real variables. In any event, we shall examine each of these conditions which we feel can enhance our understanding of international organizations. Throughout, we shall draw on the experience of the UNFPA and FAO, working respectively in the fields of population and forestry, to put some meat on the analytical bones.<sup>12</sup>

#### ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

The shift from closed to open systems in organizational sociology marked the important recognition that environments vary and can have a

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<sup>12</sup>. This somewhat unusual selection of examples comes simply from the fact that it was our work on these organizations that led us to perceive the great gap between organizational and international organization studies.

decisive impact on organizational behavior and performance (Aldrich 1979). Environmental forces shape goals, boundaries, and the internal activity of organizations. Conceptually, environments are found to vary in homogeneity, stability, complexity and turbulence, all with substantial impact of character and behavior. Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), for example, showed how environmental variance determined which structure would be most effective for an organization. This was a major step, among many, in the development of what is (perhaps presumptuously) called contingency theory. Contrary to the arguments of the classicists like Bernard, this argues that there is no one best way to organize anything; the best structure and process is contingent upon such things as the environment and the technology. All of this has led to a rich conceptual development and a research enterprise that goes very much unused in the field of international organizations, and for its side has been blind to international organizations and their distinctive environments.

#### Environments in International Organizational Analysis

Although international organization analysts have made little use of sociological work on environments, there are at least two developments that are noteworthy. In their work on influence in international governmental organizations<sup>13</sup>, Cox and Jacobson (1974) provided one example of the political scientists' examination of environments. First, they make a distinction between the general and specific environments (which is not unlike the distinction between environments, and task environments in organizational theory). General environments are those that affect all international organizations, specific environments affect only some, depending on the issue. Further, they "...conceive the general environment in terms of states, their characteristics and broad policies." Only states can become members of international organizations, and "...states are the principal units in world politics and the dominant mode for organizing human and physical resources." (p 27) The general environment exhibits three dimensions of variance: the

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<sup>13</sup>. It should be noted that this work, which provides a conceptual framework together with case studies on influence in international organizations focuses purely on international governmental organizations, though this distinction between IO and IGO is not made explicit.



stratification of power, economic and political characteristics (which are really two dimensions), and the political alignment of states. Cox and Jacobson recognize that this focus on states has some limitations, since it excludes transnational corporations, religious groups, or other "emerging forms of behavior and value".<sup>14</sup>

Two points must be made about this conception of the environment. First, the limited focus on states marks the implicitly non-Marxian character of this perspective. The neo-Marxian World Systems perspective, for example, would argue that it is the capitalist system that provides the dominant mode of organizing human and physical resources, and that this system requires a world comprised of a large number of relatively small states precisely to give the capitalist system freedom to exercise its own internal logic of economic calculation for capital expansion. Second, even for a non-Marxian perspective, it seems both unnecessary and conceptually costly to exclude the other transnational phenomena that Cox and Jacobson recognize could be conceived as part of the environment. We believe they are led to this unnecessary limitation by developing a conceptual framework that is basically descriptive rather than analytical. If the environment were conceived to include a variety of organizational units, which vary in homogeneity, complexity, stability, and turbulence, it could readily accommodate the great variety of transnational phenomena that have a substantial impact on the character and behavior of international organizations (governmental, non-governmental, and business). This is, of course, only a suggestion and does not provide a full development of a research agenda. It does, however, question the limited conceptualization of this one important treatment of environments in the field of international organizations.

Aside from this specific treatment of the impact of environments on influence, work on international organizations has generally neglected this world of external conditions. The more common treatment is that found in Jacobson's more general work, International Organizations: Networks of Interdependence (1984) Here the environment is treated as a

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<sup>14</sup>. In a subsequent paper we shall use this as a point of departure to examine the relation between social movements and international organizations.

collection of sovereign states, which limits the autonomy of international organizations. (p 77, our emphasis) They are creatures of sovereign states, have no powers of taxation, and rely in sovereign states both for their resources and for rights of access to their territories. Little else follows to bring the complexity and variance of the environment deliberately into focus as a determinant of the character and behavior of international organizations.

#### The International Environment and Organizational Autonomy

We believe it would be more fruitful to include this complexity in part because it accords better with the world of international governmental organizations, and also because it can provide for the development of interesting propositions from the functionalist perspective that this work portrays. First, although international governmental organizations indeed lack autonomy in one sense, there are also important ways that they use the sovereignty of states to increase their autonomy. IGO secretariats spend great amounts of time and energy in the diplomacy of conferences, establishing agendas, coopting member state representatives (buying votes), developing technical data for specific organizational purposes and generating consensual resolutions. These provide legitimation for the demands or interests of the IGO as they search for external resources. One could not really understand this elaborate ritual of conference diplomacy without seeing it as a mechanism by which IGOs use state sovereignty to increase their autonomy. Further, IGOs can use the differences between sovereign members to increase their own autonomy. For example, if the governing body of a Specialized Agency presses for a change of policy or tactics, the agency can respond that it is carrying out the legitimate demands of the sovereign nations states it is serving.

