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From Utopian One-worldism to Geopolitical Intergovernmentalism:
UNESCO's Department of Social Sciences as an International Boundary Organization, 1946-1955

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Abstract

As a new coordinating organization in the rapidly expanding international field of post-World War II social science, UNESCO's Department of Social Sciences (SSD), set up in 1946, played a central role. This article explores the formation of the SSD during its first decade with a special focus on its organizational aspects. By conceptualizing the SSD as an "international boundary organization", the article analyzes the organizational structuration of agency spaces on different levels – within SSD, in relation to UNESCO and to the UN system at large – as well as over time. As a result, the article discerns four phases, distinguished by organizational changes, under which the SSD was successively transformed from a relatively independent transnational organization, which shared the utopian vision of one-worldism, to an intergovernmental organization considerably more vulnerable to external geopolitical pressures.

Keywords

INTRODUCTION

On Saturday morning 7 December 1946, on one of the final days of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) inaugural General Conference in Paris, Dr Julian Huxley proudly declared in his installation speech as the new and very first Director-General: "Unesco is now born." It was a remarkable symbolic event, unique in its kind, Huxley pointed out:

> never before in the history of the world have there been brought together in one place so many representatives of the arts, science, philosophy and education, of radio, of government, of relief societies and youth organizations, town-planning, and of all the higher activities of the human mind [...] from every region of the world, not merely [...] from China to Peru [...] but from the Arctic Circle to the Equator and from the cradle of our Western Civilisation to the Eastern Mediterranean and the Antipodes.[1]

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[1] UNESCO Archives, Paris, *General Conference, Paris, 20 Nov. – 10 Dec. 1946*, UNESCO/C/30: 74-75.

To Huxley the gathering was a great success, marked by hard work and an endless co-operative spirit. This convinced him that the great tasks and ideals which had inspired the founding of UNESCO and its general mission – "to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture [...] for the peoples of the world" – would be realizable.[2]

The cosmopolitan internationalism and the hopes for a unified world, expressed by Huxley and which underlay the creation of UNESCO, were not only firmly anchored in the Enlightenment tradition of confidence in the power of knowledge and subsequent nineteenth-century conceptions of evolution. They were also historically situated in, what Glenda Sluga aptly has described as, "that curiously utopian moment bracketed by the end of World War II and the onset of the Cold War" (Sluga 2010: 393). Although the early postwar years witnessed a minor explosion of international organizations, including the creation of the United Nations, none of its other specialized agencies better exemplified the renewed faith in worldwide cooperation than UNESCO (Iriye 2002: 44). As a result of the inaugural conference in Paris and its "utopian one-worldism" a number of departments were set up within UNESCO, one of them being the Department of Social Sciences, or Social Sciences Department (SSD) as it was most often referred to.[3]

During the decade that followed, UNESCO's SSD became instrumental for the creation of international associations of political science, sociology, economics, comparative law, psychology and other disciplines, but also of interdisciplinary bodies such as the International Social Science Council, international research institutes, regional social science officers and several major research projects. Furthermore, it systematically worked to improve the infrastructure for the international communication and dissemination of social science by initiating indexing and abstracting services, international inventories, as well as journals, yearbooks, dictionaries and other publications. As one of the central players in the contemporary, increasingly populated, international landscape of social science organizations, SSD is also key to understanding the rapid post-World War II expansion of the social sciences that has been highlighted in a number of recent studies.[4]

Within the broad and steadily growing research on UNESCO[5], surprisingly few studies have paid more focused attention to the Department of Social Sciences. An early but still useful book is Peter Lengyel's retrospective "insider's" account from 1986 which offers a brief overview of SSD's history, including its "pioneering years" from the inception up to 1961 (Lengyel 1986). More recently historians of science Perrin Selcer (2009, 2011) and Teresa Tomás Rangil (2011, 2013) have contributed with important pieces, enriching our understanding of SSD's epistemological attempts

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[2] Ibid. Mission statement quoted from UNESCO 2004: 8, article 1.

[3] Its original name was the "Social Sciences Section". In 1948 it was changed to "Department of Social Sciences". The Department existed until 1974, from 1965 as part of the "Social Sciences, Human Sciences and Culture Sector". This was followed by the "Sector for Social Sciences and their Applications" (1976-1984) and "Social and Human Sciences Sector" (1984-present).

[4] See e.g. Heilbron *et al.* 2008; Backhouse & Fontaine 2010, 2014; Heyck & Kaiser 2010; Isaac 2011; Solovey & Cravens 2012; Fontaine 2014; Boncourt 2015; Heyck 2015; Pooley 2016.

[5] See e.g. Krill De Capello 1970; Pompei *et al.* 1972; Sewell 1975; Hoggart 1978; Elzinga 1996b; Horner 1996; Iriye 2002; Droit 2005; Graham 2006; Petitjean *et al.* 2006; Petitjean 2008; Sluga 2010, 2014; Jolly *et al.* 2009; Maurel 2010; Toye & Toye 2010; Beigel 2013; Frey *et al.* 2014; Duedahl 2016.

to combine universalism and diversity and its changing intellectual outlook around 1950.[6] But still we do not know very much about the *organizational* aspects of UNESCO's Social Sciences Department. How were the internal organizational structures on the SSD-level interrelated to the UNESCO-level and to the UN-level? How were these intra- and interorganizational structures shaped and reshaped in relation to individual and collective action? And how did this multilayered relationship between organizational structure and individual action change over time?

By addressing these questions on SSD's organizational embedding, this article intends to add yet another piece to the body of research referred to by analyzing the organizational structuration of agency spaces on different levels – within SSD, in relation to UNESCO and to the UN system at large – during SSD's first formative decade. Conceptually, I will do this by interpreting UNESCO's SSD as an "international boundary organization". The concept draws on David Guston's notion of "boundary organizations" – defined as institutions that mediate and stabilize the boundary between science and politics; involve participation of actors from different social worlds; provide space for boundary objects that make collaboration across these worlds possible; and include delegations of authority and integrity between principals and agents (Guston 2000: 6; Guston 1999: 93; Guston 2001: 400-401). In addition to these criteria, my conceptualization of "*international* boundary organization" has been critically adjusted to the context of this article with regard to, first, the international level of analysis, second, the historical postwar setting, third, the processual rather than the stability-centred aspects and, fourth, the introduction of "agency space" as an empirically investigable domain in-between organizational structures and individual actions.[7]

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[6] Selcer (2009) analyzes SSD's attempts to bring epistemic unity to cultural diversity in the formula of "a view from everywhere", whereas his dissertation (Selcer 2011) looks more broadly at UNESCO's strategies for the production of objective global knowledge by navigating bureaucratic rivalries and cold war politics, including a case study of SSD's "Tensions Project". Rangil (2011) is empirically focused on SSD's projects on "Tensions", "Race" and "Technical Assistance" and discerns a gradual shift from a social-psychologically informed "universalism" to an anthropologically-based "pluralism" around 1950, while Rangil (2013) analyzes the identity-work of SSD's social scientific co-workers. Besides these explicitly SSD-focused accounts, there are also ongoing projects and relevant studies that have highlighted, for example, SSD's expert networks, Alva Myrdal's leadership and approach to developmental issues during her time at the UN, and UNESCO's role for Latin American social science. See Moesslinger (2014), Ekerwald (2001), Ekerwald & Rodhe (2008), Sluga (2014) and Cutroni (2013).

