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The Paradigm Debate in International  
Relations: Data in Search of Theory

J. Martin Rochester

THE PARADIGM DEBATE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS:  
DATA IN SEARCH OF THEORY

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## ABSTRACT

There has been an ongoing paradigm debate conducted in recent years in the international relations field between traditionalists who argue that nation-states remain the only significant actors in world politics and modernists who argue that the increasing importance of nonstate actors renders the "state-centric" paradigm inadequate as a framework for understanding contemporary events and necessitates the acceptance of a new one (variously labeled "cobweb," "world policy process," or "complex interdependence"). The purpose of this paper is to point up some basic problems that have characterized this debate and that have resulted in more heat than light being generated on the subject. In particular, the author argues that more theory-building tied to systematic empirical analysis is needed in order to determine under what conditions the traditionalist or modernist paradigm might be expected to offer the best description of reality.

In the first section of the paper the author discusses the nature of the paradigm debate and identifies some misguided directions that the debate has taken. If the modernists are vulnerable to any single criticism, it is that all they have offered for the most part to support their claims for the new paradigm are isolated case studies focusing on particular issue-areas and isolated statistics that purport to demonstrate the increasing importance of nonstate actors in world politics. The debate has largely consisted of volleying bits of data back and forth and has been relatively devoid of theorizing on the part of the modernists. The problem with this is that for every analyst whose data confirm that the nation-state as traditionally conceived is no longer the sole or primary actor in the international system, there is another whose data indicate otherwise. With little good theory to go on, we are left essentially with random facts that offer an inadequate basis for reaching conclusions about the relative strengths of the two paradigms. While case studies

in some instances have generated hypotheses, they have primarily been employed by modernists to illustrate the significance of nonstate actors rather than as theory-building vehicles attempting to specify how the latter relate to each other and to nation-state actors and influence world politics. In the second section of the paper the author suggests one avenue of theoretical development that might be pursued by formulating some hypotheses on state-nonstate actor interactions derived from three bodies of theory--collective goods theory, coalition theory, and learning theory--that have been applied to inter-nation interactions in the past. An attempt is also made to relate the discussion to a fourth body of theory found in the integration literature.

At the start a new candidate for paradigm may have few supporters, and on occasions the supporters' motives may be suspect. Nevertheless, if they are competent, they will improve it, explore its possibilities, and show what it would be like to belong to the community guided by it. And as that goes on, if the paradigm is one destined to win its fight, the number and strength of the persuasive arguments in its favor will increase. More scientists will then be converted, and the exploration of the new paradigm will go on. Gradually the number of experiments, instruments, articles, and books based upon the paradigm will multiply. Still more men, convinced of the new view's fruitfulness will adopt the new mode of practicing normal science, until at last only a few elderly hold-outs remain.

-- Thomas S. Kuhn,  
The Structure of  
 Scientific Revolutions

It is too early to ascertain the outcome of the paradigm debate which has been occurring in recent years between "traditionalists" and "modernists" in the international relations field. The purpose of this paper is not to choose between the two paradigms but to point up some basic problems that have characterized this debate and that have resulted in more heat than light being generated on the subject. In particular, the author will argue that more theory-building tied to systematic empirical analysis is needed in order to determine under what conditions the traditionalist or modernist paradigm might be expected to offer the best description of reality.<sup>1</sup> The paper will first articulate the case for more theory and then suggest some lines that theory development might follow.

#### THE NATURE OF THE DEBATE

The positions of the two schools can be stated fairly simply, notwithstanding the fact that there are several variations to be found. The traditional paradigm in which phenomena in the field have been conceptualized in the past (variously labeled "international politics," "state-centric," or "billiard

ball") has its roots in the realist thought of E. H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau.<sup>2</sup> It assumes that nation-states, acting through official representatives (decision-makers, diplomats, soldiers, etc.) are the only significant actors in world affairs. Neither subnational actors (bureaucratic and societal interest groups) nor transnational<sup>3</sup> actors (intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, including multinational corporations) are treated as distinct and autonomous actors, with the former subsumed by the nation-state and the latter considered as extensions of the nation-state or, at best, marginal factors influencing nation-state interactions. The paradigm assumes a hierarchially ordered set of relationships with demands flowing from bureaucratic and societal groups to national leaders located at the apex of the authoritative decision-making apparatus who resolve whatever internal conflict exists and whose actions then become the nation's actions and the source of interactions between the national unit and other national units.

The traditional paradigm has come under attack by the "modernists,"<sup>4</sup> represented by Keohane and Nye, Modelski, Coplin et al, Brown, Burton et al, Mansbach et al, and Morse, who have argued that the paradigm never has entirely corresponded with reality and is especially inadequate to comprehend contemporary events.<sup>5</sup> In its place (or at least beside it), another paradigm is suggested (variously labeled "world politics," "world policy process," "cobweb," "complex interdependence," or "complex conglomerate") which takes into account relatively new, more complex phenomena.<sup>6</sup> The key assumption of this paradigm, in contrast to the former, is that subnational and transnational actors can be treated as distinct and autonomous actors apart from national actors and that there are no hierarchially organized patterns of influence and authority among these three categories of actors. The world is conceived of as a set of systems interacting rather than a set of geographically and legally defined entities interacting. In other words, not all stimuli which provide the inputs for

world politics travel through and are emitted from Washington or Paris or Cairo; instead, some bypass national capitals and travel by way of places like Poughkeepsie and Peoria. The paradigm suggests that subnational actors can affect world politics directly--and not just indirectly through domestic political processes--by initiating or serving as targets of interactions with either foreign governments or subnational groups located in other countries. It tends to accentuate conflict within national units and cooperation across national units--allowing for the possibility that coalitions of interests among bureaucrats or private interest groups in different countries may be found that are stronger than intranational coalitions--although there is nothing in the paradigm which precludes the kinds of cooperation and conflict patterns assumed by the traditional paradigm.