If IGOs can gain, as well as lose, autonomy through the sovereign state character of the environment, it is possible that under certain conditions, they might actually resist the greater integration of the international system. Weiss (1975) makes this point generally, and Sewell (1966) has shown how organizational constraints in the World Bank have obstructed supranational cooperation. A more integrated and politically centralized world system would provide stronger supra-

organizational direction over the IGOs, which would limit certain types of autonomy, especially where unit heads use the resources of the organization for their own advancement or amusement. From this perspective, IGOs could be expected to obstruct greater world integration. The United Nations system has more than once attempted to reorganize itself to bring greater capacity to control its own units. It is also clear that the units themselves have often resisted such reorganization, precisely because the heads of specialized and other agencies would thereby lose some control over their own organizations. The inability of the UN system to control special agency directors is well recognized. The extreme case of M'Bow's leadership of UNESCO is only that, an extreme case. It is by no means unique. Common observations of the "feudal" character of the UN system of organizations contain as much accuracy as hyperbole.

The point here is not to criticize the UN system, but to point out that the organizations of the UN system are by no means the simple, easily directed tools of action that Functionalists implicitly assume them to be. They are human collectivities that serve the personal interests of their members as well as the general ends of their mandators. How the balance is struck between these sets of interests depends for the most part on the larger political-economic environment, the structure controlling the organization itself, and on other internal characteristics, such as leadership. The point is that environment, governing structure, and leadership vary, and under certain conditions can be expected to lead organizations to work against, as well as for, the integration of the larger international system. Thus unless we know more about the organic link between organizational activity and the larger system integration, we cannot assume that the mere creation of more international organizations, or the mere fact of state membership in such organizations reflects greater system integration. At the very least, this establishes a rich and complex research agenda for Functionalist theory.

#### The International Environment: Three Dimensions of Variance

There are other dimensions of variance in the international scene that should be identified. Here we can suggest three more dimensions,

whose systematic analysis might advance both organizational and international organizational analysis. These concern boundary permeability, claimed and actual areas of state control, and the existence of an overarching, international legal and normative system. Boundary permeability refers to the quantity and quality of boundary openness. States like modern Burma have relatively closed boundaries; most Western European states, or Canada and the US, show more open boundaries. The degree of boundary permeability, or openness, varies both across countries and over time. It also varies on a qualitative dimension as well. Burma can restrict the flow of certain persons and organizations, but it also experiences a substantial pattern of smuggling<sup>15</sup> of a limited range of consumer goods, from cloth and flashlights to contraceptives. Thus multinational corporations find it difficult to enter Burma to establish their own operations, but Burmese find it possible to obtain a range of consumer goods that their own economy cannot produce in sufficient quantities. Jacobson (1984) has shown that there is greater integration in the EEC than in other regional groupings. From this one could propose a general relationship between boundary openness and the amount of integration achieved by IGOs, and the causal links should not be assumed to be simple or unilinear.

State sovereignty also varies considerably in the type and number of internal activities over which the state claims legitimate and exclusive control. The classic distinction here is between totalitarian and non-totalitarian states, but the full range of differences is scarcely captured by this simple dichotomy. Internal controls over markets, information flows, private associations, and the means of violence are only a few of the areas in which state-claimed control varies. And there are very dramatic differences in the capacity of states to exercise claimed control. All claim the exclusive right to control the means of violence, but some states are obviously more

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<sup>15</sup>. Smuggling, of course, is not a simple objective condition. It varies with state taxation and marketing control schemes. During the early 1960s when Indonesia attempted to control the marketing of rubber through its state apparatus, providing less than world prices for the product, much of the rubber was smuggled out of Indonesia into Singapore, whose boundary policy defined this as merely open trade.

capable of exercising this control than are others, and the same is true for almost all areas in which claims are made. Again, one can derive a proposition from this observation. The scope of a state's control may be related to the degree of integration signalled by IGO membership or activity. Whether that relationship is linear or curvilinear can be left as an empirical question.