[7] Although Guston's multidisciplinary STS approach is close to the historical and sociological perspective of this article, the four revisions are critical for the following reasons. The *first* one concerns the level of analysis and is related to the empirical context of origin of Guston's concept, namely the history of science policy in twentieth century USA. Although Guston explicitly has argued that the concept is applicable to international cases as well (Guston 1999: 89, 106), other scholars, like Clark Miller, have problematized the crucial differences in dynamics when studying *international* boundary organizations and the complexity, contingency and contestedness of global politics (Miller 2001: 480). The *second* and more acute reason for revising the concept is also related to the empirical context of origin of Guston's concept, and more specifically the *historical situatedness* of "boundary organizations" as a new kind of institutions, like the Office of Research Integrity (ORI) or Office of Technology Transfer (OTT), which according to Guston's periodization explicitly were "impossible" before the 1970s (Guston 2000: 12, 139). Therefore, it must be emphasized that my conceptualization is explicitly decontextualized from Guston's historically situated definition. The *third* reason is that, without going into too much detail at this stage, it is worth noting that Guston's main concern is related to the problem of stability (Guston 1999: 88; 2000: 6). Our case will give us reason to problematize this stability-centeredness and instead pay greater attention to the dynamics involved in the formation of "epistemic communities", i.e. networks of knowledge-based experts in international policy coordination (Haas 1992; Cross 2013), and in processes of *de*-stabilization (see Leith *et al.* 2016 for a critique of stability as a defining criterion of successful boundary organizations). The *fourth* and final revision, which has been made to avoid an interpretation that over-emphasizes the organizational structures in relation to individual and collective action, is to introduce the concept of "agency space". Agency space refers to the situated – and sometimes contested – material, legal, social, cultural boundaries which circumscribe and set the limits for what actions are *potentially possible*. The analytical point in this context is that the concept helps us to reformulate the abstract

With these revisions taken into account, however, I argue that the concept of "international boundary organization" offers a systematic approach with a specific set of tools that heuristically highlight and analytically connect a number of central but seemingly disparate organizational themes within SSD, such as the relationship between science and politics, the problem of collaboration across social worlds, the importance of workable boundary objects, and the organizational structuration of agency spaces. Furthermore, it will help us to discern and analyze four relatively distinct phases during the period, all marked by organizational changes that not only affected the formal conditions for SSD's activities, but also set restrictions for what was possible to initiate and achieve and hence also had an impact on its direction and contents. Taken as a whole, it will be argued that UNESCO's SSD during the period was principally transformed from a relatively independent transnational organization, which shared the optimistic vision of one-worldism, to an intergovernmental organization considerably more open and vulnerable to external geopolitical pressures.

In the following sections, SSD's development during the four phases – labeled "visionary creation" (1946), "organizational problems" (1947–1949), "revitalization and consolidation" (1950–1952) and "geopolitical re-organization" (1953–1955) – will be characterized and analysed. The paper ends with a concluding section which summarizes the most important changes with regard to the identified organizational structuration of agency spaces and discusses some theoretical implications when analysing SSD as an international boundary organization.

THE VISIONARY CREATION, 1946

The birth of the SSD at UNESCO's first General Conference in Paris in 1946 might give the impression that its character as an international boundary organization that mediated and stabilized the boundary between science and politics was more or less given from the very beginning. This was however far from the case. As this section will show, both UNESCO and its SSD emerged out of a primarily political initiative, where the "scientific" component – the "S" in UNESCO – was not included until late in the process. And if the presence and position of the natural sciences were insecure for a long time, this was even more true for the social sciences. A second point to be emphasized during this founding phase is the importance of complementing Guston's stability-centered concept with a perspective that is more sensitive to the formation of epistemic networks to better understand the dynamics involved in the creation of SSD.

The multifaceted pre-history of UNESCO can of course be narrated in several ways, with emphases on the dynamics of the broader geopolitical context or on different sets of actors, intellectual traditions and sources of origin. In this article, with its focus on the organizational aspects, the retrospective perspective will be restricted to the formative importance of the first Conference of the Allied Ministers of Education (CAME) which took place in London 16 November–5 December 1942. The red thread connecting this conference initiative with four subsequent meetings – the United Nations Conference on International Organization (UNCIO) in San Francisco in April 1945; the UNESCO Founding Conference in London in November 1945; the creation of UNESCO's Preparatory Commission, also in London, directly after the Founding Conference; and finally,

question about the impact of structures on individual action into two *empirically investigable* research questions, the first being in what way the organizational structuration defined the agency spaces on different levels, whereas the other and quite different question is how the actors on these levels *actually made use* of the agency spaces available.

UNESCO's inaugural General Conference in Paris – has been analyzed in detail in earlier accounts (F.R. Cowell 1966; Krill De Capello 1970; Sewell 1975). To this series of conferences we can add a number of complementary organizational initiatives, like the pre-existing Commission for International Intellectual Cooperation, founded in 1922 and a few years later transformed into League of Nations' International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, the non-governmental International Bureau of Education in Geneva, as well as the Social Relations of Science movement, which were, so to say, woven into the main thread along the way (see Lengyel 1986: 4-5; Elzinga 1996a: 3-19; Toye & Toye 2010: 315; Petitjean 2008).

The main point in this context is that the organizational creation of UNESCO, with its origin in CAME as an intergovernmental forum based on bilateral agreements between the allied ministers of education, was explicitly inscribed in a particular geopolitical setting – where the initiative in the protracted negotiations was shuttling back and forth between the leading delegations of the United Kingdom, United States and France – and that the area in explicit focus from the beginning was education (Graham 2006: 235ff; Krill De Capello 1970: 2, 25-6). The idea of an international organization based on multilateral agreements, encompassing education as well as science and culture, did not appear until later during the process. By the start of the Founding Conference in London on 1 November 1945, "science" had still not found its place in the plans, as revealed by the full name of the meeting, "Conference of the United Nations for the Establishment of an International Organization for Education and Culture" (Krill De Capello 1970: 9; Sewell 1975: 12; Lengyel 1986: l6). Instead it was during the two-week long conference that "science" was added with reference to its universal character, its international mode of collaborating across national borders and because, as the Preparatory Commission's *Report on the Programme* expressed it, "its application constitutes by far the most important means of improving human welfare."[8] In other words, it was first at this late stage that it is possible to speak about UNESCO as an "international boundary organization" in its most basic sense, that is, as an institution situated in the borderlands of politics *and science.*

It was also at this stage, at the Founding Conference in London, in the direct aftermath of the end of the war, that the visionary ideas of a unified world were spelled out in their most optimistic, almost utopian, articulations, including UNESCO's famous preamble: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".[9] The gathering brought together mid-century internationalists of all sorts, from moderate proponents of international understanding to radical advocates of world government, filling the air with expressions about "intellectual cooperation", "international understanding" and the "present and future system of supranational cooperation", as well as more far-reaching hopes about "the solidarity of all peoples", "universal peace" and "the world […] as a single unit", where science and society would be harmoniously co-produced with the help of UNESCO, almost filling the function of a "world parliament" and hence contribute to "a new world order to be created".[10]

These optimistic visions colored not only the debates, but also the concrete organizational proposals. These included an annual general conference open to both National Commissions and international non-governmental organizations, as well as the cosmopolitan principles that the

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[8] UNESCO Archives, Preparatory Commission, *Report on the Programme*, 1946: 5, 7.

[9] UNESCO ECO/CONF./29 (1945): 22, 61, 93.

[10] UNESCO ECO/CONF./29 (1945): 12-93; c.f. Krill De Capello 1970: 19-22. On the different forms of mid-century internationalisms, see Iriye 2002: 37-59; Sluga 2013: 79-117.

Executive Board, the Directorship and the Secretariat posts should be occupied by persons in an unofficial capacity and based on their individual intellectual merits.[11] These proposals were embraced not least by Huxley, who, like several other leading names in the new organization, wanted to incline UNESCO away from governments in favor of strong-minded individuals and NGOs (Sewell 1975: 109; Petitjean 2006: 31). In that sense, UNESCO can be described as a "hybrid organization" that heralded principles of universalism and non-governmentalism inside an intergovernmental structure (Elzinga 1996b: 169). On the last day of the conference, the UNESCO constitution was signed, which has been described as "the last great manifesto of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, a utopian document reflecting fervid belief in […] reform through education, science and reason" (quoted from Lengyel 1986: 5).

Consequently, it is within the organizational context of UNESCO's formation with its optimistic and almost utopian internationalism, that the creation of SSD as an international boundary organization is to be seen. However, at this point in the analysis, we also need, as already mentioned, to complement Guston's stability-centered approach (see Guston 2000: 3) with a perspective that is more sensitive to the central group of actors and their formation as an "epistemic community" (Haas 1992, Cross 2013), as well as to how this network was positioned hierarchically within the organization and in the program-making process (Courpasson *et al.* 2012). This will draw our attention to the small and relatively anonymous group of scholars set up during the spring of 1946 which constituted the so-called "Social Sciences Section" of the Preparatory Commission Secretariat, then located in Belgrave Square in London. The group was headed by Mohamed Bey Awad, an Egyptian social geographer trained in London and Liverpool, who acted as Senior Counsellor. By his side Awad had two Counsellors, the British economist Percival W. Martin, with a background from the International Labor Organization (ILO), and the Norwegian sociologist Arvid Brodersen, who had a PhD from Berlin and experience as a Rockefeller scholar in the USA.[12]

Although Awad was the Senior Counsellor, the available records suggest that Martin and Brodersen played no less important roles in the initial phase. At least it was Martin who in April 1946 received the initial instructions from UNESCO's Deputy Executive Secretary Howard E. Wilson, Julian Huxley's right hand man in the Preparatory Commission. The instructions included a detailed time plan, month by month, for the preparations of the social science activities, together with a suggestion on how the section could be organized.[13] One of the very first tasks was to produce a "discussion paper" to be pre-circulated before and discussed at the General Conference in Paris. In early June, this nine-page paper, entitled "The Social Sciences in Modern Society", was finished.[14] In it several programmatic arguments appeared that would be recurrent in the subsequent discussions, including the central role of SSD for UNESCO at large:

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[11] UNESCO ECO/CONF./29 (1945): 93-98. On the French counter-proposal "Projet francaise de Statut de l'Organisation de Cooperation Intellectuelle de Nations Unies", see UNESCO ECO/CONF./29 (1945): 5-9; c.f. Krill De Capello 1970: 24; Sewell 1975: 72-73; Graham 2006: 237; Cutroni 2013: 49.

