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Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are increasingly incorporated into the structures of global governance, which are greatly shaped by the activities of regional and international intergovernmental organisations (IGOs).[1] Most significantly NGOs are involved in the processes and performances of the dominant global institution, the United Nations (UN). NGOs regularly collaborate with the United Nations and advise UN Commissions; they also work together with UN agencies on an ad hoc basis and implement UN projects; they even assist UN institutions and provide information on particular issues. Especially important, NGOs participated in the series of UN-organised world conferences in the 1990s, where they contributed to the drafting of conventions, sat in governmental delegations, and organised their own forums. Because of these intense interactions, the United Nations serves as the "transparent point of observation"[2] to explore the position of NGOs as actors in international politics.

This growing involvement of NGOs on the global stage has been acknowledged in theoretical terms in the social sciences. Scholars recognised non-governmental activity by turning away from state-centric perspectives to society-dominated views on world politics.[3] Others, the "new transnationalists", examined the conditions under which NGOs gain influence on state institutions and intergovernmental organisations.[4] Others translated transnational relations into the concept of "world culture" in which NGOs play the dominant role.[5] From a

1. The concept of global governance has often been associated with the management of international relations in the post-Cold War era. In particular, multilateral systems of regulations and international intergovernmental organisations make up the structures of governance in the interdependent global system. Unlike the Westphalian model of sovereign states, the absence of any central authority is emphasised in the concept of global governance; it therefore presents a model of "governance without government". James Rosenau and Ernst-Otto Czempiel (eds.), *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

2. Leon Gordenker and Thomas G. Weiss, "Pluralising Global Governance: Analytical Approaches and Dimensions", in Thomas Weiss and Leon Gordenker (eds.), *NGOs, the UN, and Global Governance* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996), p. 17.

3. These shifts have been described elsewhere. Thomas Princen and Matthias Finger, "Introduction", in Thomas Princen and Matthias Finger (eds.), *Environmental NGOs in World Politics. Linking the Local and the Global* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 6.

4. Thomas Risse-Kappen (ed.), *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-state Actors, Domestic Structures and International Institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1998).

5. John Boli and George M. Thomas, *Constructing World Culture: INGOs since 1875* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

different methodological perspective, domestic conceptualisations of societal activism were extended to the international level. Scholars drew analogies from works at the national level for the study of the activities of "transnational" social movement organisations;[6] others considered the role and limits of the "global" civil society,[7] or studied the "third sector" in an international comparative perspective.[8] What all these perspectives have in common is that they drew an enthusiastic picture of NGO involvement in the processes and performances of international political processes.

In recent years, however, scholars have taken a rather moderate standpoint on NGO involvement at the international level. In particular, NGO linkages with international institutions, such as the United Nations, have been identified as being possibly harmful or dysfunctional for NGOs. NGOs may lose their flexibility and ability to give quick responses to governmental actions because co-operation with IGOs requires an increased professionalisation and bureaucratisation.[9] It has also been argued that close collaboration with the United Nations might conflict with NGO autonomy and NGO accountability, in particular because NGOs depend increasingly on funding from official institutions.[10] As a result, NGOs fall into the "trap of irrelevance" if they do not maintain an independent stand from official institutions. They could lose their status as critical observers of official policies, which was, in fact, for many, their initial *raison d'être*.[11]

The aim of this paper is to explore in greater depth the significance of NGO/UN linkages for NGOs. Instead of focusing on NGO influence on the intergovernmental agency, special attention will be placed on the modes of NGO incorporation into the UN system. A pertinent case analysis is the interaction between NGOs and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), since this interaction has been recognised repeatedly as being more sophisticated than between NGOs and any other UN body.[12] This

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6. Jackie Smith, Charles Chatfield and Ron Pagnucco (eds.), *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics. Solidarity Beyond the State* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Publications, 1997); Donatella della Porta, Hanspeter Kriesi and Dieter Rucht (eds.), *Social Movements in a Globalizing World* (Chippenham: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

7. Ronnie Lipschutz, "Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society", *Millennium*, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 389–420; Paul Wapner, "Governance in Global Civil Society", in Oran Young (ed.), *Global Governance: Drawing Insights from the Environmental Experience* (Boston: MIT, 1997), pp. 65–84.

8. Lester M. Salamon and Helmut K. Anheier, *Der Dritte Sektor* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann-Stiftung, 1999); Annette Zimmer and Stefan Nährlich, *Bürgerliches Engagement: Traditionen und Perspektiven* (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 2000).

9. Pratap Chatterjee and Matthias Finger, *The Earth Broker. Power, Politics and World Development* (London: Routledge, 1994).

10. David Hulme and Michael Edwards, *NGOs, States and Donors—Too Close for Comfort?* (London: Macmillan, 1997).

11. Peter Wahl, "Mythos und Realität internationaler Zivilgesellschaft. Zu den Perspektiven globaler Vernetzung von Nicht-Regierungs-Organisationen", in Elmar Altvater *et al.* (eds.), *Vernetzt und verstrickt: NRO als gesellschaftliche Produktivkraft* (Münster: Westfälische Dampfboot, 1997), p. 301.

12. Richard Hoggart, "UNESCO and NGOs: A Memoir", in Peter Willetts (ed.), "*The Conscience of the World". The Influence of Non-governmental Organisations in the UN System* (London: Hurst, 1996), pp. 98–115; Klaus Hüfner, "Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) im System der Vereinten Nationen", *Die Friedenswarte. Blätter für international Verständigung und zwischenstaatliche Organisation*, Vol. 71, No. 2 (1996), pp. 115–123; Borko Stosic, *Les Organisations Non Governementales et les Nations Unies* (Paris: Droz, 1964), p. 267.

is so because UNESCO's system of classification takes into account not only the size and representative character of an NGO, but also its ability to contribute efficiently to the organisation's objectives. In return, NGOs can be involved closely in various stages of the planning and execution of UNESCO programmes and may receive direct subventions from the IGO. Particular attention is paid to the statutory framework for integrating non-governmental agencies into the UNESCO system since 1995 when new "Directives concerning the Relations with NGOs" were introduced.

To guide this study I apply corporatism as a theoretical approach, as it is capable of acknowledging the benefits and the implications from close public–private partnerships in the international sphere. Corporatism was developed in the 1970s as a alternative model to pluralist approaches on interest mediations.[13] Instead of focusing on social groups engaging outside the official frame, corporatism recognised the increasing integration of interest groups into political processes. In particular, it explains the advantages for official institutions of "incorporating" societal actors into their frames of activity. Based on a corporatist approach, I explore the implications of NGO/UNESCO linkages in more detail. Since this alliance has often been used as the example for particularly intense NGO/IGO relations, it represents what King, Keohane and Verba call a "crucial test case" for applying a theory on the "least-likely observation".[14]

In this article, I take a sceptical standpoint on the impact of NGO integration into international institutions. The NGO/UNESCO case demonstrates that the process of NGO incorporation into intergovernmental systems does not necessarily continue, nor do NGOs arise exclusively from outside the intergovernmental framework. The creation of NGOs by UNESCO (due to the nature of UNESCO itself) and the decrease in associated NGOs (due to UNESCO's reform process) is analysed. As a result, it is shown that a model of "international" corporatism may explain the interrelationship between NGOs and UNESCO much more precisely than a pluralist "social movement" approach.