The final dimension of variance to be considered here is the existence of an effective overarching legal and normative system. Here the critical distinction is between international and domestic environments. That is, organizations dealing in a domestic environment can deal directly with private individuals or groups, constrained and assisted by the general legal and normative rules that govern the population. An organization can provide services or mobilize resources from private individuals and groups, and can also sue and be sued by its clients or the population it affects. The international environment contains only a weak overarching set of either legal or cultural controls.<sup>16</sup> Multi-national corporations can find their assets or facilities nationalized, and they may have little recourse to any super-state law for compensation. Individuals may find themselves incarcerated or fined, without the protection of international law.<sup>17</sup> Governments or people may also find themselves invaded, and their territorial integrity violated, without any recourse to international law. Haile Selassie's Ethiopia and modern Afghanistan or Nicaragua present only some of the more obvious cases. These observations, of course, identify one of the major aims of international government organizations, the creation of a world legal or normative system. It is here that we can place the central Functionalist proposition that IGO membership and activity lead to a more extensive and powerful international legal and normative system.

If we note that different forms of organization are differentially

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<sup>16</sup>. International private law provides some possibility of law suits, but these depend on specific treaty agreements, which make the environment something less than homogeneous.

<sup>17</sup>. Both organizations and individuals have some recourse to assistance, of course, but it is more often to the power of the parent state and to bilateral diplomacy that organizations and individuals turn for redress of wrongs in the international arena.

affected by boundary permeability, or by claimed and actual areas of state control, we are led to some important perceptions about environments that organizational sociology neglects.<sup>18</sup> Environments are not simply objective facts whose conditions are independent of organization. They are, on the contrary, partly defined by the organization itself.

Thus since IGOs are formed specifically by agreement between two or more governments, governments form a dominant portion of the environment. IGOs must deal through governments and often have difficulty in dealing directly with the citizens of member states. Citizens or organizations in states that are not members to the agreement are in a real sense off-limits, outside the purview of action, or not a part of the environment of IGOs. Today some of the most successful population and agricultural programs to be found in the Third World are in Taiwan. Since 1972, however, the United Nations has been unable to participate in these programs, and for some activities it cannot even recognize that they exist.<sup>19</sup> Before 1972, of course, the UN and its agencies could not deal with mainland China, thus eliminating about a fifth of the world's population from its activities.

International nongovernmental organizations, either non-market or market, have far greater capacity to deal with all governments, and even capacities to by-pass governments in dealing directly with individuals or groups in a host country. Thus the "environment" is in a very real sense defined by the organization itself. If we are to build effective taxonomies of environments, then, this must take into account the organization whose environment is being examined.

#### TECHNOLOGY IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

##### Organizations and Technology

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<sup>18</sup>. Perrow (1986 pp 173-176) notes that much attention has been given to the environmental impacts on organizations, while the reverse impact has been largely neglected. Especially if one takes seriously the fact that organizations generate power for their controllers, it is easy to see that powerful organizations control their environments, precisely to make them stable and supportive.

<sup>19</sup>. This is especially evident in the publications of the World Bank tables, but can be seen in most UN documents as well.

An organization's technology lies in the tools and the procedures it uses as it works, or goes about attempting to achieve some end. Two decades of work on technology in the sociology of organizations has produced rich insights, a new conceptual framework, and enduring confusion and disagreement (Scott 1987).

The character of an organization lies to a great extent in what James Thompson (1967) calls its technical core. Given the importance of this organizational element to their operations, organizations typically seek to buffer their technical core against the demands of the environment through a host of structural arrangements and administrative strategies. His work and that of Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) called attention both to the variance of technology, and the impact it has on organizational structure. The result was contingency theory, a new conceptual framework that argues there is no one best way to design an organization.<sup>20</sup> Instead, the best way depends upon the specific technologies used and the specific environment in which the organization finds itself.

The concept of organizational technology is generally broadly defined. It includes not only the machines and other hardware used by organizations to achieve their ends, but the skills, knowledge, training of employees, the approaches, strategies and procedures utilized, and even the characteristics of the objects (inputs and outputs) on which work is performed (Scott, 1987 p 211). Specifically, Scott identifies six dimensions of technologies: Inputs, throughputs, outputs, materials, operations, and knowledge. The first three comprise what Scott calls stage of processing while the latter three are facets of technology (Scott, 1987 p. 212). Without going into greater detail in defining technology, we can illustrate several aspects of technology that we feel demonstrate the value of the concept to the study of international organizations. They are: input technologies from the environment, the organization's own distinctive core technology, and a previously uniden-

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<sup>20</sup>. This can be seen as a theoretical development as significant in organizational sociology as the advent of Functionalism was in international organizations. In both cases, the shift is from more mechanical, legalistic, and constitutional approaches to organizations to more organic, behavioral and empirical approaches.

tified type of technology that we shall call monitoring technologies.

Although typically considered an "internal" organizational element, technology overlaps significantly with the environment. Employees and their skills are garnered from the environment as are inputs such as materials, information and so on. Likewise, an organization's end products are distributed to elements found within its environment. In short, technology links the organization with its environment, creating a conduit through which influence, power, and materials are passed. Relationships also exist between technology and another organization element - structure. As of yet, little work has focused on the relationship between technology and organizational performance.