[12] UNESCO Archives, Prep.Com./Soc.Sci.Com./SR.Minutes, Session I, 13 June 1946: 4-5; Unesco, Guide de la CG Paris: 59.

[13] UNESCO Archives, X07.55, Memo H.E. Wilson–P.W. Martin, 1 April 1946, and "Organisation of the Social Sciences Section", 8 May 1946; Brodersen 1982: 252: "Min oppgave var å skrive et utkast til programmet for den socialvitenskaplige avdelningen."

[14] UNESCO Archives, Prep.Com./Soc.Sci.Com./2, "The Social Sciences in Modern Society", Paper No. I: Prepared by the Social Sciences Section of the Preparatory Commission Secretariat, 4 June 1946: 2.

> The social sciences have a peculiarly close relation to the total program of UNESCO. [...] It is impossible to develop a sound and realistic program in the social sciences for UNESCO in separation from the total UNESCO program. In one sense UNESCO is itself a phenomenon in the field of the Social Sciences. [...] It is a responsibility of UNESCO not only to serve the established disciplines, fundamental as that is but also to aid in formulating new syntheses of social analysis based on the human experience and problems, hopes and fears involved in living in "one world".[15]

The discussion paper was presented at a meeting of the Social Sciences Committee of the Preparatory Commission in London on 13–14 June 1946. Attached as an Appendix to the paper was a three-page list of proposals from a number of governmental advisory bodies, social science organizations, individual experts and other interested people and groups, who had been invited to submit suggestions regarding the coming work of the social science section.[16] Those present at the meeting were, apart from the three main authors Awad, Brodersen and Martin, the four leading members of the provisional UNESCO Secretariat – the Executive Secretary Julian Huxley, Deputy Executive Secretaries Jean Thomas and Howard Wilson, and Alfred Zimmern as Adviser – as well as 23 delegates from 18 countries, including Paolo de Berredo Carneiro from Brazil who chaired the meeting.[17]

In the next step the social science program was included in the draft "Report of the Preparatory Commission on the Programme of UNESCO", which was delivered in September 1946, in preparation of the coming General Conference. By then, however, the social sciences had been grouped together with philosophy and humanistic studies and integrated under the chapter heading of "The Human Sciences".[18] This was a significant change. In the printed version of the Preparatory Commission's *Report on the Programme of the Unesco* (1946) the heading "Human Sciences" was motivated by the critical difference between the social sciences and the natural sciences. Even if the social sciences aimed to be as objective, systematic, and scientific as the natural sciences, it was argued, "here the matter is complicated by the need for taking account of values as well as 'neutral' facts". This required collaboration with the humanities and philosophy "in the endeavor to work out a scale of values adapted to the modern world and to its continued and progressive development".[19]

As a consequence of the *Report* of the Preparatory Commission's Programme Committee, the social sciences were by the time of the Paris General Conference grouped together with philosophy and humanistic studies in the programme, although not under the heading of "Human Science", but in the sessions of the "Sub-Commission on Social Sciences, Philosophy and Humanistic Studies". The very first session of the Sub-Committee on Thursday morning, 28 November 1946, was introduced by an explicit note from the General Committee of the Conference that it "very strongly recommends that the programmed sub-commissions should not set up new sub-committees".

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[15] Ibid: 2.

[16] UNESCO Archives, X07.55, Appendix, dated 23 May 1946, to "The Social Sciences in Modern Society", Paper No. I: Prepared by the Social Sciences Section of the Preparatory Commission Secretariat, 4 June 1946, UNESCO/Prep.Com./Soc.Sci.Com./2.

[17] UNESCO Archives, Prep.Com./Soc.Sci.Com/S.R.1, Summary Report of Meeting 13-14 June 1946. See Toye & Toye (2010: 322-5) on Wilkinson's and Maud's decision to replace Zimmern with Huxley.

[18] UNESCO Archives, X07.55, "Report of the Preparatory Commission on the Programme of UNESCO", Chapter VI, 23 September 1946, UNESCO/C/2.

[19] UNESCO Preparatory Commission, *Report on the Programme,* 1946: 8.

Ironically, the very question about the relation between social sciences, philosophy and humanistic studies immediately became the topic of lengthy discussions. The winding debate concerned whether the three areas should be organizationally kept together or divided into two or maybe three separate sections. Some delegates suggested that philosophy and humanities should constitute a separate section, others that social science could be grouped together with the natural sciences under the heading of "science". A third viewpoint emphasized the affinity between philosophy and social science, whereas a fourth proposal spoke in favor of a broad conceptualization of science, in accordance with German terminology, which included the exact as well as the social and humanistic sciences. Yet another delegate suggested that the whole issue of classification and division should be postponed and that UNESCO, once it had commenced its work, could bring it up anew in one year. At this stage of the discussion, Julian Huxley in his capacity as Executive Secretary resolutely stepped in and proposed: "To sum up, what we are doing is, for purely administrative and practical reasons and to satisfy the requirements of administrative logic, to separate the social sciences section from the section on human philosophy." And so it was decided. A vote was taken and the resolution was adopted by 30 votes to 1.[20] When the Sub-Commission had made its vote, the recommendation to separate social sciences from philosophy and humanities was passed on for adoption by the General Conference Assembly.[21]

It might seem strange that Huxley both went against the explicit recommendations of the General Committee and chose to intervene so directly in the discussions about the separation between, on the one hand, the social sciences and, on the other, philosophy and the humanities, in spite of the number of different alternatives and options that had been presented. It is, however, worth observing that this very delineation was in perfect harmony with the categorizations made in Huxley's own, personal and programmatic, booklet *Unesco, Its Purpose and Its Philosophy* (1946), published just before the General Conference. There Huxley spoke in favor of the social sciences in general, and in particular "the importance of psychology" and social psychology as "indispensable as a basis for any truly scientific sociology as well as for the successful application of the findings of social science" (Huxley 1946: 45).

What can be discerned from the above is how UNESCO's SSD during this initial phase was constituted as an international boundary organization, and how social science was delineated and demarcated as an object of common concern. In this process we have identified an epistemic community consisting of a core group in the Preparatory Secretariat – including Awad, Martin and Brodersen as well as Wilson and, not least, Huxley – that was backed up by the Sub-Commission on Social Science, and a third enlarged circle of delegates at the General Conference, as well as organizations, experts and other individuals who were able to have their say by giving input in relation to the first draft of the discussion paper. This agenda-setting process developed, by and large, in accordance with the formal power structures and the organizational instructions for delegation of authority as formulated and adopted by the General Conference Assembly in Paris. According to these instructions, the General Conference was "the highest authority in the Organization", whereas the Executive Board, consisting of individual members selected on their intellectual merits, should be "responsible to the General Conference for the preparation and execution of the program", and the Director-General "responsible for developing an efficient Organization and for adapting it to changing programs and needs". Furthermore, which we will

[20] UNESCO Archives, C/Prog.Com./S.C.Soc.Sci./V.R.1: 2-10.