NGOisation of World Politics or Resulting NGO Modifications?

The relationship between NGOs and IGOs has been the subject of academic analysis, particularly since the mid-1990s. At first, studies on the legalistic relationship between NGOs and the United Nations dominated the literature, and authors have retraced the development of their "consultative status".[15] Later, most studies intended primarily to show the NGO impact on UN processes, and concluded that NGOs have greater options for influencing international affairs when co-operating with intergovernmental forums. In many of these "success stories", scholars described NGOs as being tremendously influential on the

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13. Phillippe C. Schmitter and Gerhard Lehmbruch (eds.), *Trends Towards Corporatist Intermediation* (London: SAGE, 1979).

14. Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry. Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 209–210.

15. Peter Willetts, "Consultative Status for NGOs at the United Nations", in Willetts (ed.), *"The Conscience of the World"*, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–62; Hüfner, *op. cit.*; Rainer Lagoni, "Article 71", in Bruno Simma (ed.), *The Charter of the United Nations. A Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 902–915.

international level. In particular, in two edited books on NGOs and the UN system, NGOs have been called enthusiastically the "conscience of the world",[16] or the partners for a joint "global governance".[17]

Particularly in the field of human rights and the environment, studies on NGOs and the United Nations demonstrate the significance of NGOs in the UN system. Scholars present various examples of NGO activity within the UN system and enthusiastically proclaim the impact of NGOs on governmental officials.[18] Case studies of single organisations show the influence of NGOs on the United Nations.[19] NGO participation at international conferences is seen as demonstrating their importance and authors emphasise NGO impact on governmental negotiations.[20] Most of these studies on conferences are, however, primarily empirical and emphasise the quantitative dimensions of NGO participation as an indicator of NGO influence. Thus, for many authors, mere participation demonstrates NGO influence.[21]

In recent years, however, scholars have begun to take a different point of view. As well as focusing on the influence of NGOs on the UN system, other spectra of the NGO/IGO relationship have been explored. It has been pointed out that influence and dependencies are not only one-dimensional, but that NGOs and the United Nations influence each other mutually.[22] Particularly in the field of human rights, scholars have become aware that there are limits to NGO influence and importance. NGOs depend on the goodwill of states and state organisations, because only states are capable of enforcing international conventions on human rights. In addition, NGOs are excluded from any treaty complaints procedures and can exercise pressure only indirectly by finding state allies.[23] Similarly, states set out the limits of NGO participation during

16. Willetts, *"The Conscience of the World"*, *op. cit.*

17. Weiss and Gordenker, *op. cit.*

18. Julie Ziegler, *Die Beteiligung von Nichtregierungsorganisationen (NGOs) am Menschenrechtschutzsystem der Vereinten Nationen* (Munich, 1998); Sheila Jasanoff, "NGOs and the Environment: From Knowledge to Action", in Thomas Weiss (ed.), *Beyond UN Subcontracting. Task-sharing with Regional Security Arrangements and Service-providing NGOs* (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 203–226; Felice Gaer, "Reality Check: Human Rights Nongovernmental Organisations confront Governments at the United Nations", in Weiss and Gordenker (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 51–66; Sally Morphet, "NGOs and the Environment", in Willetts (ed.), *"The Conscience of the World"*, *op. cit.*, pp. 116–146.

19. Ramesh Thakur, "Human Rights: Amnesty International and the United Nations", in Paul F. Diehl (ed.), *The Politics of Global Governance. International Organizations in an Interdependent World* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1997), pp. 247–268; Helena Cook, "Amnesty International at the United Nations", in Willetts (ed.), *"The Conscience of the World"*, *op. cit.*, pp. 181–213.

20. Kevin Boyle, "Stock-taking on Human Rights: The World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna 1993", *Political Studies*, Vol. 43 (1995), pp. 79–95; Peter Willetts, "From Stockholm to Rio and Beyond: The Impact of the Environment Movement on the United Nations Consultative Arrangements for NGOs", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 22 (1996), pp. 57–80.

21. Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 188, Dieter Rucht, "The Transnationalization of Social Movements: Trends, Causes, Problems", in della Porta, Kriesi and Rucht, *op. cit.*, p. 211; Jessica Mathews, "Power Shift", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 76, No. 1 (1997), p. 55; Jackie Smith, "Global Civil Society? Transnational Social Movement Organizations and Social Capital", *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (1998), p. 96.

22. Peter Uvin and Thomas G. Weiss, "The United Nations and NGOs: Global Civil Society and Institutional Change", in Martin I. Glassner (ed.), *The United Nations at Work* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), pp. 213–238.

23. Rachel Brett, "The Role and Limits of Human Rights NGOs at the United Nations", *Political Studies*, Vol. 43 (1995), p. 107.

international conferences and shut the doors to international processes when sensitive issues are touched.[24]

The consequences for NGOs of their increasing co-operation with IGOs have been identified. Two main foci of the NGO modifications can be distinguished. On the one hand, the focus has shifted to exploring IGO benefits from linkages with NGOs. IGOs gain on a symbolic level from co-operation with NGOs because NGOs justify IGO politics: the presence of NGOs in international negotiation gives IGOs democratic legitimacy, because the representatives of civil society participate directly.[25] On a more pragmatic level, IGOs gain essential material support from NGOs: they devolve work to NGOs and "subcontract" them for special purposes, because NGOs are popular for their comparative advantages, such as fewer bureaucratic structures and a higher level of acceptance by the population.[26] In this context, it has also been pointed out that NGOs can be "co-opted" by the United Nations, whereby they merely exercise UN projects.[27] In particular, case studies of single UN organisations have revealed that IGOs often instrumentalise NGOs for their purposes.[28]

On the other hand, NGO/IGO linkages can foster modifications within the NGOs themselves and the NGO community. Linkages with IGOs can trigger the internal development of NGOs, such as professionalisation and bureaucratisation, in order to become more efficient in their performance.[29] It has been observed that these developments have affected the work of NGOs in that they increasingly subordinate their aims to pragmatic politics instead of proposing radical alternatives. Instead of carrying out "classical" protest (now only performed by smaller NGOs on a ritual level), NGOs tend to conduct intense talks with officials in the preparatory phase of the actual meeting. Such criticism has been particularly strong in the environmental[30] and development[31] sectors. Moreover, the formalisation of relations might also reduce NGO creativity, and NGOs increasingly adapt to official politics. Some have pointed out tensions in the NGO community, because of competition for (governmental) funds, resources, donors and international standing.[32] Similarly, others have stated that

24. Ann Marie Clark, Elisabeth Friedman and Kathrin Hochstetler, "The Sovereign Limits of Global Civil Society: A Comparison of NGO Participation in UN World Conferences on the Environment, Human Rights, and Women", *World Politics*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (1998), pp. 1–35; Kerstin Martens, "NGO Participation at International Conferences—Assessing Theoretical Accounts", *Transnational Associations*, No. 3 (2000), pp. 115–126.