The effect of technology on structure is well established, at least in general outlines. A more complex technology demands a more complex, differentiated structure or greater reliance on professionals; a more uncertain, less routinizable technology demands a flatter (i.e. less hierarchic) organization with more effort given to the coordination of relatively independent parts.<sup>21</sup> These important insights are not without their disagreements and confusion, however. There is disagreement over the relative impact of technology, structure, and environment on one another. And operationalizing the concept of technology for systematic measurement has not proved an easy task (see Scott, 1987 p.223-232; Perrow, 1986 p. 143-146).

Still, the concept of varying technology, and the proposition that it will be closely related with structure, environment and performance provide important insights that have been neglected in the study of international organizations. A few examples must suffice here to demonstrate that organizational technology should be on the research agenda of international organizations.

#### Input Technologies

A major input technology of the UNFPA is the new non-coitally-

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<sup>21</sup>. For summary information on technology and structural relationships see Scott, 1987, especially chapter 9; Perrow 1986; classic works by Woodward, 1965, Thompson, 1967, and Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967; see also Perrow, 1970; Rackham and Woodward, 1970; and Pugh et al. 1969.



specific contraceptive technology. It was produced in the general environment less than a decade before the Fund was established. Without this new technology, the task of the Fund would be far different than what it has turned out to be. It might even be reasonable to propose that without this input technology, there would have been no UNFPA. In effect the development of this technology gave established governments and international organizations something they could actually do to affect population growth rates.

In this, the technology was similar to that used previously by national and international health organizations to reduce mortality. Vaccines, insecticides, anti-biotic drugs, IUDs, oral contraceptive pills, and surgical sterilization share the property of being bureaucratically portable. They need to be "distributed" to users, whose acceptance does not necessarily require their active participation in new, long-linked, complex patterns of behavior. Without such technologies, reducing mortality or fertility would require changing values and patterns of daily behavior that have proved to be difficult for government bureaucracies to affect. Here, then, is an input technology that not only affects the performance, but possibly also the very existence of an international governmental organization.

#### Core Technology

To explain the autonomy of the World Bank and some of its internal units, Ascher (1983) uses March and Simon's approach to uncertainty management and provide some understanding of how the Bank works. We believe that Crane and Finkle (1981) gives us a more critical understanding, however, from the use of the technology concept.<sup>22</sup> They point out that despite MacNamarra's strong public statements and personal commitment, he was unable to move the Bank to work effectively in the field of population. Crane and Finkle argue that it was the Bank's core technology that was at fault. That technology is effectively one of cal-

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<sup>22</sup>. There is a more powerful contrast to be made between Jonsson's (1986) use of interorganizational analysis to examine the IATA involvement in the air fare issues and Perrow's (1984, chapters 5,6) use of technology to contrast air and maritime safety and accident records, but that would take us further afield than we wish to go now from our substantive focus on population and social forestry.

culating investment returns in project activities. For the construction of the physical infrastructure needed for development, this technology may work quite well.<sup>23</sup> It does not work well, however, for investments in social services. In effect, the Bank's core technology made it ignorant of how to invest in population activities. In another areas, however, we can show how that same technology gave the Bank greater flexibility to move into new activities in forestry.

As noted earlier, technology resides not only in the physical tools of an organization, but also in work procedures, and perhaps more importantly in the training and background of its staff. This may make technology as much a political as a technical issue. The impact of the political dimensions of technology on organizational behavior can be readily illustrated in international work in forestry.

In the world of international forestry, the past decade has seen a dramatic shift from "industrial" to "social" forestry. Rapid growth and the expansion of agriculture in the Third World has destroyed most of the wood supply in many world regions. It is estimated that more than 2 billion people in 100 countries are in desperate need of forests for fuel, fodder, and for ground cover to protect against erosion.<sup>24</sup> Industrial forestry, concerned with producing trees for industry, is not geared to addressing the problems of rural populations and their basic needs. Social forestry has emerged to fill this gap and has become an important strategy for reforestation of rural areas to meet basic human needs.

What is most interesting here is the different extent of the movement found in different international organizations. Thus UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Forestry Division has shown the least

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<sup>23</sup>. The Bank has made a significant movement toward another form of core technology in recent years in the greater use of Sectoral Lending. This move appears to be dictated in part by political considerations as well as economic ones, and it presents the Bank with some extremely difficult technical problems. The technology of investment return calculations for sectors are by no means as well developed as they are for projects, if indeed there exists such a technology at all.