There have been signs lately suggesting some rapprochement between proponents of these different views. Even such orthodox realists as Morgenthau and Kissinger have felt the need to modify their thinking somewhat. Morgenthau has gone so far as to confess that

the technological revolutions of our age have rendered the Nation-State's principle of political organization as obsolete as the first modern industrial revolution of the steam engine did feudalism. The governments of Nation-States are no longer able to perform the functions for the sake of which civilised governments have been instituted in the first place: to defend and promote the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness of its citizenry. Unable to perform these functions with regard to their own citizens, these governments are incapable of performing them in their relations with each other.<sup>7</sup>

Kissinger has made similar pronouncements which, even if calculated to appeal to world public opinion, still represent remarkable concessions on his part, such as his statement before the World Food Conference in November of 1974, that "we are stranded between old conceptions of political conduct and a wholly new environment, between the inadequacy of the Nation-State and the



emerging imperative of global community."<sup>8</sup> A number of modernists, for their part, have adopted a more conciliatory attitude toward the traditionalists, as reflected in the latest work of Keohane and Nye:

We do not argue. . . that complex interdependence [their label for their alternative paradigm] faithfully reflects world political reality. Quite the contrary: both it and the realist portrait are ideal types. . . . Sometimes, realist assumptions will be accurate, or largely accurate, but frequently complex interdependence will provide a better portrayal of reality.<sup>9</sup>

Still, notwithstanding the mollification of views, fundamental differences between the two schools remain and the debate goes on.<sup>10</sup> It is safe to say that the "revolution" has not yet been won by the modernists. Not only are there more than "a few elderly hold-outs" remaining but the traditional paradigm still dominates the field despite gains made by the modernists.<sup>11</sup> Those who have gravitated toward the modern paradigm do not appear to represent any distinct normative or methodological persuasion, although the traditionalist critic might characterize them as (1) normatively-oriented "idealists" who have become restless looking for the growth of world order in legal-institutional terms and have sought to broaden the concept of "international organization" to uncover it in more informal terms, and (2) methodologically-oriented "behavioralists" who have tired of collecting data on nation-states and having failed to achieve high correlations have discovered a whole new area for data collection and analysis that is in some respects easier to deal with--both coming together under the banner of what could be called "neo-neofunctionalism." However, this would be an unfair characterization of the modernists insofar as the latter on the whole have been careful to point out the potentially negative effects of interdependence and transnationalism, and most have contended that the new paradigm should supplement rather than supplant the old one since neither by itself can account for all international

relations phenomena.

There is one criticism, however, that the author would argue the modernists are especially vulnerable to. For the most part, all that the modernists have offered to support their claims for the new paradigm are isolated case studies focusing on particular issue-areas<sup>12</sup> along with isolated statistics that purport to demonstrate the increased importance of nonstate actors in world politics. To cite just a few examples, one writer notes that "in the first 100 [economic units in the world], countries outnumber corporations, but only by 59 to 41."<sup>13</sup> Another writer notes that "the Town Affiliation Association lists over 400 U.S. cities with over 500 affiliations with cities in nearly 70 countries."<sup>14</sup> Still another points out that "there were at least 2,190 [nongovernmental organizations] in 1972 as compared to under 1,000 in 1958."<sup>15</sup> And another writes that "beginning with 1815. . . the number of intergovernmental organizations has been rising exponentially at a doubling rate of about twenty years."<sup>16</sup> Pointing up the fragmentation of the "foreign policy establishment" into several bureaucratic actors, one author comments that "in 1973, of 19,000 Americans abroad on diplomatic missions, only 3400 were from the State Department and less than half of the governmental delegates accredited to international conferences came from the State Department."<sup>17</sup> In the same vein, another observer states that "from 1960 to 1970 the Labor Department's international expenditures increased eightfold, Agriculture's went up about ten times, and Commerce five and one-half, while the State Department's budget doubled" and that "overseas travel [in 1972] by State was only about half (53%) of the total travel by the seven largest departments excluding Defense."<sup>18</sup>

In short, the debate has largely consisted of volleying bits of data back and forth and has been remarkably devoid of theorizing on the part of the

modernists. The problem with this is that for every analyst whose data confirm that the nation-state as traditionally conceived is no longer the sole or primary actor in the international system, there is another whose data indicate otherwise. With little good theory to go on, we are left essentially with random facts that offer an inadequate basis for reaching conclusions about the relative strength of the two paradigms. While case studies in some instances have generated hypotheses, they have primarily been employed by modernists to illustrate the significance of nonstate actors rather than as theory-building vehicles attempting to specify how the latter relate to each other and to nation-state actors and influence world politics.

This preoccupation with seeking out "evidence" has perhaps been the result of a defensive overreaction by the modernists to traditionalist demands for proof of the validity of the new paradigm. Only very recently have there been some explicit attempts at theory construction, such as the latest work of Keohane and Nye.<sup>19</sup> But these mark only a beginning. What is needed at this juncture in the debate is more theorizing tied to empirical research, and not "data-making" alone, if the new paradigm is to justify its existence by yielding useful insights into the dynamics of foreign policy making and international politics. There is no need here to recite the role of theory in the pursuit of knowledge. Abraham Kaplan's remarks should suffice: "Every theory serves. . . as a research directive; theory guides the collection of data and their subsequent analysis, by showing us beforehand where the data are to be fitted and what we are to make of them when we get them. . . . Without a theory. . . there is only a miscellany of observations. . . ."20

Edward Morse acknowledges the atheoretical nature of the paradigm debate and the limitations of his own recent theoretical effort when he states:

The relationship between the processes [of modernization] and the transformations in international society are supported only by streams of indirect and often conflicting evidence. Although no one . . . has yet made a strong . . . theoretical link between the two, I feel strongly that efforts will be made in this direction in research during the coming years.<sup>21</sup>

Morse goes on to state that "this theoretical task is 'an urgent one' since "policy, more than ever, must be based on sound theory. It must be predicated upon an understanding of the costs of manipulating different variables and of the relationships among these variables in the process of change."<sup>22</sup> At the same time, one must keep in mind Charles McClelland's admonition that a single theory will not suffice when one is dealing with such a large-scale phenomenon as the transformation of the international system:

It might be a momentous event if someone should publish just the right theory of the transformation of the international system.