25. Jens Martens, "Dabeisein ist noch nicht alles", *Vereinte Nationen*, No. 3 (1993), p. 171.

26. Uvin and Weiss, *op. cit.*, p. 215; Isebill V. Gruhn, "NGOs in Partnership with the UN: A New Fix or a New Problem for African Development?", *Global Society: Journal of Interdisciplinary International Relations*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (1997), p. 337.

27. Wahl, *op. cit.*; Chatterjee and Finger, *op. cit.*

28. Kal Raustiala, "States, NGOs, and International Environmental Institutions", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41 (1997), pp. 719–740; Kerstin Martens, *Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the UNESCO System: A Case Study* (Frankfurt/Oder: Viademica, 1999).

29. Chatterjee and Finger, *op. cit.*; Seamus Cleary, "The World Bank and NGOs", in Willetts (ed.), "*The Conscience of the World*", *op. cit.*, p. 86.

30. Denis Chartier and Jean-Paul Deléage, "The International Environmental NGOs: From the Revolutionary Alternative to the Pragmatism of Reform", *Environmental Politics*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1998), pp. 26–41.

31. Hulme and Edwards, *op. cit.*

32. Wends Schoener, "Non-governmental Organizations and Global Activism: Legal and Informal Approaches", *Global Legal Studies Journal*, Vol. 4 (1997), p. 548.

the diversity of NGO contributions has decreased. As such, NGOs are not perceived as being pure "good guys",[33] but they might simply be the "most overrated political actors of the 1990s".[34]

To summarise the literature on NGO involvement in international politics, the perception of NGOs and their relationship with other international actors has clearly changed from one of one-sided NGO influence on intergovernmental actors to one of more co-operative mutual interaction between the two sets of organisations. Whereas, in the past, NGOs have often been seen as dogmatic and radical idealists, the picture of the role of NGOs in the international arena and their interaction with intergovernmental forums is now more one of co-operative and productive partners. Rucht, for example, argues that NGOs are no longer perceived by governments as trouble-makers; rather, they are seen as pressure groups, negotiators or even advisers.[35] NGOs have become appropriate and suitable auxiliary assistants in the process of "privatisation of world politics".[36]

Theoretical Accounts on Interest Mediation at the (Inter)National Level

The interaction between social actors and state institutions is one of the leading themes in political science. Of particular interest has been the rise and fall of social activism, the reasons for the emergence of pressure groups, and the ways they express their needs to the official representation or their dissatisfaction with governmental politics. Two theoretical approaches deal in some detail with the public–private relationship: social movement theory and corporatism. Both approaches explore the patterns of interactions between state and society. Corporatism, for example, investigates interest groups and their integration into the political system; social movement theory focuses on the origins and the continuous development of social actors and their modes of expression towards the state.

To date only conceptualisations drawn from social movement theory have been applied to NGOs and their interaction with the United Nations. Borrowing from this theory, some authors have referred to NGOs on the international stage as

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33. Note, in this respect, that NGOs were overwhelmingly regarded as "positive'' in the press until 1991, whereas lately the perception of NGOs has changed and journalists have been ambivalent. Thränhardt analysed 352 newspaper articles between 1986 and 1991 and found only three critical of Greenpeace and four critical of Amnesty. Lately, a different standpoint has been taken in numerous articles on NGOs. Thus, for example, *The Economist* stated that ironically those who criticised official politics (NGOs) have become the governmental puppets through which aid is now channelled. NGOs are becoming contractors for governments, which simply use NGOs as sources of information (e.g. in the field of human rights), implementing partners or contractors for official politics. Co-operation between NGOs and states is most visible in financial contributions from governments and in the exchange or fluctuation of staff. NGOs, on the other hand, fight for donors and media attraction. "The focus of such NGOs can easily shift from finding solutions and helping needy recipients to pleasing their donors and winning television coverage". *The Economist*, "Sins of the secular missionaries", < http://www.economist.co.uk/editorial/freeforall/current/sf3300.htm > (2 February 2000); Dietrich Thränhardt, "Globale Probleme, globale Normen, neue globale Akteure", *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (1992), p. 228.

34. Wahl, *op. cit.*

35. Rucht, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

36. Uvin and Weiss, *op. cit.*; Gordenker and Weiss, *op. cit.* In particular, case studies on technical issues have shown this in detail. Kelly Lee, David Humphreys and Michael Pugh, "'Privatisation' in the United Nations System: Patterns of Influence in Three Intergovernmental Organisations", *Global Society: Journal of Interdisciplinary International Relations*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (1997), pp. 339–357.

transnational social movement organisations (TSMOs) or use this phrase for a special sort of NGO that engages at the international level for social change.[37] For these TSMOs, intergovernmental forums have become the major point of reference.[38] IGOs are their direct target because they are concerned with the same issues as they are.[38] Intergovernmental and supranational organisations are important linkage organisations because they provide new arenas for the articulation of demands and open up a greater reference public, in the widest case the global public.[39] From closer co-operation, IGOs gain benefits which they often lack, such as knowledge and legitimisation; NGOs in return are provided with symbolic as well as material resources. As such, IGOs—like the United Nations—offer what has sometimes been called "transnational" political opportunity structures.[40]

If social movement theory has become the major underlying theoretical basis for explaining the rise, importance and influence of social movements on the international scale, it should also be possible to apply a corporatist approach to the study of the effects on TSMOs as a result of their incorporation into the structures of global governance, in this case the UN system. To put it differently, if scholars have drawn analogies from one of the two major theories on interest mediation in order to explain the importance of social movements in world politics from namely national social movement theory, it should similarly be possible to draw analogies from the other theoretical approach on this theme: the implications of corporatism to study interest groups at the international level.