<sup>24</sup> For a general overview of international environmental problems see Erik Echolm, 1982.

movement.<sup>25</sup> The World Bank has shown more significant movement, with recent programs and loans for social forestry projects. The INGO, Cooperative American Relief Everywhere (CARE), has moved most rapidly with over ten years of actual field project experience in this area. The explanation for this variance is best found in the impact of technology. FAO's forestry unit is staffed by highly professional foresters, whose training and professional orientation are directed to industrial forestry. The Division's origins lie in the very important work it did arranging for the trade in European lumber (from East to West) that was used in the reconstruction of Western Europe after the war. Thus there are both the historical experiences and staff backgrounds that give this organization a dominant character shaped largely by its technology. Industrial forestry is an FAO core technology that has been infused with value, and thus severely obstructs the shift to social forestry.

As a profession, forestry is essentially industrial forestry. Professional foresters tend to view themselves as a special breed who are generally misunderstood by society, where there is felt to be little understanding of the important role trees play in creating and maintaining a modern lifestyle. Without trees, the foresters say, there would be no houses, paper, chemicals, and other essential products. It is therefore of greatest importance to produce trees as efficiently as possible. Social forestry, with its concern for satisfying basic human needs (such as firewood) in small communities, tends to be viewed by many foresters as an unfortunate diversion, drawing attention and resources from the serious business of the efficient production of timber and other industrial wood products essential for modern life.

If the World Bank's core technology prohibited it from active involvement in population planning, that same technology had quite different implications for forestry projects. The capacity to estimate investment returns makes all manner of forestry projects simple tools rather than ends in themselves. If social forestry projects can be

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<sup>25</sup>. This is the area of a doctoral dissertation currently underway by Steven Brechin. The statements here can be taken in the nature of working hypotheses that are being tested.

shown to have greater benefit to cost ratios, they command resources. Further, as the World Bank made a policy decision to focus more on rural development and basic human needs, the calculative technology could search for specific activities that would achieve those ends. Projects could be generated with requests for staff tailored to the task, rather than the task being tailored to the existing staff (see also Finkle and Crane, 1981 p.518)

CARE's core technology in this area may be said to lie in community development programming and emergency relief. The staff have developed high technical capacities to determine what activities will actually contribute to local living standards, and also to determine the feasibility of such projects. Projects can therefore be designed to meet local needs, drawing the specific resources -- expert staff and specialized materials -- needed for that project. That is, resources can be tailored to the task rather than having the task tailored to the resources. Sensing the value of social forestry for rural community development, CARE's technology facilitated the induction of social forestry as part of CARE's repertoire of development programs.

#### Technology and International Integration: The Role of Monitoring

If technology is an important determinant of organizational action and should be placed on the research agenda in international organizations, one of the central questions here can be the relation between technology and international conflict or integration. For example, we can suggest that the new contraceptive technology that made a major part of UNFPA's work actually possible, generated both conflict and consensus or integration. Coinciding with UNFPA's birth was The Papal Encyclical, Humanae Vitae, which reiterated the Roman Catholic Church's proscription of "artificial" contraception. Further, the perfection of a simple and safe method for abortion has also thrust the UNFPA into the center of new and very costly controversies. Here the impact seems to be in the direction of conflict that negates or reverses international integration. On the other hand, perhaps the greatest achievement of the UNFPA has been the generation of a world consensus around the problematic character of population dynamics, especially rapid growth, and the need for rational and humane planning to shape those dynamics

(Ness, 1986). The depth of this consensus, and the speed with which it has been generated is truly remarkable, especially give the long history of government policies in population, which have been essentially pronatalist and pro-growth.

In part, the success of the UNFPA in generating this consensus rests on another aspect of the technology available to it: social demography. This is essentially a monitoring technology, which can display the character of the social and economic conditions of the population, project estimates for the future, and monitor the impact of major social programs on those conditions. This technology has been developing, both in its material and organizational sense for the better part of the past two centuries, and now can be said to represent one of the most powerful research technologies available in the social sciences. The impact of this technology on policy decisions in population planning has been deep and extensive.<sup>26</sup> It may not be an exaggeration to propose that this technology has been the single most important force in drawing the world community toward consensus in the area of population planning.<sup>27</sup>

The monitoring technology for environmental protection, on the other hand, is not so well developed, and places the UNEP, for example, in a less powerful position for generating consensus than was the UNFPA. The monitoring technology for "environmental degradation" is of more recent origin, it is more complex, and it is far less developed than is social demography. The technology is developing rapidly, however, and

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<sup>26</sup>. Ness and Ando (1984) have shown how national population censuses and socio-economic surveys, especially emerging out of plans for national economic development, have been major determinants of policy decision making in population planning.