[However], we shall be poorly advised to look for a creative formulation that would take into account all the various . . . trends, indications, and forewarnings. . . . We are aware already of too much happening in too many places and in too many ways to develop readily any profitable and comprehensive viewpoint. [Also]. . . effective theory distorts, simplifies, and ignores wide ranges of observed experiences in order to get at crucial variables. . . . The very wide span of relevant changes and the large size of the international system may not allow the development of any unitary theory but may encourage, instead, the formulation of clusters of theoretical questions and statements.<sup>23</sup>

In the following section, the author suggests one avenue of theoretical development that might be pursued which supplements the "partial theories of inter-nation relations"<sup>24</sup> and "inter-nation influence models"<sup>25</sup> of the past with generalizations about state-nonstate actor interactions and which, in particular, deals with the conditions under which "modernist" phenomena appear and take on importance in world politics.

## HYPOTHESES ON STATE - NONSTATE ACTOR INTERACTIONS

Given the need for theory which can specify relationships between state and nonstate actors, how does one go about theory-building in the first place?

Essentially, one can either start "from scratch" or one can rely on analogy, i.e. borrowing and adapting a relatively developed body of theory relating to some other system or process that is deemed to resemble the one in question.

The use of analogy can be very economical and enlightening, assuming of course that an appropriate analogue can be found. The role of analogy is discussed by Nagel:

The widespread use of metaphors. . . testifies to a pervasive human talent for finding resemblances between new experiences and familiar facts, so that what is novel is in consequence mastered by subsuming it under established distinctions. In any event, men do tend to employ familiar systems of relations as models in terms of which initially strange domains of experience are intellectually assimilated. [Accordingly] when familiar notions are extended to novel subject matters on the basis of unanalyzed similarities, serious error can easily be committed. . . . Nonetheless, apprehensions of even vague similarities. . . are often starting points for important advances in knowledge. When reflection becomes critically self-conscious, such apprehensions may come to be developed into carefully formulated analogies and hypotheses that can serve as fruitful instruments of research.<sup>27</sup>

The author proposes to derive some hypotheses on state-nonstate actor interactions from existing theories that have been employed in connection with inter-nation interactions. Admittedly, there may be a certain irony here in utilizing theories that have been associated with the traditional paradigm to sharpen one's thinking about the modern paradigm. However, the theories that will be relied on have been applied at a variety of levels of analysis--including the individual (inter-personal relations) and societal (political party competition) in addition to the inter-nation level (alliances)--and there is no reason in principle they cannot also be applied in the context of state-nonstate

actor phenomena. While there are obvious differences between these levels and units of analysis, there are also more than "vague similarities." The theories referred to here are collective goods theory, coalition theory, and learning theory. What all of these theories have in common is that they deal with the dynamics of cooperation and conflict among actors, which is after all the central concern of the paradigm debate.

Hypothesis 1: Subnational, national, and supranational elites compete in seeking to produce a maximum supply of goods for different collectivities.

The Frölich-Oppenheimer "entrepreneurial" theory of politics, which is a refinement of collective goods theory as originally developed by Mancur Olson,<sup>28</sup> posits that "the leaders of nations may be conceptualized as political entrepreneurs who supply goods to their populace for their own gain."<sup>29</sup> In other words, national leaders will pursue policies which are calculated to maximize their own interests (i.e. maintaining their leadership position, increasing their resource base, and enhancing their prestige) and not so much the "national interest" (i.e. physical survival, economic well-being, and political self-determination of the society), although these elites will tend to identify their own fate with the fate of the nation. By national elites, then, we simply mean central governmental decision-makers who define their primary constituency as the nation-state and who seek to maximize goods in the form of a strong defense and high Gross National Product in return for payoffs they derive from their leadership position.

We can also identify two other categories of elites in the international system--subnational and supranational elites--who may be considered political entrepreneurs oriented toward different collectivities or clienteles than national elites. Subnational elites may be leaders of either societal interest groups or governmental bureaucracies, who view their own interests as

being served by maximizing the supply of goods received by the members of their particular constituencies and not necessarily by the wider collectivity represented by the nation. Supranational elites are the heads of intergovernmental organizations, who tend to be guided more by their special organizational interests than by any larger concern for "mankind," although the former and latter may often converge.

Subnational elites tend to deal in goods that are produceable for the most part within the framework of the nation-state. In attempting to maximize the supply of these goods for their members, a given subnational elite tends to come into conflict with other subnational elites over various issues that relate to the production of the goods in question. If one views the world as a political system, an overwhelming number of issues in the system involve conflicts over the distribution of goods between subnational elites that do not surface above the level of the nation-state--the imposition of stricter auto emission standards, no-fault insurance, right-to-work laws, etc. National elites assume a mediating role in these conflicts but tend ultimately to support those subnational elites who can most help them maintain their national leadership position.

In addition to these intranational conflicts between subnational elites, there is, of course, another axis of conflict existing between national elites representing different countries. International conflict has been the focal point for the study of world politics. Clearly, there are many issues (e.g. arms control) that do not occupy the attention of subnational elites but are highly salient to national elites insofar as they involve the production of goods that national elites in particular feel they will be held accountable for. Supranational elites may play a mediating role in these international conflicts although, as in the case of national elites managing intranational



conflicts, they will tend to support those parties (national elites) whose support can most benefit them. National elites have a much larger role to play in managing intranational conflicts than supranational elites in international conflicts since the former is far more institutionalized. A third axis of conflict in the system that is relatively insignificant but can have some strategic importance is the competition between supranational elites themselves over the distribution of goods among their individual intergovernmental organizations.