Corporatism[41] focuses on structures and patterns of interest representation and interest mediation in relation to official institutions. Primarily intended to explain and analyse the co-operation of interest groups and governmental representatives in the economic field, it has developed a relatively precise toolbox for analysing the private–public relationship mainly at the national level in order to compare different countries. However, it has also enjoyed application above the domestic level and on non-economic issues. In particular, in the European sphere (known as "Euro-Corporatism"), numerous studies have applied a corporatist approach, though with varying success.[42] Apart from the European dimension, the concept

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37. Smith, Chatfield and Pagnucco, *op. cit.*; della Porta, Kriesi and Rucht, *op. cit.*

38. Rucht, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

39. Donatella della Porta and Hanspeter Kriesi, "Social Movements in a Globalizing World: An Introduction", in della Porta, Kriesi and Rucht, *op. cit.*, pp. 16–17.

40. For an analysis of the different ways in which the concept of political opportunity structures has been used in international and transnational studies, see Kerstin Martens, "Applying the Concept of 'Political Opportunity Structures' in European and International Studies", *Transnational Associations*, Vol. 3 (2001), pp. 2–9.

41. The notion of *corporatism* has been used in many variations and with changing prefixes and adjectives, such as *neo*, *liberal* or *democratic*. This variation in terminology is due to the different "schools" of corporatism (e.g. Schmitter mainly uses the expression *neocorporatism* whereas Lehmbruch prefers *liberal corporatism*) as well as disagreement about the content or meaning of the term; the variations are often used synonymously. Moreover, these attributes are used to make a sharp distinction with older, mainly fascist, connotations of the inter-war period. The plain term *corporatism*, however, seems to be the most commonly used expression and is the one used in this paper.

42. Rainer Eising and Beate Kohler-Koch, "Inflation und Zerfasserung: Trends der Interessenvermittlung in der Europäischen Gemeinschaft", in Wolfgang Streek (ed.), *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* (Special Issue: Staat und Verbände), Vol. 25, (1994), pp. 175–206; Michael J. Gorges, *Euro-Corporatism. Interest Intermediation in the European Community* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1996); Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999); Franz Traxler and Phillippe C. Schmitter, "The Emerging Euro-polity and Organized Interest", *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (1991), pp. 191–218.

of corporatism has been applied only sporadically in international relations. Glagow and Schimank developed a model for "corporatism administration" in order to explain administrative structures of aid politics between official institutions and NGOs; Uckermann applied corporatism to the involvement of German trade unions and NGOs in Third World countries; finally, Voelzkow, Hilbert and Heinze looked at environmental issues from a corporatist perspective.[43]

On the relationship between NGOs and the United Nations, the corporatist approach has also found some reference in recent works.[44] It has lately been pointed out that NGO/UN relations might better be analysed through a corporatist lens since NGOs are increasingly "incorporated" into the UN system.[45] For example, Bahner's study on the institutional integration of NGOs in the discussion of biodiversity refers to the corporatist approach.[46] Also, Wahl perceived a corporatist integration of NGOs in the UN system because of the distinct corporatist tradition of interest mediation in single countries. He argues that this perception of interest groups will also be transferred to the international level, since national governments define the conditions of NGO access to intergovernmental forums and, therefore, it is not unlikely that national governments apply similar modes for the incorporation of non-governmental organisations at the international level.[47] As a result, the corporatist approach levels off the diversity with the NGO community because NGOs have select representatives who speak for all NGOs. According to him, it is exactly this that is implied in the term "major groups", which has been used frequently for NGOs in UN documents since the Rio Conference.[48]

Corporatism is thus useful for the study of NGO/UN relations because it can be interpreted as the systematic arrangement for direct participation of societal actors (interest groups) in the formulation and implementation of governmental policies. In a corporatist system, the relationship between the state and interest groups is marked by a strong mutual and interrelated interaction between the two sets of actors. Corporatism is the interrelation between organised interests, on the one

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43. Manfred Glagow and Uwe Schimank, "Korporatistische Verwaltung: Das Beispiel Entwicklungspolitik", *Politische Viertesljahresschrift*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (1983), pp. 253–274; Helga Uckermann, *Gewerkschaften und Dritte Welt. Konzeption, Strategien und Standort im System der Nichtregierungsorganisationen* (Sinzheim: Pro Universitate, 1996); Helmut Voelzkow, Josef Hilbert and Rolf G. Heinze, "'Regieren durch Verbände'—am Beispiel der umweltschutzbezogenen Techniksteuerung", *Politische Viertesljahresschrift*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (1987), pp. 80–100.

44. When explaining the relationship between societal actors and the United Nations, scholars often referred to the commonly used expression of "NGOs", rather than "interest group" as this is traditionally the term used in corporatism. The term "interest group" has mainly (or almost exclusively) been employed for economic groups. For this reason, Willetts has argued that the term should not be used in relation to NGOs because "interest group" contains too much connotation of a primarily economically oriented association. Peter Willetts, "Transnational Actors and International Organizations", in John Baylis and Steve Smith (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 298. Others, however, view this issue differently, particularly because NGOs—just like any other societal actors—have an "interest" in a specific issue. "The predominant way to think about NGOs in world affairs is as transnational interest groups". Paul Wapner, "Politics beyond the State: Environmental Activism and World Civic Politics", *World Politics*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (1995), p. 336.

45. Ulrich von Alemann, "Vom Korporatismus zum Lobbyismus?", *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, No. B26–27 (2000), p. 6.

46. Titus Bahner, *Globale Biodiversität und die institutionelle Einbindung von NGOs* (Universität Witten Herdecke: Heft 47, 1997).

47. Wahl, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

48. Wahl, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

hand, represented by strong organisations, and a co-ordinating state, on the other. As Schmitter has pointed out, "corporatism [can be viewed as] as a system of interest and attitude representation, a particular modal or ideal-typical institutional arrangement for linking the associationally organized interests of civil society with the decisional structures of the state".[49] In the initial phase during the 1970s, the corporatist concept was used mainly to compare different Western industrialised nations in their "degree of corporatisation". The debate was limited to application on economic processes in capitalist societies.[50] Gradually, however, the corporatist model was applied to all sectors of society. New corporatisms and new corporatism-types were gradually developed, so that the corporatist approach increasingly conquered the political scene.[51] Today, it can be used for almost all areas of institutional relations between public and private organisational life.

What made the corporatist approach so attractive was its alternative explanation for the increasingly direct participation of societal actors in political processes. As such, the corporatist model developed mainly in response to the deficits of the pluralist approach. Pluralist models were not capable of explaining certain aspects of interest mediation in the public sphere, in particular the co-operative interaction between societal actors and the state. Although both concepts, pluralism as well as corporatism, basically explore the same theme—organisational societal activism—they differ in the angle from which they view interest mediation. Whereas pluralist approaches concentrate on the democratic notions of societal activism in the state, corporatism explores the institutional aspects and the understanding of systemic control of interest mediation. They are therefore not mutually excluding approaches: rather, they highlight different perspectives. Corporatism expresses the view that societal participation in political process is not diffuse and partial, but well shaped and durable.