[21] UNESCO/C/30 [Records from GC Paris]: 233. See also UNESCO Archives, X07.55, US Delegation statement on SS Program 461128.

have reason to go into in more detail in the next section, the Heads or Program Directors of the different departments "were to be responsible directly to the Director-General" and "be assigned in his field the functions of research, stimulation of services, liaison and operation".[22]

ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS, 1947–1950

Once the organizational structure of UNESCO had been settled – initially with eight different program sections: Education; Natural Sciences; Philosophy & Humanistic Studies; Museums; Libraries; Social Sciences; Arts & Letters; Mass Communication – it was time to translate UNESCO's visionary constitution into practice and to start organizing the internal program work of the individual sections.[23] For that purpose directly after the General Conference Julian Huxley called for a first Heads of Sections meeting on 15 January 1947, at which SSD, then formally the Social Sciences Section, was represented by Awad.[24] However, to launch a large and completely new organization was easier said than done. The delicate task, as described by Léon Blum at the General Conference, was to "put into operation a very complicated administrative system" and to remain "true to the great ideas and ideals which inspired its creation", while at the same time avoiding the risk, pointed out by the Preparatory Commission, of the UNESCO Secretariat becoming "an isolated bureaucracy".[25]

On the departmental level the task was not much easier. There SSD's two most pressing questions were, according to Brodersen (1956: 401), "how to translate the general ideas and principles of the constitution into specific objectives in the field of social sciences; and how to design in line with these policy objectives, concrete projects according to priorities of urgency and importance, at the same time adjusting them realistically to existing conditions of implementation." Added to this came the general challenge of fostering cooperation in spite of the many heterogeneous participants involved, that is, to manage collective action across social worlds and to achieve enough agreement to get work done, or to speak with Guston's terminology, to provide a space for the creation of workable boundary objects (Guston 1999: 93, 2000: 109; c.f. Star & Griesemer 1989: 387; Fujimura 1992: 168). During this second phase, as we will see, UNESCO's SSD confronted several practical problems due, among other things, to organizational instability, institutional overlapping and inadequate boundary objects.

The organizational instability – in terms of rapid growth and unsteady leadership – applied to both UNESCO at large and SSD, although the emphases of the problem differed slightly on the two

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[22] UNESCO/C/30 [Records from GC Paris] "Annex III: Report on Organisation of the Secretariat": 254-5. In terms of recruitment, the Director-General was the only post elected by the General Conference on the recommendation of the Executive Board, while all other positions, the programme directors included, were formally employed by the Director-General. Se UNESCO Preparatory Commission, *Report on Programme,* 1946: 17. C.f. Ascher 1950, 1951; Hoggart 1978: 20.

[23] UNESCO/Cons.Exec./2e.Sess/15/1947/Supplement, "Organisation of the Secretariat". The eight sections were soon reduced to five departments: Education; Natural Sciences; Mass Communication; Cultural Activities; Social Science (Lengyel 1986: 15). By 1 March 1952 and 31 December 1954 there were six department with "Department of Technical Assistance" as a new and separate department (UNESCO DG Report 1952: 191; UNESCO DG Report 1954). In 1955 a seventh department, "International Exchange", was added (UNESCO Archives, 1955 and 1960).

[24] UNESCO Archives, H.S./9/1947, 15 Jan 1947.

[25] UNESCO Archives, General Conference Paris 1946: 74; UNESCO Preparatory Commission, *Report on the Programme*, 15 Sept 1946: 27.

levels. On the general UNESCO level, Julian Huxley was the one who led the practical construction work during this early phase. The way he set his mark on the organization with his visionary one-worldism – summarized in his own words as "a world scientific humanism, global in extent and evolutionary in background", with its grounding in contemporary scientism, materialism and universalism – and his energetic and inexhaustible style of leading UNESCO's attempts "to make more real the idea of a world society", have been analyzed by several scholars.[26] But since his thoughts – especially his materialism – were controversial, Huxley's mandate had been restricted to only two years instead of the constitutional six (Sewell 1975: 106-7, 127; Toye & Toye 2010: 239).

Hence, already at the General Conference in Beirut in December 1948 Huxley was succeeded by the Mexican author and former foreign and education minister Jaime Torres Bodet, who was elected for six years with an overwhelming majority of votes (Sewell 1975: 128). Although Huxley and Torres Bodet shared many visions, for instance, on the role of education, and their pioneering spirits diffused into the whole organization, there were also significant changes marking UNESCO's three first years of practical work (see Sewell 1975: 132; Brodersen 1982: 258). After only one year in the office, Torres Bodet reported the acute situation caused by the rapid expansion of the Secretariat. In the last six months alone, September 1949 to March 1950, almost 100 new staff members had been recruited (marking an increase from 717 to 810). This meant that more than half of the budget (56%) went directly to wages and had caused "signs of overstrain" among the personnel, Torres Bodet complained and summarized: "We have been so occupied with reporting on the past and preparing for the future that we have scarcely had time to do anything in the present".[27]

On the departmental level, lack of steady leadership caused an even greater problem. During SSD's first four years there was a succession of no less than four different Heads. Mohamed Bey Awad, who had led the work in the preparatory Social Sciences Secretariat as Senior Counsellor left SSD only a few weeks after the General Conference in Paris.[28] The transition to Arvid Brodersen was however a smooth one, since he also, as mentioned, had been in the preparatory Secretariat. Brodersen stayed for two and a half years, from early 1947 until August 1949, when he moved to take up a post as Professor of Sociology at the New School for Social Research in New York (Brodersen 1982: 258). Brodersen was replaced by the Brazilian anthropologist Arturo Ramos. However, only three months later, in late October, Ramos suddenly died. In that situation the American sociologist Robert Cooley Angell, who was currently directing SSD's "Tensions Project", volunteered as Acting Head for SSD as a whole.[29]

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[26] Quotes from Huxley 1946: 8, and Swedish Labour Movement's Archives and Library, Stockholm (ARBARK), 405/4/1/7/8, "Final Resolutions: the Programme of Unesco in 1948", 2C/129 (Rev.), 4 Dec. 1947: 1. C.f. UNESCO (1947), *The Programme of Unesco in 1948*. See Krill De Capello 1970; Sewell 1975: 106-7; Elzinga 1996b; Toye & Toye 2010: 239; Sluga 2010; Duedahl 2011.

[27] UNESCO, 5C/3, *Report of the Director General, October 1949-March 1950*: 15. The expansion of the staff was underblown by the increasing number of member states which more than doubled (from 28 to 60) during 1946-1950, and would almost triple to 74 in 1955 – and yet the most significant influx of new member states occurred during the subsequent decade with a first wave of East European countries after Stalin's death in 1953 and then a total of 27 newly independent African states joining the Organization (*The Courirer*, January 1953: 3; DG Report 1955: 185; Elzinga 1996b: 188; Cutroni 2013: 50; Duedahl 2016: 51; Sluga 2013:106).

[28] According to Sewell (1975: 100) Awad left due to failure to receive others' encouragement of his view points on social insurance, wages and collective bargaining.

[29] Angell later held positions as President of ASA (1951), ISA (1953-56) and the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO (1951-1956) (see Platt 1998).

Like UNESCO at large, SSD too expanded during the decade. However, as one of the smallest departments throughout the period in terms of numbers and budget, this did not cause a problem in the same way as on the general UNESCO level.[30] The basic organizational principle, on the departmental level as well as on the general UNESCO level, was a project-based structure. As Huxley had explained at the initial Heads of Section meeting, "the organization would gradually grow out of the proposed projects".[31] In the beginning SSD was too small – with only a handful of people – to motivate an internal structure with separate divisions, but as it set out to realize its prioritized program, the department was soon to be organized accordingly. By Mid-November 1948, the SSD staff was organized into four divisions – with a Head's Office (1 Acting Head + 3 administrators), "Tensions Affecting International Understanding" (1 Head of Project + 2 Program Specialists + 1 Program Assistant + 1 Junior Analyst + 2 Secretaries), "Study of International Collaboration" (1 Head of Project + 1 Program Specialist + 1 Program Assistant + 2 administrators) and "Methods in Political Science" (2 Program Specialists + 2 administrators) – mirroring not least the major undertaking during the period, the so-called Tensions Project.[32]

Another crucial and – as it would turn out – recurrent problem, emerging from the complicated UN system with its different levels, was concerned with organizational overlappings, that is, "what scope and role was to be assigned to UNESCO generally, and to its Department of Social Science [sic!] in particular, within the United Nations group" (Lengyel 1986: 17). Although UNESCO's constitution strongly encouraged organizational collaboration with the UN as well as other intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations "whose interests and activities are related to its purpose", problems of overlap with other special agencies such as ILO and WHO as well as the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) surfaced at an early stage.[33] In 1947, for instance, UN's Social Department planned to set up a whole Educational, Scientific and Cultural Division – which would have completely duplicated UNESCO's existing scope – which urged UNESCO to remind that UN should have an exclusively coordinating interagency function and not a program-implementation role (Boel 2016: 155). For SSD these organizational overlappings meant that early pilot projects were sometimes abandoned in order to avoid duplicating similar initiatives under consideration by other UN agencies.[34]

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[30] Lengyel 1986: 2. The more exact numbers depend on which staff categories are included. Rangil (2011: 7-8) focuses on the permanent staff and counts less than 12 in 1951, 24 members in 1952, 48 members in 1955-56, and 53 in 1959-60. According to Lengyel (1966: 568), the budget expanded from $286,500 in 1949, $540,600 in 1953, $761,400 in 1956, and just over $1 million in 1959.