Comparativists have been traditionally concerned with the first axis of conflict; international relationists, with the second and marginally with the third. However, these various lines of conflict are less clearly drawn and more intersecting when issues (deep-sea mining, skyjacking, etc.) arise which do not fall neatly into the domains of subnational, national, or supranational elites, which open up possibilities for bargaining among all three types of elites, and which tend to disrupt the normal mode of goods production. In these instances subnational elites, in particular, may expand the conflict beyond national boundaries against the will of national elites by entering into coalitions with counterpart subnational elites in other countries. These coalitions may be transnational in nature (involving leaders of societal interest groups) or transgovernmental (involving leaders of governmental bureaucracies).

Hypothesis 2: Transnational and transgovernmental coalitions will occur only as a last resort after subnational elites have failed to produce desired results through national political processes.

Whether or not subnational elites in a particular country will seek coalition partners in other countries on a given issue will depend on whatever success they have had in enlisting the support of other subnational elites and the



national elites within their own country. Since aside from their immediate clientele their primary reference point remains the nation-state, the first impulse of subnational elites will be to try to achieve their goals through intranational coalitions. Only at the point where subnational elites have been frustrated will they feel compelled to pursue coalition-building outside the nation. The reasoning behind subnational elites pursuing cross-national coalition-building only as a last resort is that there are two kinds of costs entailed in such a strategy. First, subnational elites may alienate national elites in their country whose support might be needed in the future and who view the search for allies across national boundaries by subnational elites as challenging and undermining their national leadership position. Secondly, subnational elites may alienate their own followers who remain largely attached to national symbols and whose nationalistic sensibilities might be offended by such internally divisive tactics; the "nation" has a more powerful hold on followers than elites, a fact that is not lost sight of by the latter. Both types of costs will be felt more by bureaucratic elites than societal elites, so that there will be greater constraints on transgovernmental than transnational coalition-building.

Transnational and transgovernmental coalition-building processes will follow essentially the same pattern. They have the same starting point--the frustration experienced by certain subnational elites with national political processes on a given issue--and the same end point--the final disposition of the issue, successfully or unsuccessfully for the subnational elites, and its removal from the agenda of the national elites. In the case of both transnational and transgovernmental coalition-building, the frustrated subnational elites in Country A will attempt to find counterpart elites elsewhere who are willing and able to apply pressure on their respective national elites so that the latter might then

persuade the national elites in Country A to reconsider the policy in question. The subnational elites in Country A are interested solely in the effects on their immediate constituency in Country A; whatever benefits might accrue to their counterparts in other countries are of merely incidental concern to them. By the same token, their counterparts in other countries are likely to enter into a coalition with the subnational elites of Country A only if the former share a similar frustration or if their demands have been accepted by their national elites but require similar acceptance by the national elites of Country A to be fully realized (i.e. inter-nation cooperation is required).

Transnational coalition-building may be facilitated by the existence of a nongovernmental organization (NGO) in the issue-area in question which can be mobilized by subnational societal elites. Transgovernmental coalition-building will tend to be more ad hoc, although it may likewise be facilitated by the existence of an intergovernmental organization (IGO) that can serve as a locus for consultation among subnational bureaucratic elites with shared interests. Transnational and transgovernmental coalitions may join forces when their mutual interests are at stake. Supranational elites are potential partners in both transnational and transgovernmental coalitions, although they will be more inclined toward the latter insofar as they have more formal links with governmental actors than with societal actors. In considering coalition participation, supranational elites will weigh the relative benefits that might be gained by their organizations against the possible costs entailed in alienating national elites who might resent the latter's intrusion into national political processes.

Once subnational elites in Country A decide that coalition-building across national boundaries is called for, the problem becomes one of whom exactly to ally with. As suggested above, subnational elites will seek to identify counterpart elites elsewhere who are willing and able to exert influence on

national elites in the desired direction. In other words, the potential partner(s) must have at least two basic attributes: (1) a willingness to participate based on a shared interest in the outcome preferred by the subnational elites in Country A and (2) an ability to contribute to victory. While Riker's "size principle" that "coalitions will increase in size only to the minimum point of subjective certainty of winning"<sup>30</sup> is not applicable here since it is irrelevant to non-zero sum situations of the type treated in this analysis, it can still be expected that coalition partners will not be courted and added frivolously. Because subnational elites tend to undertake cross-national coalition-building either to avert a policy decision that is otherwise imminent or to reverse one already taken, there is likely to be a felt need on their part to act quickly and, hence, to focus attention on those parties whose collaboration is deemed most crucial.

However, aside from these pragmatic considerations, there may be some other intervening factors that will affect the nature of transnational and transgovernmental coalitions that are formed. Some coalitions are more probable than others, given the characteristics of the subnational elites who are initiating coalition-building. In studies of alliance formation and other types of collaboration among nations, several observers have noted the importance of political and cultural homogeneity in accounting for membership patterns;<sup>31</sup> as Guetzkow hypothesizes, "the greater the similarity of language, customs, and ideology among nations, the more easily will their members collaborate with one another."<sup>32</sup> Applying this same sort of reasoning to relationships between nonstate actors, we can generate a more elaborate set of hypotheses.

Hypothesis 3: Societal elites from a developed democratic state will be more likely to participate in transnational coalitions with societal elites

from other developed democratic states than with societal elites from developed nondemocratic states.

Hypothesis 4: Bureaucratic elites from a developed democratic state will be more likely to participate in transgovernmental coalitions with bureaucratic elites from developed democratic states than with bureaucratic elites from developed nondemocratic states.

Hypothesis 5: Transgovernmental coalitions between bureaucratic elites from developed democratic states and from developed nondemocratic states are more likely to occur than transnational coalitions between societal elites from developed democratic states and from developed nondemocratic states.

Hypothesis 6: Both transnational and transgovernmental coalitions are more likely to occur between elites from developed democratic states and elites from developed nondemocratic states than between either of the latter and elites from underdeveloped states.