<sup>27</sup>. See Finkle and Crane (1984) for a good discussion of the Mexico City Second International Conference on Population. Our analysis here does not propose that the UNFPA is the only organization to have led toward greater world consensus on this issue. Indeed, many private and public organizations have played important roles over the past three decades, and some can trace their activity back almost a century. See also Simmons, Ness, and Simmons (1983) for the argument that the dominance of social demography has led to a neglect of study of the impact of population policies and programs on reproductive modern fertility transitions.

it will be important to trace its impact on international integration, or on other issues of international organizational behavior. To the extent that the technology shows, as it does, that pollution does not respect national boundaries, it can be a force for greater international integration. It should not be forgotten, however, that the creation of the UNEP involved a storm of economic conflict between the more and less developed countries of the world (see Caldwell, 1985). The extent to which this conflict is fueled or dampened by the technology of international environmental monitoring and management represents at the very least an important research question for international organization.

Finally, we can observe that monitoring technologies serve some of the most common activities of the United Nations system in general.<sup>28</sup> It is important, therefore to note that there are differences in these technologies that have important implications for the international system. For example, the surveys of social demography require either agreement or cooperation of the nation-states members if they are to be effective. States undertake their own population censuses, and sometimes control private organizations that wish to engage in large scale sample work. For some states this implies little or no monitoring, because the results can be so conflict-producing. This is especially the case in mixed ethnic states like Lebanon and Nigeria, whose censuses have been retard precisely because of the conflictual political implications. For most states, however, it is not difficult to show that more accurate demographic information is important to national policy. Ultimately this promoted increased international cooperation around monitoring. Thus the increase in the numbers of countries that accept international standards and both undertake and report censuses can be taken as an indirect measure of integration.

Environmental monitoring, on the other hand, does not require nation-state agreement when pollutants are carried by air and water currents. Pressures on industrial and nuclear waste production can act to increase world integration in part because the monitoring technology does not require agreement at the source. To the extent that remote

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<sup>28</sup>. Jacobson 1984, chapters 8, 11, and 14.

sensing from satellites is developed as a monitoring technology, it enhances this set of pressures. Other forms of environmental monitoring, of course, do require on-site inspection, and thus can become sources of sustained conflict.

This only raises the general issue, of course, it provides no answers. The point is that technologies of all sorts have implications for organizational action, and for outcomes of that action in the international scene. One of the major forms of technology used by international governmental organizations is monitoring technology. This varies along many dimensions and will have varying impact on the international system. Those complex patterns of covariance should certainly be a part of the research agenda in international organizations.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS AND STRUCTURE

Even more central and of longer duration in organizational analysis have been the concepts of goals and structure. Like environment and technology, however, these concepts have been both richly insightful, and confused and conflictual. Here we can only touch on these concepts briefly and suggest some fruitful lines of enquiry.

##### Goals

It is generally agreed that organizations are specifically created to achieve some specific ends, or to perform some specific tasks. That that end or task should be amenable to systematic observation and analysis would seem to follow logically. And so it has. There have been a number of classification systems for goals, and these have led to some interesting observations of systematic covariance (Perrow, 1961, Etzioni 1961 and 1972). Etzioni, for example, proposed a taxonomy of goals based on a tripartite classification of power, thus drawing this important concept into the center of organizational analysis. There has been little application of the concept in international organizations, although Jacobson's (1984) presentation of the networks of integration uses a similar classification in discussing security, economic, and welfare organizations in the system.

Etzioni's classification is useful for more than simple description, however. In fact, its real utility lies in the use of the dynamic

propositions that can be derived from the theory of power. He argues that different goals demand different compliance structures, and these often make contradictory demands on an organization. We can argue that many of the UN agencies must carry two different types of goals, which fit the IO functionalists' prescriptions. They must be concerned with delivering a good or service, thus promoting enmeshment, and with changing, or creating a new set of values and attitudes.

In Etzioni's terms, value change is a cultural goal, requiring a normative compliance structure. Providing goods and services, on the other hand, is an economic goal, requiring a utilitarian compliance structure. The two often make contradictory demands, which we have argued (Ness 1985) is a source of internal strain in the UNFPA. In relatively simple terms, the cultural goal requires a high degree of internal loyalty or commitment to the organization, which gives it something of the character of a religious social movement.<sup>29</sup> The organization needs a staff of believers. To provide goods and services, however, efficiency and effectiveness are required, demanding some technical expertise, and attention to rewards for performance. UN agencies may especially find these demands contradictory. For example generating a policy consensus may require soliciting support among member state delegates, which not infrequently carries the price of appointing politically influential people to positions, or some other form of "vote-buying". Thus people and projects may be selected for their political utility to the policy or value change, which may be quite different more limited technical utility of moving goods and services to the points of greatest need. The observation of this conflict appears to have been at the base of Mitrany's preference for "technical" projects and organizations, and his distaste or revulsion for politics.