[31] UNESCO Archives, H.S./9/1947, 470115. C.f. Cutroni (2013: 55) on the "basic programme" under Torres Bodet and "operational activities" under Evans.

[32] UNESCO X07.55, "Staff of Social Sciences Department on 15th November 1948", 3 pp. To be compared with ISSB 1949: 9-10, on the current programme with four projects on "Tensions Affecting International Understanding", "International Collaboration", internationalization of the political science discipline and the organization of the social sciences more generally. Rangil (2011: 61-62) lists the SSD staff by division by early 1949 – though without including the administrative staff – with a "General Office" (Acting Head), "Tensions Affecting International Understanding" (5 staff members, incl. one project director, two programme specialists and two assistants), "Studies of International Collaboration" (incl. one programme specialist and one assistant) and "Methods of Political Science" (1 Programme Specialist).

[33] UNESCO 2004: 19, Article XI. See also UNESCO, *The Programme of Unesco in 1948* (1947): 24-25.

[34] Brodersen (1956: 405) mentions one example in jurisprudence and another one on town and community planning. C.f. Lengyel (1986: 3-4, 17, 87-95, 113) on the problem of UNESCO's "competing functionalistic polycentrism" and "double hybridization".

An even more central and fundamental problem concerned the object of SSD itself. "It rapidly became evident that the very expression 'social science' meant widely different things in different countries", the editorial to the very first issue of *International Social Science Bulletin* explained when summarizing SSD's work during its first eighteen months (ISSB 1949: 9). Already at the meetings of the Social Sciences Committee of the UNESCO Preparatory Commission there had been repeated comments about the "wide national variations in the definitions and conceptual structure of the social sciences", the "flexible character of the social sciences themselves", and "the vagueness of the term 'social sciences'".[35] SSD staff members during this phase – like Hadley Cantril and Marie-Anne de Franz – have in similar ways testified "that the term 'social science' meant quite different things to the French, the British, and the Americans" (Cantril 1967: 125) and that "[m]eticulous spirits often requested Unesco in those early days to proceed to a 'definition' of the social sciences" (Franz 1969: 406). Brodersen (1956: 401) explained in more detail the latent conflict between different traditions and conceptualizations: "The French, for instance, tended to give it the wider meaning of human sciences, including philosophy and the liberal arts, whereas English-speaking people usually defined it in a more restricted sense." The conceptualization of social science was in this respect not only a terminological issue, but also a principal question about "negotiations with a view to delineating the boundaries of scientific disciplines" as well as an organizational question with practical implications for the division of labor between the departments and how their respective unifying objects should be defined.[36]

Interpreted with David Guston, the SSD's organizational problems in general and the conceptual disagreements in particular during this early phase, I argue, may well be understood as a *lack* of necessary boundary objects, that is, common objectives plastic enough to offer shared reference frames for the heterogeneous participants and different traditions involved, and robust enough to make successful collective action possible (Guston 1999: 93, 2000: 109; Star & Griesemer 1989: 387; Fujimura 1992: 168). Hence, when the first issue of *International Social Science Bulletin* was launched in early 1949, the editorial admitted that "the social sciences of Unesco found considerable difficulty in getting under way" (ISSB 1949: 9).

In spite of these problems, several activities were initiated during this phase – although Brodersen admits that the projects often were "rather loosely coordinated" and initiated from a pragmatic "'shot-gun' approach, covering vast ground by minor attacks in many different directions" (Brodersen 1956: 403, 407). Among these projects were first and foremost the mentioned "Tensions Project", in 1950 described as the "oldest and largest undertaking of the Social Science Department" investigating "the factors in the human mind and in cultures and societies which positively or negatively affect international understanding and peace" (Angell 1950: 282-283). Originally named "Tensions Conducive to War", the project was renamed several times over the years – from "Tensions Crucial to Peace", through "Tensions Dangerous to Peace" and "Tensions Affecting International Understanding" to "Studies of Social Tensions" – in a way that reveals its successively displaced focus from being centered on the psychological causes of war, to questions about how to foster peace and then to more general questions about international understanding

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[35] The first quote is from UNESCO /Prep.Com./Soc.Sci.Com./2, "The Social Sciences in Modern Society", 4 June 1946: 3, and the two latter from UNESCO Archives, Prep.Com./Soc.Sci.Com./SR.Minutes, Session I, 13 June 1946: 4 and 13.

[36] Brodersen 1956: 401. C.f. Petitjean 2006: 48; Lengyel 1986: 11 on the "persistent tension between the focused, relatively concrete and, if possible, quantifiable lines favoured by the English-speaking countries, the Scandinavians, the Dutch and a number of others, and the synthesizing and moralising Latin tradition with its emphasis on long-term endeavors and tolerance for intangible outcomes".

(Rangil 2011: 8n10). However, as Brodersen (1956: 405) clarifies, "this was never a single project, but a cluster of at least half a dozen". A list of its most important participants over the years – Edward A. Shils (Chicago and London) , Nathan Leites (Yale), Henry V. Dick (Tavistock, London), Hadley Cantril (Princeton), Otto Klineberg (Columbia) and Robert C. Angell (Michigan), the three latter formally titled heads of the project – illustrates its firm anchorage in American social psychology.[37] The Tensions Project was institutionalized as a separate division of SSD from 1948, until it merged with and became a part of the division of "Applied Social Science" in 1952 (Brodersen 1956: 405-6).

In a similar way a second project on "International Cooperation" was institutionalized as a separate division from 1948 under the leadership of the American political scientist Walter Sharp (Yale). The project aimed at studying collaboration in modern large-scale international organizations and included several meta-studies on international collaborations. It became an integral part of Unesco's social science program in the early years and resulted among other things in a special issue of the *International Social Science Bulletin* on the "The Technique of International Conferences" and a book on *Program-Making in Unesco 1946–1951* by the American professor of public administration Charles S. Ascher (Brooklyn).[38]

Relatively soon, however, it became clear to Brodersen and the SSD Secretariat that the most robust way "to help the social scientists of all countries develop ways and means by which they could best co-operate with each other so as to increase the scientific strength on a world-wide scale" would be to establish comprehensive networks of what they referred to as "single-disciplined bodies", that is, separate international associations for each discipline. Such cooperation would be "both easier of achievement as a permanent feature, and also in some respects more productive than that involving scholars from different disciplines", Brodersen argued. As professionals in a common field they would *per se* be more "familiar with each other's problems and language" and united by "bonds between them before they ever meet" (Brodersen 1956: 402-3). The three first associations – the International Political Science Association (IPSA), International Sociological Association (ISA) and International Economic Association (IEA) – were all set up in 1949, whereas their counterparts in comparative law and psychology followed in the two coming years.[39]

Brodersen in retrospect self-critically summarized SSD's activities during his term as "*ad hoc* pieces of research" and as incidental "projects of the 'fire-fighting' kind". Of these several were interrupted while still in their infancy and no single project "was probably more productive in terms of results in the field". But there were also other, less visible foundations being laid down, he argued:

> The relatively most important staff activities at this stage were perhaps not those which figured most conspicuously in the budget as project proposals, but rather those devoted to the quiet and patient study of the situation in the social sciences […] the gradual

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[37] On the the informal impact of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), see Selcer 2009: 309n1; 2011: 89ff, and UNESCO Archives, 3A01UNG.

[38] ISSB 1953; Ascher 1951; UNESCO Archives, SS/SIC/15, 15 nov 1950; UNESCO/SS/5, 26 March 1952. C.f. Brodersen 1956: 406; Angell 1950: 287; Selcer 2011: 323-325.