It must be noted that the theoretical formulation that has been presented thus far in this section is relevant primarily to relations between developed pluralist democracies, only secondarily to developed nondemocratic states, and even more marginally to underdeveloped states. The reason is simply that transnational and transgovernmental coalition activity assumes both a relatively high degree of specialization of interests and a high level of autonomy on the part of the subnational elites of a society vis-a-vis national elites--conditions that are found predominantly in developed democratic states.<sup>33</sup> One would expect, then, to find transnational and transgovernmental coalition activity occurring mostly between members of the latter societies. This is not to say that subnational elites in developed nondemocratic systems do not engage in transnational and transgovernmental activity, only that such coalitions as do occur will be relatively infrequent and will tend to be with

counterpart elites in other developed nondemocratic states (Hypotheses 3 and 4). The rationale here is not merely the natural affinity that might be expected to exist between subnational elites from similar political systems but also the logic of the coalition-building process described earlier, i.e. the proclivity of subnational elites to search for counterpart elites in other countries whose national elites are on good terms with their national elites and can thereby exercise influence. These allies are more likely to be found in similar than dissimilar political systems.

In the relatively few instances where coalition-building occurs between subnational elites in developed democratic states and developed nondemocratic states, it will tend to take the form of transgovernmental more so than transnational collaboration (Hypothesis 5). While it was stated earlier that as a general rule there are more constraints on transgovernmental than transnational coalition activity, this is much less true in the case of relations between democratic and nondemocratic systems than between democratic systems. Developed nondemocratic states generally permit somewhat more transgovernmental than transnational activity since bureaucratic elites in these societies tend to have greater autonomy than societal elites; even though the latter may be more interested in coalition-building, the former are more able to do it. Transnational coalition-building with societal elites in democratic systems tends to be especially threatening to the national elites in nondemocratic systems and will be monitored more closely than transgovernmental activity. In addition, developed nondemocratic states are far better represented in IGOs than NGOs, so that transgovernmental contacts and coalitions are facilitated more readily than transnational ones. Subnational elites in underdeveloped countries--with the exception of a few larger ones--will be particularly poor candidates for transnational and transgovernmental coalitions with anyone

(Hypotheses 6), given the relatively low level of interest group differentiation (which will limit the number of societal elites who are potential coalition partners) and the relative smallness of their bureaucracies (which is likely to inhibit attempts at autonomous action by bureaucratic elites).

We have posited thus far that the instrumental needs of subnational elites will be the primary determinant of the composition of a given coalition, but that homogeneity factors operate as intervening variables. We need to add one other set of factors--past experiences--that may also affect the nature of the coalitions that are formed, no matter whether these are between elites in democratic or nondemocratic states. These factors will introduce a dynamic element into the coalition-building process.

Hypothesis 7: The more successful a transnational or transgovernmental coalition is on an issue, the more likely the same coalition will materialize on another issue in the future; and, conversely, the less successful the less likely the same coalition will form.

It was stated earlier that the "end point" of a particular transnational or transgovernmental coalition effort coincides with the final disposition of the issue, successfully or unsuccessfully, for the subnational elites who entered into the coalition. Having won or lost, the coalition loses its raison d'etre. However, whether the outcome was a successful one or not, in terms of averting or reversing an adverse decision taken by national elites, can have important implications for participation by the subnational elites in such coalitions again in the future on some other issue. As learning theorists such as Raser and Rapoport have commonly pointed out in connection with interpersonal and inter-nation relations, positive or negative past experiences that one party has with another conditions their future behavior toward each other.<sup>34</sup> In the case of transnational and transgovernmental coalitions, if good experiences

(i.e. successful results) are repeated often enough by coalition partners, the latter may even develop "habits. . . of mutual attention, communication, and responsiveness,"<sup>35</sup> although such coalitions will still tend to be activated only as a "last resort."

Even if the same exact coalitions are not reconstituted intact, at the very least one would expect that those subnational elites who have participated in winning transnational or transgovernmental alliances will be more likely to undertake similar efforts across national boundaries again than those who have been on the losing side. There will be a tendency, in other words, to generalize from past positive or negative experiences about the virtues of transnational and transgovernmental coalition formation. The cumulative effect of successful transnational and transgovernmental activity may ultimately produce a dramatic transformation of the international system whereby the latter becomes the normal mode of goods production among subnational elites rather than the exception. The "vanguard" of this new international system, though, are more likely to come from the ranks of societal elites than bureaucratic elites since the latter can only go so far in dismantling the nation-state before they begin to jeopardize their own existence.

This sort of transformation, of course, is not likely to occur anytime soon. There are too many obstacles to contend with, not the least of which are recalcitrant national elites in some 150 nation-states. In addition, there are limits to the extent to which the international system can be transformed along the lines suggested above as long as certain key "discontinuities" remain in the system. In particular, the existence of many nation-states-- politically nondemocratic and economically underdeveloped societies--whose structures allow only low levels of participation in transnational and transgovernmental networks means that these societies are unable to relate to other



societies except through national elites, so that traditional inter-nation issues will persist along with the central role of national elites in presiding over conflicts surrounding these issues. As for the supranational elites, there is relatively little they can do to expedite the transformation of the system beyond providing modest but strategic support to subnational elites in the form of making their organizations available as vehicles for coalition-building. Should the transformation of the international system ever come to pass, the supranational elites figure to be among the chief beneficiaries insofar as they will replace the national elites as the chief mediators of conflict in the system.