Again, the point is not to criticize UN agencies, but to suggest

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<sup>29</sup>. It is interesting to note that both the UNFPA, and the US AID's Population Office were described as having something of an internal religious character, showing a high degree of internal morale and commitment, especially during their formative years. These were years when the organizations had to fight to bring population into the arena of public policy and planning. The same almost religious zeal may be said to have characterized many of the UN's Specialized Agencies, and even the UN Secretariat itself, during the early years.



the utility of goal analysis in international organizations, and especially to be alert to the potentials for conflict in organizations that may have to carry more than one type of goal. Thus there are empirical questions about the performance of international organizations that can be solved only by careful examination of what they are charged to do, and the extent to which their charges impose upon them conflicting organizational demands. This, too, identifies a larger research agenda for international organizations.

### Structure

One of the major advances over Weber's ideal typical construction of the bureaucracy is to note that "rationally" constructed organizations may be tall and hierarchic, or flat and collegial.<sup>30</sup> The contribution of Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) is to identify these two major types of structure and to show that they are related to both technological and environmental considerations. They showed that a flat organizational structure produces higher performance when it operates with a new, changing, and not readily routinizable technology, in an environment that is unstable and rapidly changing. Where the environment is homogeneous and stable, and the technology well known, however, a tall, Weberian-type bureaucracy tall or hierarchic structure tends to provide the higher performance.

These observations raise questions about the structure of international organizations in relation to both the environment in which they must operate, the type of technology they use, and the aims they espouse or have thrust upon them. UN agencies themselves can be found to vary along the tall to flat dimension, with UNICEF reputedly more professional, flat, and decentralized. On the other hand, the overall UN structure tends to impose a tall hierarchic structure on its organiza-

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<sup>30</sup>. We can observe this variance even in the military, an often-used example of the hierarchic organization. "Rationality" may sometimes require small, flat organizations only loosely controlled by the center. Carlson's Raiders in World War II, or the Green Berets in the Vietnam war represent such "rational" adjustments. We can also see something of this same rational adjustment throughout history, as, for example, when the Dutch military decentralized itself greatly to deal with the guerilla warfare it faced in the conquest of Java in the early 19th century (Hyma, 1953, Ness and Stahl, 1977).

tions. It is possible to raise empirical questions about the appropriateness of the given structures for the tasks that have to be performed and the environment in which the organization must work. Again, items are added to the research agenda, which focus directly on organizational performance and its relation to structure, technology, and environment.

**CONCLUSION: Comparative Analyses of Performance**

That a gap exists between organizational and international organizational analyses is clear. Its source may lie in the different treatments the two disciplines have given to the issue of organizational performance, an issue central to sociology and neglected in international organizations. Though the two functionalisms -- from Sociology and International Organizations -- bear some resemblances, they are quite different on the issue of organizational actions, and especially on the issue of performance. At the extremes, Sociology takes a cynical view of organizations surreptitiously serving the cloaked aims of their individual masters; International Organizations takes the naive view of organizations working inexorably toward the integration of the world community. Neither position is tenable. Both disciplines holding these views could be made richer by coming closer together. Further, sociology can gain much from a consideration of the mass of international organizations that it has so studiously neglected. International organizations can gain greatly from a consideration of the issue of performance, which it has neglected with equal diligence.

One of the major arenas for research on the performance of international organizations presents itself from the natural development of international organizations. Consider, for example, the three major substantive areas Jacobson uses to examine the networks of interdependence: security, economic development, and social welfare and human justice. In all three arenas we find a plethora of IGOs, INGOs, and BINGOs as well as those hybrids (like the CIA, and USAID), national governmental organizations that operate in a distinctly, though not exclusively, international environment. This should provide a rich opportunity for comparative analyses of organizational performance.

And so it has, though only in a limited but very prescient

exploratory analysis. Kay and Jacobson (1983) have examined the role and performance of international organizations in environmental protection. They have provided us with a useful taxonomy of functions to be performed, of criteria for the analysis of comparative organizational effectiveness, and some good ideas about the determinants of organizational effectiveness. They recognize that the taxonomy needs further development, that the data problems are intractable, and that the strategy requires further work. Their work, however, provides an extremely useful base from which to build further studies. It represents a foundation on which a cumulative scientific development can be built. One promising strategy would be to increase the potential for generalization by increasing the range of issues or technical problems that is addressed in systematically comparative analysis.

For example, UN, private foundations and welfare organizations, a host of bilateral aid agencies, and many multinational multinational business organizations profess general goals of agricultural development and fertility control. The organizations involved are clearly different, have far different constraints, have different structures and procedures, and use different technologies, though they all draw on a large common stock of readily available agricultural and contraceptive technologies. It is probably a correct guess that all of these organizations have worked effectively, in some way, at some time, under some conditions, to promote the ends of increased agricultural yields or human fertility reduction. Identifying those ways, times, and conditions for either problem would provide for a greater understanding of organizational performance in the international environment, thus adding greatly to the Sociology of Organizations. It would also tell us a great deal about the role international organizations of all sorts play in the growing networks of international interdependence. To perform this type of comparative analysis in parallel fashion for two or more technical or issue areas at the same time would greatly increase the generalizability of the findings to a wider range of international or organizational issues.