The important difference between pluralist and corporatist approaches is thus the institutional incorporation of societal actors into the political process. Whereas pluralism emphasises the autonomous standing of societal actors, corporatism recognises their permanent integration. In his often-cited definition, Schmitter expresses the fundamental understanding of corporatism:

> Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and support.[52]

As a result of this corporatist integration into the political system, the societal

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49. Phillippe C. Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism", in Schmitter and Lehmbruch, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

50. Ulrich von Alemann and Rolf G. Heinze (eds.), *Verbände und Staat. Vom Pluralismus zum Korporatismus. Ananlysen, Positionen, Dokumente* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1979).

51. Roland Czada, "Konjunkturen des Korporatismus: Zur Geschichte eines Paradigmenwechsels in der Verbändeforschung", in Wolfgang Streek (ed.), *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* (Special Issue: Staat und Verbände), Vol. 25 (1994), p. 40.

52. Schmitter, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

actors have to accept certain consequences for their work. Offe summarised the implications for societal activism as follows:

> In a typical case, access to governmental decision-making positions is facilitated through the political recognition of an interest group, but the organization in question becomes subject to more or less formalized obligations, for example, to behave responsibly and predictably and to refrain from any nonnegotiable demands or nonacceptable tactics.[53]

Offe thus makes it clear that societal actors modify their contents according to the demands of the governmental institution.

In sum, the corporatist approach emphasises this co-operative element in the public–private relationship. Unlike pluralist concepts, it also highlights the benefits of the official part of the interrelationship. It explains why official institutions are interested in co-operating with societal actors. Thus, the ideal-type of corporatism can be understood as a system of interest mediation in which a limited number of societal organisations are directly integrated into the political process. Moreover, they maintain an officially recognised status, may be supplied with resources from the official institution, and are sometimes even founded by the governmental institution. They are not under pressure of competition because they are considered from the point of view of certain functional aspects. Therefore, they own a kind of monopoly over the representation of interests in their respective fields of activity. In return, they take over certain tasks which would otherwise be left to the governmental institutions. In the following section I examine how the NGO/UNESCO relationship fits the corporatist model.

Transforming Relations: NGOs at UNESCO

Like no other IGO, UNESCO has maintained relations with non-governmental organisations from its very beginning. Co-operation between NGOs and UNESCO dates back to the establishment of this intergovernmental organisation in 1945 when both types of organisations were interacting on a close, but informal, level. In 1966, UNESCO adopted supplementary "Directives Concerning UNESCO's Relations with Non-governmental Organizations[54] which set out the statutory framework for the NGO/UNESCO relationship in more detail. In the broader context of the UNESCO reform process (since 1988), the classification of NGOs was reorganised and new directives were adopted in 1995.[55] In this section, I examine the origins of the NGO/UNESCO relationship as well as the reasons for, and results of, its reform in 1995.

Creation and Expansion of NGOs by UNESCO

During the discussions on the foundation of UNESCO in 1945, a point of great controversy was the scope of activity that the new organisation should encompass

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53. Claus Offe, "The Attribution of Public Status to Interest Groups: Observations on the West German Case", in Suzanne D. Berger (ed.), *Organizing Interests in West Europe: Pluralism, Corporatism, and the Transformation of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 135.

54. UNESCO Doc., *Directives Concerning UNESCO's Relations with International Non-governmental Organizations* (1966).

55. UNESCO Doc., *Directives Concerning UNESCO's Relations with Non-governmental Organisations* (1995).

and how it should manage the resulting workload.[56] Some were in favour of an organisation working on educational and cultural matters only ("UNECO"), whereas most viewed it as necessary for scientific matters to be included in the new organisation. Consequently, the objectives and the workload of UNESCO became extremely broad. This encompasses not only three widely differentiated sectors—"Education", "Science" and "Culture"—but also documentation and archives, sports, communications and the international protection of human rights. In this context, it was laid down by the founding conference in London that UNESCO could co-operate with non-governmental organisations concerned with subject matters coming within UNESCO's scope of activity, particularly in technical questions, and that UNESCO might also create new organisations if necessary.[57]

A closer look at UNESCO's early NGO policy confirms its close co-operation with NGOs in order to reduce the IGO's own areas of responsibility. Firstly, UNESCO created many NGOs itself in order to hand over specific tasks or whole areas of responsibility to non-governmental organisations.[58] For example, the International Council of Museums (ICOM)—one of the major NGOs—was founded by UNESCO in 1946 and subsequently took on the assignment of establishing and running a common Documentation Centre on museums. In fact, "UNESCO entrusted it with the task of running its [UNESCO's] documentation centre".[59] In all, UNESCO founded 25 major NGOs in the period up to 1965.[60] Most

56. Above all, the question of whether the organisation was to be governmental or non-governmental became an area of conflict. During the preparation of the drafts, it was widely argued that the new organisation should not necessarily be an intergovernmental body in order to protect cultural, scientific and educational issues from political and ideological considerations. Particular NGOs participating at the founding conference spoke for a non-governmental organisation such as the predecessor of UNESCO, the non-governmental International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation (IIIC) (founded in 1925). The French draft promoted an organisation which also included individuals. In this proposal, the new organisation was supposed to have a trinomial structure with each part having the same rights: a representation of the governments, national committees and civil society (NGOs). The French proposal particularly emphasised that the organisation should encompass the intellectual élite of its member states. However, this proposal was rejected, and the advocates for an integration of UNESCO into the intergovernmental family of UN bodies won, so that the governmental UNESCO replaced the non-governmental IIIC. Christine M. Merkel, "Neue Wege der Zusammenarbeit der UNESCO mit Nicht-regierungsorganisationen (NROs)", in Klaus Hüfner and Wolfgang Reuther (eds.), *UNESCO-Handbuch* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1996), p. 94; Walter M. Kotschnig, "Education, Science and Culture", in Robert E. Asher (ed.), *The United Nations and Promotion of the General Welfare* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1957), p. 551; James P. Sewell, *UNESCO and World Politics. Engaging in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 6.