[39] Platt 1998; Boncourt 2015. The International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) was founded in 1948, but did not belong organizationally to the SSD but to the Philosophy and Humanistic Studies Section, although it later, from 1952, was represented in the ISSC.

establishment of contacts, by correspondence and face to face, with men and women of the profession wherever they could be reached. (Brodersen 1956: 403-404)

By bringing together prominent and engaged international social scientists and by providing a new transnational platform, collaborations and gradually extended networks, partly institutionalized in new professional associations, UNESCO's SSD contributed with what one of the staff members called the "international spade-work concerning the infrastructure" (Franz 1969: 407). Although this "essential part of the initial groundwork" for international social science, according to Brodersen (1956: 404), far from followed "a general plan in a long-term and large-scale operation", it is still worth noting, I hold, that the "infrastructures" being laid down had its central junctions, encouraged a certain kind of communication and directed the intellectual traffic in some directions more than others. The emerging networks of prominent social researchers were with few exceptions centered in the USA, as Selcer (2009: 314, 317) observes, usually with a rotating series of American scholars in the central posts as research leaders or presidents of the international associations, whereas the operational secretary functions often went to Europeans, hence establishing a structural trans-Atlantic beam. A second pattern is that the emerging international social science was built on discipline-based organizational structures, and of the disciplines contemporary American social psychology and public administration in particular served as models (c.f. Backhouse & Fontaine 2010: 207-216). Third, the "international" component of SSD's enterprise was largely implicitly interpreted in terms of a relatively one-way directed social knowledge transfer across the Atlantic to different countries in Europe and other parts of the world (c.f. Myrdal 1951: 157).

The foundation laid during Brodersen's term was further refined by Robert Angell during his period as Acting Head of SSD, with an even more marked disciplinary approach, a slight sociological twist, and an even stronger emphasis on American research. In late December 1949, for example, Angell in his double role as Acting Head of SSD and Director of the Tensions Project gave a speech to the American Sociological Society – an assocation that he would become the President of only one year later – that was published in *American Sociological Review* – a journal that he had been editing during the previous three years (1946–48). In the speech he did not regard the American dominance within SSD as a problem, but quite the opposite as a risk if his colleagues failed to contribute to UNESCO: "There is always the danger that an international secretariat will become isolated from the most dynamic currents of research".[40] Another of UNESCO's problems, pointed out by Angell, concerned its lack of organizational stability and short planning horizons: "the grouping of studies within the Social Science Department has shifted between 1949 and 1950, and threatens to shift again between 1950 and 1951" (Angell 1950: 282). He probably did not know by then how right he would be about this forecast only a few months later.

REVITALIZATION AND CONSOLIDATION, 1950–1953

From around 1950 a new phase in SSD's early history is discernible, characterized by both revitalization and organizational consolidation. Although several practical outcomes during this phase emanated from the previous period, there were also a broad and varied range of new

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[40] Angell 1950: 282-3. See also ARBARK, 405/4/1/7/8, Angell, "Concentration of 1951 Programme", 18 July 1950.

initiatives and activities that expanded and renewed SSD's scope and status to the degree, I argue, that it is motivated to speak about the SSD as an almost ideal-typical international boundary organization during this third phase. This marked shift happened to co-occur with yet another change of the leadership, as observed by several scholars (Ekerwald & Rodhe 2008: 168; Rangil 2013: 86; Sluga 2015: 64, 66). Selcer, for example, notes that "SSD suffered from disorganization due to lack of steady leadership until the dynamic Swede Alva Myrdal [took] over the department in 1950" (Selcer 2009: 314). Myrdal herself witnessed already in 1952, in a private letter to her husband: "Everybody affirms that I personally set the Department on its feet."[41] As will be argued, these observations will give us reason to pay closer attention to the question about agency space especially on the program director's level during this phase.

When Alva Myrdal took up the job as head – from this moment formally upgraded to the title of Director – of SSD on 28 August 1950, she actually moved downwards in the UN hierarchy. As Director of the Department of Social Affairs at the UN headquarters in New York, on the "third level from the top", under Secretary-General Trygve Lie and Assistant Secretary-General Henri Laugier, she had been the highest-ranking woman in the whole UN organization – and remained so as Director of SSD (Ekerwald & Rodhe 2008: 153; Sluga 2015: 51). Although the primary reason for changing office was private and family-related, the tasks that awaited her in Paris were in no way new to her.[42] Her commitment to the social sciences, especially education and social psychology, can be traced back to the 1920s. And when she and her husband, the economist and sociologist Gunnar Myrdal, went on a Rockefeller stipend to the USA in 1929–30 her engagement became even more marked. From this moment on they both became ardent advocates of interdisciplinary applied social science.[43] Her international career really took off when she moved to the UN headquarters in 1949. But already in 1946 she had attended UNESCO's inaugural General Conference as observer and actually also been offered a post by Julian Huxley.[44] When Torres Bodet asked her anew in March 1950 she was not only already familiar with UNESCO, its mission and early development, but had by then also acquired a superb overview of the entire UN bureaucracy as well as practical experience of working inside it.[45] Furthermore, the tasks of UN's Social Affairs and UNESCO's SSD were partly similar – some would probably say unsatisfactorily overlapping – an issue that Myrdal had brought up in her discussions with Torres Bodet.[46]

Hence, when entering the office as SSD Director, Myrdal was well prepared and immediately started to outline the plans for SSD's programme for the coming years.[47] In January 1951 she typed a manuscript entitled "The Cost of National Isolation in the Social Sciences". In this programmatic

[41] ARBARK, 405/3/3/33, A. Myrdal-G. Myrdal 26 Nov 1953, quoted by Ekerwald & Rodhe 2008: 168.

[42] ARBARK, A. Myrdal-G. Myrdal, 31 Oct 1949. C.f. Hederberg 2004: 186; Hirdman 2006: 311; Etzemüller 2010: 315-6.

[43] Wisselgren 2006: 137; 2008: 179-180; 2009: 232-233; see also Jackson 1994; Ekerwald 2000; Hirdman 2006; Etzemüller 2010; Lyon 2015.

[44] ARBARK 405/4/1/7/1a, A. Myrdal, "Rapport från UNESCO:s generalkonferens i Paris nov.-dec. 1946"; J. Huxley-A. Myrdal, 27 November 1946.

[45] ARBARK, 405/4/1/7/4, Letters A. Myrdal-J. Torres Bodet, 17 April-11 July 1950. On R. Cowell's role in this process, see letters Cowell-G. Myrdal, 19 Nov 1949; Cowell-A. Myrdal, 9 and 15 March, 27 June 1950.

[46] ARBARK, 405/4/1/7/4, Letters A. Myrdal-J. Torres Bodet, 17 April-11 July 1950. Regarding Myrdal's portfolio at UN, see Sluga 2015: 52; Ekerwald & Rodhe 2008. See also Myrdal's notes for a speech on "The Welfare of People and One World", attached with letter E.O. Melby-A. Myrdal, 29 Jan. 1949, in ARBARK, 405/3/1/3/4, folder V-Z.

[47] ARBARK, 405/4/1/7/8, "Assumptions for establishing the 1952 programme of the Social Sciences Department", 11 Sept. 1950; SS/Memo./50/2410, "Submitting First Draft of 1952 Programme for the Department of Social Sciences", 18 Sept. 1950.

text Myrdal problematized the "immaturity of the social sciences" and the lack of "international pooling", which according to her view resulted in a heavily imbalanced "system for stimulation between social science developments in different countries". In this situation, Myrdal envisioned: "Unesco's role is highly important, as it just consists in bringing into international focus the research that is carried on in disconnected centers over the world".[48] Her social scientific internationalism, as expressed in this early manuscript, basically remained intact during her term as Director – although some minor displacements are discernible during the latter half of the period.[49]

In comparison with Brodersen and Angell, there are both important similarities and differences. All three were in agreement that contemporary U.S. social research was to be seen as a model. In a lecture held in New York in 1955, for instance, Myrdal suggested that *"Its advance in social science might be America's greatest gift to the art of international social welfare"* (Myrdal 1955: 44; italics in original). But in contrast to Brodersen's "single-disciplined" strategy and Angell's promotion of U.S. sociology, Alva Myrdal (like her husband) always remained truly interdisciplinary in her problem-oriented approach. In that sense she *both* followed in the footsteps of Brodersen and Angell *and* widened and partly redirected the scope of SSD. In practice, the many activities of SSD during this phase form a pattern that mirrors both the similarities and differences between, on the one hand, Brodersen's and Angell's discipline-based and U.S.-centered conceptualizations of international social science and, on the other, Myrdal's U.S.-influenced and pragmatic social scientific internationalism as well as her more interdisciplinary and polycentric ambitions.