This strategy of parallel comparative analysis in different issue areas could prove as useful in areas of security, all sectors of

economic development, population, education, welfare, refugee assistance, and human rights. The rough similarity of goals, or at least of stated goals, the fact that any goal implies a variety of sub-activities, and the fact that all organizations can usually draw on a common stock of technology (including professional personnel), provides an excellent opportunity to assess performance in a reasonable manner. To suggest possible formulations, let us close with two rough propositions about the relative performance of IGOs (especially UN Agencies) and INGOs.

#### Goal and Structure Conflicts in International Organizations

First, both IGOs and INGOs typically face two types of activities in reaching their general goals: one concerns developing some consensus within the world community for the activity in question. The other concerns the delivery of technical assistance for that activity. In the early days of the UN concern with development, industrialization was seen by many to be the key to economic development. Development plans and technical assistance gave great emphasis to steel mills and heavy industrialization, leading to the neglect of agricultural development. Population growth was virtually ignored until the round of Asian national censuses in 1960/1 (Ness and Ando 1984, chapter 2). Thus for all international agricultural and population organizations, one important early task was to raise awareness agriculture and population, or to convince the world community, or its individual member states, of the importance of both agriculture and population for general economic and social development. Along with this came the task of providing the technical assistance needed to achieve what is now known as the Green Revolution and rapid fertility decline. From these illustration, we can propose two specific hypotheses

- a. IGOs have been more effective than INGOs in generating world community consensus around development and welfare issues, and it is the legitimacy of international representation that largely accounts for their greater success.
- b. INGOs (and possibly some of the hybrids) have been more effective than IGOs in performing the tasks of technical assistance for development and welfare aims. This may be because their environmental constraints permitted, or induced, them to pay more attention to professional than to political or geographic considera-

tions in personnel and project selection

It is important to remember that these are hypotheses to be tested, not findings to be accepted. They are based on superficial descriptions of a few cases. Although we have reason to believe that they are sound, it is quite possible that on closer investigation we would conclude that the IGOs alone have produced the progress, or that they have been completely ineffective in promoting any form of popular welfare or development. The latter might be in accord with current popular American assessments of the United Nations organizations, but would run counter to classical IO Functionalist predictions. Whatever the outcome, the point is that the issue is an empirical one that demands systematic attention to the comparative performance of international organizations.

#### Time and Organizational Change

Second, we can propose that time takes a heavier toll on UN IGO performance than it does on INGO performance. This is largely because the structure of the United Nations, with its multiple heads, makes it difficult to set agreed upon performance standards for its agencies, nor can it easily hold them to any standards it does set.<sup>31</sup> Thus older IGOs should be expected to turn inwards with greater concern for staff welfare than for performance in the client arena. INGOs, on the other hand, can have more flexible personnel policies, and admit of greater impact of either internal or external leadership. Leadership has a greater capacity to set goals and to hold individuals and units responsible for goal performance.<sup>32</sup> Many observers critical of the UN system

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<sup>31</sup>. Kay and Jacobson (1983 p 326) point out this structural weakness in the UN system, which they see as facing an insoluble dilemma. Broad geographic representation in staffing is necessary to retain world-wide legitimacy and influence, but this makes it difficult to reward performance and technical competence.

<sup>32</sup>. It is interesting to note that Jonsson's successful case of the linking pin organization is IATA, an INGO, rather than the UN's own International Civil Aviation Organization. Of course, the ICAO is concerned primarily with safety and standardization, and IATA is concerned with fare structures, the issue on which Jonsson found IATA to perform so effectively. But this raises an interesting question of why it is that an INGO has come to be concerned with fares, while an IGO attends to issues of safety and standardization. Tracing the processes by which this specific division of labor emerged might tell us a great deal about

would certainly find this proposition congenial, but there is a far more interesting deviant case question to be raised. If this characterization of the UN system is valid, the questions would have to be not, why does the UN perform so badly, but why does it perform so well? Anyone the least familiar with the UN system can cite individuals and units that work exceptionally well. How do we account for this level of performance in an organization whose structure seems to reward privilege rather than performance? We believe that understanding this "deviant case process" would take us much further toward movements to increase agency performance than would endless tests of the expected case process. It would also do a great deal to advance our understanding of both organizations and international organizations.

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the character of the interorganizational network that is emerging in the present nation-state world system.

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