57. Julian Huxley, *Memories II* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), p. 17; Stosic, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

58. It is worth noting that the impact of the first Director-General of UNESCO, Julian Huxley, was of greatest importance for the development of the relationship between NGOs and UNESCO. Huxley favoured a role for NGOs that would involve them heavily in UNESCO's procedures and activities, since he assumed that NGOs were less bound to bureaucratic procedures than UNESCO. In particular, Huxley himself created many of UNESCO's closest NGOs. Hoggart, *op. cit.*, p. 105; Sewell, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

59. Conil M. Lacoste, *The Story of a Grand Design. UNESCO 1946–1993* (Paris: UNESCO, 1994), p. 30.

60. Major examples of UNESCO creations are: the International Council on Archives, the World Conservation Union, the International Theatre Institute (all created in 1948), the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, the International Music Council (1949), the International Association of Universities (1950), the International Social Science Council (1952), the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, the International Brain Research Organisation (1960) and the International Institute for Educational Planning (1963). One of the latest examples of UNESCO's creations is the Expert Center for Taxonomic Identification, which became established in 1990 with the support of UNESCO. UNESCO Doc. 151 EX/ONG.2 Add., *Application of the New Directives Concerning UNESCO's Relations with Non-governmental Organizations* (1997).

of these NGOs are international umbrella organisations that co-ordinate the various national organisations.

Secondly, UNESCO guaranteed direct subventions to existing NGOs in order to avoid setting up UNESCO programmes in the areas in which these NGOs were already involved. In extreme cases, some NGOs simply carried out specific projects on behalf of UNESCO. As a result, most of these NGOs became financially dependent on UNESCO, since it was their primary source of income.[61] Thirdly, UNESCO simply withdrew from certain areas of activity in favour of supporting new NGOs with objectives similar to its own. Even such a well-known NGO as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) was founded in 1961 on the initiative of another NGO with close links to UNESCO in order to mobilise the public and to raise funds for environmental issues. In the years before the establishment of the WWF, most of these tasks had been run by UNESCO.[62]

Hence, for UNESCO many of "its" NGOs function as assistant bodies which exercise or implement UNESCO objectives. Documents clearly expose UNESCO's purposes and profits that derive from close working relations with NGOs. Consider the following quotes from UNESCO documents:

1. The purpose of all these arrangements is to promote the objectives of UNESCO.[63]
2. Programmes and projects . . . financed by the United Nations organizations often include NGOs as implementing partners.[64]

The example of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) incorporates and reflects the various aspects of the NGO/UNESCO relationship in particular. ICSU was founded in 1931 "to promote international scientific activity in the different branches of science and their applications for the benefit of humanity".[65] Today, ICSU is the most important NGO in the natural sciences to co-ordinate individuals and national or international NGOs. For Baker, the former Executive Secretary of ICSU, this is due mainly to the creation of UNESCO and its payment of subventions.[66]

ICSU became closely linked to UNESCO in 1946. For UNESCO, the agreement with this organisation was the first with an NGO and was very useful for UNESCO. Particularly during the first years of UNESCO, ICSU gave the IGO much important and valuable advice on questions in its respective fields of competence.[67] In return, UNESCO recognised ICSU as the co-ordinating and representative body in the field of science.[68] With the introduction of different categories of relations with NGOs in 1966, ICSU was admitted immediately to

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61. Kotschnig, *op. cit.*, p. 563.

62. Morphet, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

63. UNESCO Doc. CPX-80/WS/8, *UNESCO and International Non-governmental Organizations—From Consultation to Co-operation* (1980), p. 4.

64. UNESCO Doc. 152 EX/40, *Review of Financial Resources Allocated by the United Nations System to Activities by Non-governmental Organisations* (1997), p. v.

65. International Council of Scientific Unions, *Yearbook 1997*, p. 1.

66. F.W.G. Baker, "The International Council of Scientific Unions—Relations and Reflections", *Transnational Associations*, Vol. 49, No. 6 (1997), < http://www.uia.org/uiata/ baker1.htm> (28 January 2001).

67. Huxley, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

68. Anne Feraru, "Transnational Political Interests and the Global Environment", *International Organization*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (1974), p. 37.

the highest category (category A); in 1995, it was then admitted to the highest status of relations (Formal Associate Relations). Moreover, since 1947, ICSU has received yearly subventions from UNESCO. In particular, during its first years, up to about 85% of ICSU's budget came from UNESCO.[69] Furthermore, UNESCO provided ICSU with secretarial assistance, e.g. the use of offices in UNESCO's headquarters in Paris, and even undertook to pay staff salaries.[70]

Following this early success of co-operation, links between the two organisations became ever closer. UNESCO enhances co-operation with ICSU in planning and carrying out scientific activities[71] and it sponsors ICSU for more than 600 congresses and symposia each year, in which both organisations have joint programmes.[72] Moreover, in 1972 ICSU's headquarters moved to Paris—where UNESCO is based—and ICSU representatives and UNESCO officials exchanged offices and positions.[73] UNESCO's subvention to ICSU "has always been used to support those activities of ICSU bodies which further UNESCO's objectives".[74] Accordingly, under the new arrangements, again, ICSU has agreed mainly to further common objectives. The success of such a close relationship with an NGO inspired UNESCO to create other organisations under its aegis, modelled on the example of ICSU.[75]

Redefined Relations between NGOs and UNESCO since 1995

From the mid-1970s, UNESCO suffered such a severe crisis that even the continuance of the IGO as part of the UN system was in danger.[76] For some, UNESCO had always been the most highly politicised agency of the United Nations, particularly since its efforts to introduce a *New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO)*; for others it is simply the long-term extension of the different opinions of UNESCO's purposes as exposed during the discussions of UNESCO's foundation in London. One of the major fields of criticism in the 1980s had been UNESCO's inefficiency in terms of budget management and administration.[77] Western states, in particular, were dissatisfied with the organisation's growing expenses, its centralised management techniques and its lack of transparency in recruitment of staff.

The eventual withdrawal from UNESCO by the United States and the United Kingdom in the mid-1980s endangered the survival of the whole organisation, both morally and financially, since two major and founding members denied

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69. Baker, *op. cit.*

70. Morphet, *op. cit.*, p. 118; Lacoste, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

71. UNESCO Doc. CPX-80/WS/8, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

72. Lacoste, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

73. Baker, *op. cit.*

74. International Council of Scientific Unions, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

75. Baker, *op cit.*

76. Gabriele Kittel, Volker Rittberger and Frank Schimmelfenning, "Between Loyalty and Exit. Explaining the Foreign Policies of Industrialized Countries in the UNESCO Crisis (1978–87)", Working Paper No. 24, Center for International Relations/Peace and Conflict Studies, University of Tübingen, < http://www.uni-tuebingen.de/uni/spi/taps/tap24.htm > (28 January 2001).