#### INTEGRATION THEORY AND THE PARADIGM DEBATE

One body of theory that has not been specifically discussed in the paper and that deserves mention, since in some respects it comes closest to focusing on state-nonstate actor phenomena, is integration theory. While the integration literature has not been explicitly alluded to here, one can discern certain traces of integration theory running through the previous section insofar as much of the integration literature itself draws upon and overlaps with the other three bodies of theory discussed earlier. For example, Russett and Sullivan, Ruggie and a number of others have examined collective goods theory in the context of integration.<sup>36</sup> Lindberg and Scheingold among others have dealt with "coalition formation mechanisms" in the integration process.<sup>37</sup> Deutsch, Teune, and Haas have applied learning theory to the integration process.<sup>38</sup> In the Cobb and Elder propositional survey of the integration literature, one finds a somewhat similar set of propositions as appear in the Holsti, Hopmann and Sullivan volume on alliances, with both works pointing up the role of such factors as elite complementarity, homogeneity of societal



attributes, and previous collaborative experience in affecting collaboration across national boundaries.<sup>39</sup>

The author would argue that the Cobb and Elder study reflects a bias that pervades much of the integration literature, i.e. it is grounded in the "state centric" model insofar as it tends to be concerned primarily with the dynamics of inter-nation cooperation. It is true that several integration theorists--in particular, the neofunctionalists--have given considerable attention to the role of subnational and supranational elites in the formation and operation of transnational interest groups; Haas and Schmitter along with Lindberg and Scheingold have been notable in this regard.<sup>40</sup> However, the major thrust of even their work has nonetheless been to examine the conditions under which nation-states integrate and how nation-states learn from previous experience and develop habits of cooperation. In particular, they have been interested not so much in the question of under what conditions will transnational coalitions form or supranational elites exercise influence but rather the question of what is the impact of such coalitions and supranational elite behavior on the integration process. In other words, state-nonstate actor phenomena have tended to be studied by integration theorists not as intrinsically worth studying in themselves but only as they relate to the integration process between nation-states.

One can note certain similarities and compatibilities between propositions found in the integration literature and those formulated in this paper. The findings of the integration literature that "a high rate of previous transaction, a similarity in size and power, a high degree of pluralism, and marked elite complementarity" tend to favor integration<sup>41</sup> are essentially consistent with the theorizing engaged in <sup>in</sup> this paper. However, there are also some differences to be noted. The integration literature accords greater significance to

supranational elites and tends to treat coalition-building across national boundaries as often the "path of least resistance" rather than, as in the author's analysis, the "last resort." The integration literature also, of course, tends to treat state-nonstate actor phenomena in a purely regional context. The main difference, though, is that the author is not concerned with how nonstate actors impact on the integration process but how they relate to other actors in influencing world politics.

The difference in perspective adopted by the author as opposed to that commonly found in integration theory is demonstrated by the fact that one is hard pressed to find any propositions or hypotheses in the integration literature that are not couched in what are essentially "state centric" terms. Consider for a moment three of the most distinctive hypotheses in the latter literature which have been contributed by the functionalist and neofunctionalist schools. One hypothesis posits that "the more specific [technical] the task, the more likely important progress toward political community."<sup>42</sup> A second states that "the greater the policy scope and the higher the level of initial commitment to collective decision making, the greater the propensity for task expansion [spillover]."<sup>43</sup> A third states that "once agreement is reached and made operative on a policy. . .pertaining to intermember or intraregional relations, participants will find themselves compelled. . .to adopt common policies vis-a-vis nonparticipant third parties."<sup>44</sup> While it follows from the first hypothesis that joint decision making among nations is more likely to occur in, say, health matters than in defense matters, does it also necessarily follow that transgovernmental coalitions among health bureaucrats can be expected to precede or occur more often than transgovernmental coalitions among defense bureaucrats? These would seem to be somewhat different issues. The author would argue that the first hypothesis along with the other two deal

with a somewhat different set of questions and operate at a somewhat different level of analysis than that which characterizes the theoretical concerns of this essay.

Integration theory simply is inadequate to deal squarely with "modernist" phenomena. Ernst Haas appeared to be alluding to this inadequacy in his recent essay on "Turbulent Fields and The Theory of Regional Integration."<sup>45</sup> Keohane and Nye have made an earnest attempt to show how integration theory potentially has a special contribution to make toward the development of a theory of state-nonstate actor relationships--in particular, "insights into the politics of complex sets of interdependent entities"--if only it were "shorn of its teleological and regional orientation."<sup>46</sup> However, if integration theory were indeed "liberated" from the latter "straitjacket", it would no longer be integration theory but something else. While Keohane and Nye may be correct that one might extrapolate fruitful insights into modernist phenomena from integration theory, the latter's "state centric" bias ultimately limits its utility as a bridge between the traditionalist and modernist schools in the paradigm debate.

### CONCLUSION

The hypotheses that have been formulated in this paper admittedly are couched at a relatively high level of abstraction. However, they have been offered primarily for heuristic purposes and are not meant to represent a completely testable theory or model of state-nonstate actor interactions. The author has simply attempted to point out the need for more theory development in the paradigm debate and to indicate what form this might take. There remains the task of developing testable propositions about state-nonstate actor relations and submitting them to systematic empirical analysis for verification.<sup>47</sup>

If the paradigm debate has proceeded thusfar with an excess of data and dearth of theory, it would be equally unfortunate if in the future an imbalance of the opposite kind were to occur. The author is not suggesting that the search for evidence should be suspended or abandoned, only that it should be conducted in conjunction with more explicit theorizing so that we can make more sense out of the welter of facts and trends that are to be found. A particularly fruitful line of research, for example, might be to articulate more precisely the theoretical links between various elites and their followers and to gather attitudinal data to test out these ideas; while the congruence/conflict of elite-mass attitudes has been a frequent subject of investigation in political science and international relations, it has hardly been studied in the context of the kinds of nonstate actor phenomena discussed in this paper. Only with the proper mix of theory and data can the paradigm debate be intelligently conducted and the new paradigm reasonably accepted or dismissed.