Among the initiatives inherited from the previous phase were, as mentioned, the creation of the pioneering international associations of political science, sociology and economics (all set up in 1949). These were accompanied by their counterparts in comparative law (ICLA 1950) and psychology (IUSP 1951) and later also – through affiliations with pre-existing bodies – criminology (ISC) and population studies (IUSSP). More significant though is that this discipline-based institutional infrastructure was complemented in 1952 by a new organization when the International Social Science Council (ISSC) was set up as an interdisciplinary coordinating body which, according to Lengyel (1986: 20), "has done more than most other formal efforts to internationalize the social sciences".[50]

In similar ways, SSD's first major effort from the early years, the loose-knit Tensions Project, bore fruit and resulted in a minor cascade of publications from 1950 and onwards (see Lengyel 1986: 22-23). At the same time these publications partly marked the end of the dominant social psychological paradigm, which during the period was smoothly phased out (Rangil 2011: 41). Significantly, the UNESCO division "Tensions Affecting International Understanding", was merged and incorporated into the new division "Applied Social Science" in 1952 under Franklin Frazier's and, from 1954, Otto Klineberg's leadership.[51] These organizational changes were accompanied by

[48] ARBARK, 405/2/3/15, "The Cost of National Isolation in the Social Sciences", 25 jan 1951. A slightly revised version of the text was later published in Swedish (Myrdal 1951: 155-162). See also *UNESCO News*, Conference Press Release No. 510. C.f. Ekerwald 2001: 8.

[49] See Wisselgren, "Alva Myrdal's social scientific internationalism 1950-1955", Paper presented to NHESR, Potsdam, 25-27 June 2015. C.f. Sluga 2015: 57-60.

[50] See also Platt 2002; UNESCO Archives, 3A02 L.C.I.A.S.S, SS/SAI/Conf.2, "Meeting of the Secretaries of International Social Science Associations, 15 Jan. 1951; 3A01 ISSC, SS/Conf./7/1 "Provisional International Social Science Council", 1 October 1952.

[51] UNESCO Archives, X0755 Parts III-IV; *Reports of the Director-General*, etc.

a displacement of SSD's focus from questions concerned with the origin of warfare to more general issues on international welfare. From 1950 onwards SSD became involved in the so-called Technical Assistance (TA) program, an enormous UN initiative focused on aid for economic development and coordinated with the U.S. Government's "Point Four Program" as well as numerous specialized agencies, non-governmental bodies and private funding agencies such as the Ford Foundation. At UNESCO a separate Department of Technical Assistance was set up in 1952, which collaborated closely with the SSD department in particular. The reason was that the TA program assigned the social sciences in general and anthropologists in particular a key role, especially after Margaret Mead's influential 1953 report on *Cultural Patterns and Technical Change* which emphasized the "dangers of technical assistance" if it was not combined with a deepened knowledge and understanding of the local cultures in question.[52]

Another project founded and prepared before Myrdal entered UNESCO, was the project on race and discrimination, initiated by Arturo Ramos and others, which resulted in a UNESCO Conference in 1950 and the book series "The Race Question in Modern Science". This was accompanied by new anti-discriminatory initiatives by SSD on women's political role and the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women project 1952–53 – all of which Myrdal advocated behind the scenes – as well as more general population and welfare-oriented projects.[53]

Before 1950 most of SSD's activities had been centred along the trans-Atlantic axis connecting US social research and the UNESCO headquarters in Paris. In 1951 a first social science field mission was organized. And during the period social science officers were being attached to the already existing UNESCO Science Cooperation Offices in New Delhi and Cairo set up under Joseph Needham's pioneering directorship in the Natural Sciences Department (Franz 1969; Elzinga 1996b; Petitjean 2008). Other initiatives aimed at strengthening the international infrastructure of the social sciences, included a country-wise survey of university teaching in the social sciences, documentary services, terminological issues and several journals (Lengyel 1986: 20; Franz 1969: 406). These initiatives were also mirrored in SSD's internal organization with separate divisions for "Aid to International Scientific Cooperation" and "Science Cooperation offices", respectively.

Taken as a whole, during Alva Myrdal's directorship SSD expanded its staff: from around ten people in 1949, to some twenty staff members in 1952, and to over 40 in 1955.[54] The budget expanded accordingly, from less than $300,000 in 1949, to somewhat over half a million in 1953, and over three quarters of a million by 1956 (Lengyel 1986: 2; Rangil 2011: 8). To sum up in more qualitative terms, the department developed from a discipline-based organization towards a more interdisciplinary one, with a displaced focus from universal causes of warfare to pluralistic conditions of development, population and international welfare, where the social-psychologically

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[52] Mead 1953; Unesco *Social Science Programme* 1955: 44; Métraux 1953: 3. C.f. Rangil 2011; Sluga 2014.

[53] *The Race Concept* (1952); UNESCO Archives, 5C/PRG/1, "Regulations concerning Economic and Social Rights in the International Covenant on Human Rights", 18 May 1950; ARBARK, 405/4/1/7/9, A. Myrdal, "The Political Rights of Women: Departmental Discussion Paper", 18 January 1951; A. Myrdal, *Unesco and Women's Rights*, reprint Unesco Chronicle, No. 6, 1955; M. Duverger, *The political role of women* (1955); Myrdal & Klein 1956. C.f. Lyon 2003, Brattain 2007.

[54] The more exact numbers depend on which staff categories are included. Rangil (2011: 7) focuses on the permanent staff and counts less than 12 in 1951, 24 in 1952; 48 in 1955-56, and 53 in 1959-60. The expansion by 1952, is primarily explained by the inclusion of a whole statistical division, besides the "applied social science" and "international scientific collaboration" divisions.

oriented Tensions Project was replaced by activities related to the more anthropologically-oriented Technical Assistance program as its major undertaking.

Viewed through the lens of Guston's definition of boundary organizations – as mediating and stabilizing institutions, characterized by different worlds participation, workable boundary objects, and delegation of authority between principals and agents – and my additional revisions as mentioned in the introduction, I argue that SSD during this phase, and in marked contrast to the previous one, stood out as an almost ideal-typical international boundary organization by late 1952. However, as Peat Leith *et al.* (2015) point out, Guston is not always clear about what it is that makes a boundary organization successful. To answer that question, Leith *et al.* underline the importance of "exemplary leadership" and the "abilities to navigate controversy and mediate among divergent interests, while maintaining a committed focus on science", but also that stability should be seen as "a precursor to success rather than a measure of it" (Leith *et al.* 2015: 376, 392, 395). This may – together with the accounts by Ekerwald and Rodhe, Selcer, Rangil and Sluga referred to – give the impression that it was Myrdal who, in line with her own statement, "put the department on its feet".

Undoubtedly Myrdal made a difference, and probably a very important one. But still it is worth recognizing that the positive development during this period was not isolated to the Department of Social Sciences but rather part of a more general UNESCO trend. At least Jaime Torres Bodet's summary in his Director-General's *Report* for the period April 1951 to July 1952 was that: "Remarkable progress has been made during these 15 months".[55] And when James P. Sewell analyzes UNESCO's political leadership he finds – maybe unfairly – that Myrdal had a "few solid accomplishments [...]. But audacious innovation was difficult, particularly at this time" (Sewell 1975: 184). My point here is that these two latter voices should encourage us not to close the door on alternative interpretations and to avoid too simplistic explanations that reduce the question about organizational change to the role of single actors, albeit in a leadership position.

This gives us reason, at this stage of the argument, to expand on the notion of *agency space*.[56] Its analytical strength, I suggest, is that the notion helps us to avoid both the scylla of structuralist reductionism and charybdis of methodological individualism. Instead "agency space", as a middle range concept, reformulates the abstract relationship between structure and actor into two *empirically investigable* research questions. First, how did the organizational changes affect the agency spaces available (in this case on the level of director of SSD)? Second, how did the actor (in this case Myrdal) actually make use of this space? Thus reformulated the first question draws our attention to the relatively wide agency spaces available during UNESCO's early years, including when Myrdal assumed the post of SSD's Director. Both Huxley and Torres Bodet were supporters of UNESCO as a relatively autonomous and independent international organization peopled by strong-minded and creative intellectuals with a relatively large freedom to translate UNESCO's abstract ideas into practical action. Lengyel partly hints at this wide agency space when he describes SSD during the formative years as a relatively flat, informal organization composed of "a small, closely knit managed team", which established "fruitful relations with widening circles of external collaborators" and further exemplifies: "Much was expedited directly, through personal relations, at very modest cost and with minimal formalities, in the spirit of collegiate adventure" generated by "group dynamics emerging from expert meetings or conferences" and characterized

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[55] Torres Bodet, *DGs Report April 1951 to July 1952*, 11.

[56] See note 7.

by "a probing flexibility" based on the fact that "Unesco was not yet a highly centralized institution" (Lengyel 1986: 18-19).