77. Mark Imber, *The USA, ILO, UNESCO and IAEA: Politicization and Withdrawal in the Specialised Agencies* (London: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 96–120; Yves Beigbeder, *Management Problems in the United Nations Organization: Reform or Decline?* (London: Frances Pinter, 1987), pp. 26–40.

their support and reduced the organisation's budget by almost 30%.[78] UNESCO's reform aimed to improve the organisation's efficacy and transparency with one of the major reform strategies being to slim down the organisation's areas of concern to only a few with more effective programmes and projects. Moreover, the budgetary situation was to be improved by the increase in extra budgetary resources. For greater transparency, field offices and national committees were considered to be more important in planning and executing UNESCO's aims.[79]

The consultative arrangement between NGOs and UNESCO was also a matter of controversy during the UNESCO crisis, which initiated several recommendations and was eventually revised in 1995.[80] The formal basis for all co-operation between UNESCO and NGOs is laid down in the Constitution of UNESCO (*Greenbook*). In Article XI, para. 4 in the UNESCO Constitution it is provided that:

> [t]he United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization may make suitable arrangements for consultation and co-operation with non-governmental international organizations concerned with matters within its competence, and may invite them to undertake specific tasks. Such co-operation may also include appropriate participation by representatives of such organizations on advisory committees set up by the General Conference.

Elaborate directives then lay down the conditions under which NGOs are eligible for admission. Since 1995, two different types of relations have been instituted: *Formal Relations* (which can either be *Formal Associate Relations* or *Formal Consultative Relations*) and *Operational Relations*. In formal relations, NGOs might be invited by the Director-General to send observers to the General Assembly conferences and the commissions; in the latter, they can make statements on matters within their competence. NGOs with formal relations are also allowed to submit written statements to the Director-General on programme matters and to receive documentation. Unlike other systems of consultation, UNESCO even provides associated NGOs with office accommodation (I.8.3).[81]

Whereas associated NGOs are to be integrated "as closely and regularly as possible with the various stages of planning and execution of UNESCO's activities" (I.8.3), operational relations are instead designed to "maintain flexible and dynamic partnerships with any organization of civil society" in a specific field of UNESCO's competence. NGOs with operational relations might only be invited to hearings; if a significant contribution is expected, they are expected to participate in collective consultations such as the "Conference of International Non-governmental Organisations". However, they are entitled to apply for financial support (II.4.1) and can also be considered by UNESCO for contracts, if the Director-General considers them most competent in a related UNESCO programme (II.4.2). Unlike other IGOs, UNESCO grants subventions to selected NGOs. Subventions were foreseen for NGOs making "a particularly valuable

78. UNESCO's Budget and Finance, < http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/about/mcr/ 2echap3.htm > (28 January 2001).

79. UNESCO's Programming and Evaluation, < http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/about/ mcr/2echap1.htm > (28 January 2001).

80. UNESCO Doc. 126 EX/31, *Report Concerning the Prospective Study on UNESCO's Relations with Non-governmental Organizations* (1987).

81. Bibliographical indications refer to the UNECSO Doc., *Directives 1995, op. cit.*

contribution to the achievement of UNESCO's objectives and to the implementation of an important part of its programme".[82] Compared with other UN bodies, UNESCO has been remarkable in terms of subvention, because it also provides NGOs with funds for travel, conferences, publishing and research.

A closer look at the contents of the old set of directives before the reform process and the new directives reveals a number of differences resulting from UNESCO's reform process, which explains why the *1995 Directives* have been described as the "turning point" in the relationship between NGOs and UNESCO.[83] First, to improve the transparency of the UNESCO system, the IGO transferred more tasks and resources to local and regional actors. As a result, UNESCO's relations to NGOs became significantly decentralised. Unlike the old system, where relations with NGOs were restricted to international NGOs, the *1995 Directives* also admit national NGOs ("any non-governmental organisation", II.1.1). However, national NGOs can apply for operational relations only, and they are supposed to conduct their links with the National Committees of the Member State or, in particular cases, with the appropriate field unit of UNESCO (and not with the headquarters in Paris).

Second, for a more effective NGO contribution to UNESCO's purposes, the obligations that UNESCO imposes on accredited NGOs are stricter than before. UNESCO not only demands that associated NGOs expand their activities that come under UNESCO's field of competence, they are also encouraged to promote the formation of more umbrella organisations in their respective fields of activity (II.7.1). In addition to the old system, associated NGOs are asked to extend their networks at the local and regional level (II.7.1). Moreover, the new directives also foresee *automatic* termination if there has been a complete absence of relations for four years. Third, UNESCO's strategy of reducing financial expenses becomes mirrored in the conceptual perception of relations to NGOs. In the old system, the emphasis was on "consultation and co-operation",[84] as mentioned frequently in the *1966 Directives*. The *1995 Directives*, instead, stress that UNESCO cannot primarily be a funding institution for NGOs. Therefore, "these relations [between NGOs and UNESCO] will be essentially of an intellectual nature" (Preamble). Under the old system, the above-mentioned subventions depended on the category in which the NGOs were registered. This means that subventions were foreseen for NGOs in the higher categories A and B only. The *1995 Directives*, instead, restrict subventions to NGOs that are newly established or have just started to co-operate with UNESCO. As a result, the priority will be the geographical location of the NGO: NGOs in developing countries or countries in transition will be given preference. Furthermore, UNESCO particularly emphasises that financial support is not to be understood as a permanent commitment, but can only be regarded as supplementary to other incomes. Subventions are also limited to a non-renewable period of four years maximum.

In addition, the *1995 Directives* particularly emphasise the support of new NGOs or existing NGOs in developing countries. UNESCO encourages "the emergence of new organizations that are representative of civil society in

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82. UNESCO Doc. CPX-80/WS/8, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
83. UNESCO Doc. 154 EX/29, *Relations with Non-governmental Organizations, Foundations and Similar Institutions* (1998), p. 1.
84. Hoggart, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

those regions of the world where such organizations, for historical, cultural or geographical reasons, are isolated or weak, and help to integrate such organizations into the network" (Preamble). Even if developing country NGOs maintain only consultative relations with UNESCO, they can be integrated more closely into co-operation with UNESCO than other NGOs having the same status. In this context, it is worth noting that UNESCO also advises all accredited NGOs to support other NGOs in the developing world. This seems to imply that UNESCO wants to concentrate on less developed regions of the world rather than on particular issue areas, something that in the past created many controversies (e.g. the NWICO).