## FOOTNOTES

1. The lack of theory-building recently in the international relations field has received considerable attention in such writings as Oran R. Young, "Professor Russett: Industrious Tailor to a Naked Emperor," World Politics, XXI (April 1969), 486-511; Marion J. Levy, "'Does It Matter if He's Naked?' Bawled the Child," in Klaus Knorr and James N. Rosenau, eds., Contending Approaches to International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1969), 87-109; and Warren R. Phillips, "Where Have All the Theories Gone?" World Politics, XXVI (January 1974), 155-188. However, the dearth of theory has hardly been discussed at all in the context of the paradigm debate.
2. E. H. Carr, The Twenty Years' Crisis (London: Macmillan 1939) and Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations (New York: Knopf 1949).
3. The term "transnational" has been used in various ways by various writers. The author is using it here as a label for any actors, such as IGOs and NGOs, which share the characteristic of having organized relations across national boundaries that are not explicitly directed by central governmental decision-makers. Another actor of this type that has attracted attention recently is the "transgovernmental" actor, i.e. coalitions between members of one national bureaucracy and their counterparts in other national bureaucracies that are not sanctioned "from above." Although there may be a conceptual difference between "transgovernmental" and "transnational"--insofar as "transgovernmental applies when we relax the realist assumption that states act coherently as units" while "transnational applies when we relax the assumption that states are the only units," both present equal challenges to the traditional paradigm. See Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition (Boston: Little, Brown 1977), 25.

4. The "modernists", of course, could be said to have at least as long a tradition as the "traditionalists", if one considers the current school the intellectual descendants of such early "cosmopolitans" as Dante, Kant, and Diderot and later ones like David Mitrany. However, the differences between current and past "modernists" are greater than the similarities.
5. See Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., eds., Transnational Relations and World Politics (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1971) and Power and Interdependence; George Modelski, Principles of World Politics (New York: The Free Press 1972); William D. Coplin, John R. Handlman, Michael K. O'Leary, and John A. Vasquez, "Color It Morgenthau: A Data-Based Assessment of Quantitative International Relations Research," paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Meeting, New York City, March 14-17, 1973; Seyom Brown, New Forces in World Politics (Washington: Brookings Institution 1974); J. W. Burton, A.J.R. Groom, C. R. Mitchell, and A. V. S. De Reuck, The Study of World Society: A London Perspective (Pittsburgh: International Studies Association 1974); Richard W. Mansbach, Yale H. Ferguson, and Donald E. Lampert, The Web of World Politics: Nonstate Actors in the Global System (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall 1976); and Edward L. Morse, Modernization and the Transformation of International Relations (New York: The Free Press 1976).
6. Although the above writers do not all share exactly the same viewpoint--Keohane and Nye along with Brown and Morse have been more restrained than the others in attacking the traditional paradigm--all do see the need to consider an alternative framework. The author cannot help noting that the structure of scientific revolutions bears some resemblance to the "anatomy" of political revolutions as discussed in Crane Brinton's well-known work The Anatomy of Revolution (New York: Random House 1952). In

the context of the paradigm debate in international relations, scholars like Graham Allison who introduced the "bureaucratic politics" approach in the late sixties and early seventies could be considered the "moderate reformers" initially tinkering with but not dismantling the traditional paradigm; scholars such as Coplin and Burton who urged total repudiation of the traditional paradigm in the mid-seventies could be considered the "radicals" taking over the banner of revolution; and Keohane and Nye, especially with their most recent work, could be viewed as the pragmatic "consolidators" of the revolution insofar as they have qualified some of their earlier criticism of the traditional paradigm while continuing to develop the new paradigm.

7. Hans J. Morgenthau, "The New Diplomacy of Movement," Encounter, XLIII (August 1974), 57.
8. Henry A. Kissinger, "The Global Community and the Struggle Against Famine," address to the World Food Conference on November 5, 1974 (Department of State Press Release).
9. Keohane and Nye (1977), 24.
10. The problems involved in trying to reconcile the different perspectives are discussed very clearly in R. Harrison Wagner's excellent essay on "Dissolving the State: Three Recent Perspectives in International Relations," International Organization, XXVIII (Spring 1974), 435-466.
11. If one takes as an indicator of trends in the field the amount of space allocated in professional meeting programs to "traditional" concerns as opposed to "nonstate" phenomena, then it would appear that the modernists have indeed made significant strides. For example, roughly 30% of the panels at the 1977 International Studies Association Annual Meeting were devoted to what could be considered "nonstate" phenomena, while the theme

of the 1978 convention was "The Emerging Transnational World--The Place of Individuals, Groups, and States." However, if one looks at the scholarly journals, which tend to be not quite so "faddy" as convention programs, one can detect the continued predominance of the traditional paradigm (with the exception of a few specialized journals such as International Organization).

12. For example, see Young W. Kihl, Conflict Issues and International Civil Aviation Decisions: Three Cases (Denver: University of Denver Press 1971); Ann L. Hollick, "Seabeds Make Strange Politics," Foreign Policy, IX (Winter 1972), 148-170; Robert W. Russell, "Transgovernmental Interaction in the International Monetary System, 1960-1972," International Organization, 27 (Autumn 1973), 431-464; Anne T. Feraru, "Transnational Political Interests and the Global Environment," International Organization, 28 (Winter 1974), 1-30; Lawrence Juda, Ocean Space Rights: Developing U.S. Policy (New York: Praeger 1975); Jonathan Aronson, "Multiple Actors in the Transformation of the International Monetary System," paper presented at Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Toronto, February 25, 1976; David P. Forsythe, "The Red Cross As Transnational Movement: Conserving and Changing the Nation-State System," International Organization, 30 (Autumn 1976), 608-630; C. Robert Dickerman, "Transgovernmental Challenge and Response in Scandinavia and North America," International Organization, 30 (Spring 1976), 213-240; and Mansbach et al.
13. Lester R. Brown, World Without Borders (New York: Random House 1972), 213.
14. Chadwick F. Alger, "'Foreign' Policies of U.S. Publics," International Studies Quarterly, 21 (June 1977), 308.
15. Mansbach et al, 40.
16. Modelski, 194.



17. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Independence and Interdependence," Foreign Policy, 22 (Spring 1976) 138.
18. Raymond F. Hopkins, "The International Role of 'Domestic' Bureaucracy," International Organization, 30 (Summer 1976), 405-432.
19. Keohane and Nye, Power and Interdependence. See, also, Donald E. Lampert and Richard W. Mansbach, "A Model of Multiple Systems in World Politics," paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Toronto, February 25-29, 1976; and Richard A. Mansbach, John A. Vasquez, and Lawrence S. Falkowski, "From Unity to Fragmentation: Actors As A Conceptual Variable in World Politics," paper delivered at Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D. C. September 1-4, 1977.
20. Abraham Kaplan, The Conduct of Inquiry (San Francisco: Chandler 1964), 268.
21. Morse, xvii-xviii.
22. Ibid., xviii.
23. Charles A. McClelland, Theory and the International System (New York: Macmillan 1966), 54-55.
24. Harold Guetzkow, "Isolation and Collaboration: A Partial Theory of Inter-Nation Relations," Journal of Conflict Resolution, I (1957), 48-68.
25. J. David Singer, "Inter-Nation Influence: A Formal Model," American Political Science Review, LVII (1963), 420-430.
26. The difficulty of breaking away from inter-nation interaction analysis and examining state-nonstate actor interactions is exemplified by a recent modernist writing in which the authors attempt to reformulate the concepts of bipolarity and multipolarity "in light of a new paradigm" but essentially end up confining their analysis to cooperation and conflict processes between nations. (See P. Dale Dean and John A. Vasquez,

"From Power Politics to Issue Politics: Bipolarity and Multipolarity in Light of a New Paradigm," Western Political Quarterly, XXIX (March 1976), 7-28.

27. Ernest Nagel, The Structure of Science (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World 1961), 108.
28. Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1965).
29. Norman Frolich and Joe A. Oppenheimer, "Entrepreneurial Politics and Foreign Policy," in Raymond Tanter and Richard H. Ullman, eds., Theory and Policy in International Relations (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1972), 165. A more expanded discussion of the concept of "entrepreneurial politics" can be found in Frolich, Oppenheimer, and Oran R. Young, Political Leadership and Collective Goods (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1971).
30. William H. Riker, The Theory of Political Coalitions (New Haven: Yale University Press 1962), Chapters 2-4.
31. See Ole Holsti, P. Terrence Hopmann, and John D. Sullivan, Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances (New York: John Wiley 1973), 11-12 and 23-24.
32. Guetzkow, 57.
33. As Katzenstein reminds us, however, one must be careful in generalizing about even the degree of transnational and transgovernmental coalition activity among developed pluralist democracies since some of these systems will tend to be more promotive of such activity than others depending on the specific structure of the society and government. He cites France as an example of a democratic political system which tends to inhibit trans-governmental coalition activity in particular. Peter J. Katzenstein, "International Relations and Domestic Structures: Foreign Economic Policies

of Advanced Industrial States," International Organization, 30 (Winter 1976), 1-45.

34. See John Raser, "Learning and Affect in International Politics," Journal of Peace Research, II (1965), 216-226; and Anatol Rapoport and Albert M. Chammah, Prisoner's Dilemma (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1965).
35. Karl W. Deutsch, The Analysis of International Relations (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall 1968), 201.
36. Bruce M. Russett and John D. Sullivan, "Collective Goods and International Organization," International Organization, 25 (1971), 845-865; John G. Ruggie, "Collective Goods and Future International Collaboration," American Political Science Review, 66 (1972), 874-893.
37. Leon N. Lindberg and Stuart A. Scheingold, Europe's Would-Be Polity (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall 1970).
38. Karl W. Deutsch, "Communication Theory and Political Integration," in Philip E. Jacob and James V. Toscano, eds., The Integration of Political Communities (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co. 1964), 46-74; Henry Teune, "The Learning of Integrative Habits," in Jacob and Toscano, 247-282; Ernst B. Haas, Beyond the Nation State (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964).
39. Roger W. Cobb and Charles Elder, International Community: A Regional and Global Study (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston 1970).
40. Ernst B. Haas and Phillippe C. Schmitter, "Economics and Differential Patterns of Political Integration: Projections About Unity in Latin America," in International Political Communities (New York: Doubleday 1966), 259-301; Haas, The Uniting of Europe (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958); Haas, "The Uniting of Europe and The Uniting of Latin America," Journal of Common Market Studies, 5 (June 1967); Schmitter, "A Revised Theory of Regional Integration," International Organization, 24 (Autumn 1970), 836-868; and

(Lindberg and Scheingold, Europe's Would-Be Polity.

41. Haas and Schmitter, 268.
42. Ibid, 101.
43. Phillipe C. Schmitter, "Three Neo-Functionalist Hypotheses About International Integration," International Organization, 23 (Winter 1969), 163.
44. Ibid., 165.
45. Ernst B. Haas, "Turbulent Fields and The Theory of Regional Integration," International Organization, 30 (Spring 1976), 174-212.
46. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "Interdependence and Integration," in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, eds., Handbook of Political Science, 8 (Andover, Mass: Addison-Wesley 1975), 401.
47. While the author has argued that the integration literature is only of marginal relevance in terms of its contribution to the development of a theory of state-nonstate actor interactions, it does have much to offer in terms of suggesting imaginative ways to operationalize and measure certain kinds of variables (such as interest group autonomy) discussed in this paper. See, for example, Mario Barrera and Ernst B. Haas, "The Operationalization of Some Variables Related to Regional Integration: A Research Note," International Organization, 23 (Winter 1969), 150-160; Phillipe C. Schmitter, "Further Notes on Operationalizing Some Variables Related to Regional Integration," International Organization, 23 (Spring 1969), 327-336; Schmitter, "A Revised Theory of Regional Integration," International Organization, 24 (Autumn 1970), 836-868; and Leon N. Lindberg, "Political Integration As A Multidimensional Phenomenon Requiring Multivariate Measurement," International Organization, 24 (Autumn 1970), 836-868.