Moreover, the reclassification of NGOs had a tremendous impact on the number of accredited NGOs at UNESCO. Until 1995, the number of accredited NGOs increased continuously. When the system of categories was introduced in 1961, 22 NGOs were admitted in the highest category A; in 1995, 55 NGOs were registered in this category. In category B, the number of NGOs increased from 99 to 252; the number in category C grew from 66 to 281. In total, the number of admitted NGOs therefore increased from 187 in 1961 to 588 in 1995. After the reclassification of NGOs, UNESCO cut down on its relations with NGOs in all types of relations. In particular, the number of NGOs admitted to the highest category decreased by 75%. Only 16 NGOs gained the highest status in the new system. Such is the case also for NGOs having the second highest status. Now only 63 of all NGO are having consultative relations with UNESCO. The percentage of NGOs in the third category, instead, stayed almost the same, and only slightly decreased to 266. In sum, under the new system 34% (or 201) of all 588 NGOs are merely registered under so-called Informal Relations. However, taking into account the low degree of co-operation between NGOs in Informal Relations and UNESCO (this status has no real framework of co-operation), this implies that almost one-third of all officially accredited NGOs dropped out of the participatory framework. In the five years following the introduction of the new system of relations, the number continued to decrease. At the turn of the century, only 337 NGOs were still maintaining official relations with UNESCO.[85]

Ever since the introduction of the new set of directives, the NGOs accredited to UNESCO have had to be evaluated in terms of their contribution to UNESCO. Through detailed questionnaires, UNESCO tests their ability and willingness to follow its principles and aims.[86] These questionnaires are sent to all NGOs every two to three years to evaluate their contribution. Moreover, single NGOs maintaining operational relations are evaluated, particularly when they ask to send observers to the various committees and the General Conference[87] or if they apply for a reclassification of their status.[88] In both cases, they have to provide detailed and specific reports on their main activities and, more importantly, on their adjustment to, and conformity with, UNESCO's demands, such

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85. UNESCO Doc. 159 EX/29, *Relations with Non-governmental Organizations, Foundations and Similar Institutions* (2000).

86. UNESCO Doc. 160 EX/38, *Relations with Non-governmental Organizations, Foundations and Similar Institutions* (2000).

87. UNESCO Doc. 157 EX/18, *Admission to the 30th Session of the General Conference of Observers from Non-governmental Organizations* (2000).

88. UNESCO Doc. 160 EX/51, *Report and Draft Decision of the Committee on International Non-governmental Organizations* (2000).

as increased international action, support of UNESCO's activities and promotion of UNESCO's aims and goals.[89]

Most importantly, the introduction of new directives had consequences for the classification of all NGOs and hence for their opportunities for participation within the UNESCO system. The reclassification had been based on an individual evaluation of each NGO whereby the quality and regularity of co-operation with UNESCO as well as the NGO's geographical representativeness and democratic legitimacy had been measured.[90] On the basis of this evaluation, UNESCO not only cut down tremendously in relations with NGOs, it also significantly favoured its self-created NGOs. Research for this article revealed that amongst the remaining 16 NGOs with associative relations, at least 12 NGOs (plus ICSU) were founded by UNESCO itself.[91] Taking into account the fact that these NGOs conform to UNESCO's objectives or in many regards simply carry out UNESCO's responsibilities and projects, it is not surprising that these NGOs have been admitted to the highest category. Also, in view of the fact that associated NGOs are in a privileged position (as explained above), this leads to the conclusion that UNESCO's "own" NGOs are more influential than other NGOs at UNESCO.

To summarise, in many respects UNESCO's relationship to NGOs thus does not conform to generally agreed-upon knowledge about public–private interaction; instead, it shows two particularities that other studies of NGO/UN linkages have not yet taken into account. Firstly, many of UNESCO's associated NGOs do not stem from private initiative; they are created by the IGO itself and often simply carry out UNESCO projects. Secondly, the *1995 Directives* do not illustrate the expected tendency of the increasing incorporation of NGOs into intergovernmental institutions; on the contrary, the number of accredited NGOs has been significantly reduced to only a few. In addition, as a result of the reform process, UNESCO's "own" NGOs have been particularly favoured. All in all, the analysis of UNESCO documents has shown that the relationship with NGOs has always been mutually dependent and major reforms in recent years sustained further benefits for UNESCO in its relations with NGOs.

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89. UNESCO Doc. 160 EX/58, *op. cit.*; UNESCO Doc. 159 EX/29, *op. cit.*

90. Geographical representation was measured in a complex matrix divided into six sections, one for the home country where the headquarters are based and five for the geographical regions (Africa, Asian-Pacific, Arabic Countries, Latin-American Countries, Europe) on the *x*-axis, and up to 15 indicators on the *y*-axis (e.g. location of headquarters, headquarters region, governing body, members, statutory meetings, workshop/seminar, field action, events, publication, miscellaneous, prizes, radio, TV, grants, fellowship). Democratic legitimacy was measured on the general policy, composition and rules of the governing body, funding, and representation arrangements with different countries. The status of co-operation with UNESCO was measured on keeping UNESCO regularly informed about the NGO's activities, the NGO's expertise in major fields in common with UNESCO's interests, and expected profit of future co-operation with the NGO. UNESCO Doc. 151 EX/ONG.2, *Application of the New Directives Concerning UNESCO's Relations with Non-governmental Organizations* (1997).

91. The NGOs are: the International Association of Universities, the International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, the International Council of Museums, the International Theatre Institute, the World Conversation Union, the International Music Council, the International Council of Sports and Physical Education, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, the International Science Council, the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centers and Associations and the International Council for Engineering and Technology. The remaining three cases are Education International, the International Federation for Information and Documentation and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. UNESCO Doc. BRX-97/WS/12, *Non-governmental Organizations Maintaining Official Relations with UNESCO* (1987).

Concluding Remarks

In contrast to what dominant pluralist theoretical accounts might suggest, the case study of NGOs in the UNESCO system indicates that the integration of NGOs into intergovernmental bodies is not necessarily strong evidence for the growing impact of non-governmental agencies on the international political scene. Rather, a model of "international" corporatism explains the inter-relationship between NGOs and UNESCO much better, because the NGO/UNESCO case demonstrates that the process of NGO incorporation into intergovernmental systems neither necessarily enlarges NGO influence nor do NGOs arise exclusively from outside the intergovernmental framework. Instead, the utilisation of NGOs for IGO purposes has been explored. In this context, the creation of NGOs by UNESCO (due to the nature of UNESCO itself) and the decrease in associated NGOs (due to UNESCO's reform process) have been illustrated and analysed.

The case study of NGOs in the UNESCO system studied from a corporatist perspective has passed the "crucial test". Thus, if a corporatist model explains the relationship between NGOs and UNESCO more accurately than pluralist approaches, have important details in the NGO/IGO interaction so far been overlooked by the academic community? Or, is the NGO/UNESCO case only the exception? As noted earlier, within the national frame, corporatist approaches have been used mainly to explain the relationship between societal actors and official institutions in the economic sphere. A detailed analysis of the incorporation of NGOs into international economic organisations might thus be a good approach in order to test further application of the corporatist model at the international level. The relationship between NGOs and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) comes to mind as a suitable future case study. All in all, it can only be emphasised that further research on public–private relations is necessary in order to fully grasp the role of NGOs in international affairs.