The second and quite different question, then, is how the individuals in the organization actually made use of these wide agency spaces. For some, like Brodersen, this freedom was rather seen as a lack of clear and workable guidelines, amplified by a problematic gap between utopian hopes and practical concrete action. For others, like Alva Myrdal, the very same gap probably appeared as a challenging opportunity space. When entering SSD, at a stage when it had suffered from several organizational problems that had been worsened by a lack of firm leadership, it could in a sense almost only get better. That said, Myrdal indeed took the chance to bring in new ideas, new energy and enthusiasm, to make use of her extraordinary qualities, including her witnessed capability to transform visions into practice, and to introduce new working routines. Among the latter were not least, I argue, her cross-organizational collaborative approach and her skills in orchestrating diverse interests and activities in multiple domains – what Miller (2001: 487) calls "hybrid management" – partly based on her experiences from working in similar boundary organizations, both international ones (at the UN) and domestic ones (in Sweden). In a private letter to the Swedish Minister of Social Affairs, for instance, she explicitly referred to her long experiences from a number of domestic Royal Commissions that she had participated in during the interwar period and wrote: "All that I ever learned from commission work in Sweden has now come to use", including how to mediate among different groups of interests and how to plan and coordinate action in an efficient way.[57] Even more important, though, is that she did not introduce this cross-organizational collaborative way of working only on her own initiative. The frequent correspondence between Myrdal and Torres Bodet that preceded her decision to accept the position, clearly reveals that her unique experience from the UN headquarters was meant to be used constructively, both in order to help coordinate the overlapping and sometimes conflicting interests between SSD and "the 'social role' of other UNESCO and ECOSOC activities" and by "making the Department of Social Sciences more of a general service bureau for the whole of UNESCO's program" as well as to foster more generally the "social applicability" of UNESCO programs.[58] This is also key, I argue, to understanding the relative success with which she managed to anchor and link up the social sciences as a vital component on multiple levels, from the SSD level (Tensions Project) over the UNESCO level (Fundamental Education) and not least to the general UN level (Technical Assistance, Race, Women, Human Rights, Population, Development, International Social Welfare) – in contrast to her predecessors who were to a larger degree restricted to single disciplines and had a more concentrated focus on the SSD level.

Interpreted in terms of the fourth criterion mentioned by Guston, the principal-agent relation, it could be added that Torres Bodet repeatedly emphasized the role of social science and had great confidence in Myrdal's capacity and integrity as Director, whereas she had assured herself already when accepting the post that she would "have free access" to Torres Bodet in order to secure "a creative cooperation" free from unnecessary "administrative arrangements".[59] In that sense the delegation of authority and integrity was based on a stable agreement of mutual trust. Although UNESCO's SSD as an international boundary organization was characterized by a marked stability

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[57] ARBARK 405/4/1/10, A. Myrdal - G. Möller, 13 Aug 1949. My translation.

[58] ARBARK 405/4/1/7/4, A. Myrdal – J. Torres Bodet, 17 April 1950. C.f. ARBARK 405/4/1/7/8 A. Myrdal, "Assumptions for establishing the 1952 programme of the Social Sciences Department", §C.2.b.

[59] ARBARK 405/4/1/7/6, Torres Bodet, "UNESCO and the Social Sciences", Speech to the University of Ljubljana [1950], UNESCO/DG/146; ARBARK 405/4/1/7/4, A. Myrdal – J. Torres Bodet, 17 April 1950.

in that respect, the following phase will show that the achieved stability was not that long-lasting after all.

GEOPOLITICAL RE-ORGANIZATION, 1953–1955

Roughly by the time of Alva Myrdal's mentioned positive self-assessment in late November 1952, a significant multilevel transformation of UNESCO's SSD was initiated from above and partly outside the organization. During the following seven months a complicated chain of events evolved in which three of the most significant manifestations were Jaime Torres Bodet's early resignation as Director-General, the U.S. Government's introduction of an International Organizations Employees Loyalty Board, and the installation of Luther Evans as new Director-General. Together these changes laid the ground for two discreet and seemingly minor constitutional amendments of the UNESCO Statutes at the Montevideo General Conference in November 1954. The two amendments, no matter how marginal they may appear at first glance, I argue, radically changed not only the relative autonomy of SSD in general and the agency space of its Director in particular, but also the organizational status of UNESCO at large as well as its crucial principal-agent relations.

Jaime Torres Bodet's declaration of his early resignation as UNESCO's Director-General at the General Conference in Paris on 22 November 1952, one year before his mandate elapsed, did not come as a total surprise. Although Torres Bodet had had broad and strong support when he succeeded Huxley as Director-General in Beirut in 1948, there had been a growing conflict between Torres Bodet's energetic visions for UNESCO and some of the most important financial supporting member states.[60] Already at the conference in Florence in 1950, Torres Bodet planned to resign with reference to the budgetary restrictions and an emerging critique against his way of leading the organization. At that time, in Florence, he was persuaded to stay on. When the issue about the budgetary needs of UNESCO resurfaced in 1952 – when Torres Bodet had asked for $20 million but was confronted by a cutback of the budget of 7.8 per cent and the introduction of a provisional budget ceiling proposed by the Delegations of USA, United Kingdom and France – he saw no other recourse than to resign his post.[61]

There were of course two sides of the coin. From Torres Bodet's point of view he had been recruited to the organization with a long suitable merit list, including a term as Minister of Education in the Mexican government where he had led a successful campaign against illiteracy. He had also been an ardent advocate of both the UN and UNESCO, which he had followed closely at the CAME and Founding conferences, and in them saw "the noblest and most important [initiatives] that men have been able to conceive" (quoted from Sewell 1975: 128-130; c.f. Petitjean 2006: 31). When approached as a nominee, he had also spoken in favor of a more concentrated program – a plan which he partly followed with the large "Fundamental Education" program. Nevertheless, he declared, as UNESCO's work and not least the world had evolved, the budget question was of principle importance since programs had to be expanded if UNESCO was to advance. In this situation, Torres Bodet motivated his resignation: "You had the choice of three possibilities:

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[60] When elected in 1948, the nomination of Torres Bodet was endorsed by a vote of 30 to 3 (Sewell 1975: 128).
[61] "Jaime Torres Bodet leaves UNESCO", *The Courier*, Jan 1953: 3. See also Düring 1953: 12-13; Sewell 1975: 142, 153; Cutroni 2013: 68.

regression, stabilization, and development. You have chosen regression." (quoted from Sewell 1975: 154)

The U.S. Government, represented by the U.S. National Commission, on the other hand, had from the very beginning been one of the most substantial funders of UNESCO.[62] In 1947, for instance, the USA contributed 44 per cent of UNESCO's total budget – and together with the shares of the United Kingdom and France, amounting to 14 and 7 per cent, respectively, two thirds of the whole budget. Over the years the U.S.'s share successively declined, to 35 per cent in 1950 and to one third in 1951.[63] But from that point of view it was not unreasonable for these National Commissions to expect that their opinions should be paid relative weight. Neither should it be a surprise that those commissions were the ones speaking most eagerly in favor of a more restricted and efficient use of the money, including the recurrent argument that UNESCO's program should concentrate on a smaller number of major projects rather than be spread out over numerous minor ones (see Düring 1953: 11, 13). Partly because of this both the U.S. and the French, as well as the British, delegations had been skeptical about Julian Huxley's energetic but also idealistic – and very costly – visions. In that sense, Torres Bodet followed in the footsteps of Huxley (Sewell 1975: 17).

But there were also factors other than the monetary aspects playing a role. On the geopolitical level, Torres Bodet was greatly annoyed by the U.S. request that UNESCO should support the UN military support to Korea in 1950, and took a clear stance at the General Conference in Florence, with the support of India, and refused to act as a "political instrument in the cold war". After this event the U.S. Government developed a much stricter financial policy towards UNESCO. According to some observers this was deliberately to weaken the organization, whereas others have seen the Florence conference as a turning point for U.S. control over UNESCO (Petitjean 2008: 266-267; c.f. Sewell 1975: 140; Düring 1953: 13).

Even more important in this context than both the budget and the geopolitical events are however, I argue, the fundamental principles that were at stake regarding different forms of internationalisms and UNESCO's status as an international boundary organization. Like Julian Huxley, Jaime Torres Bodet was a strong proponent of a one-worldism according to which UNESCO was to be seen as a relatively autonomous transnational organization, serving as a kind of world intellectual conscience, with a staff of international officers committed to the general task of contributing to a better world. The idea of institutional self-determination, that is, that UNESCO should not be the object of control by anyone except its participants – in contrast to the UN as a more politicized intergovernmental organization – was not unique among UN's specialized agencies.[64] It was also to this idea and UNESCO's original utopian one-worldism that Torres Bodet referred in his farewell speech in Paris in 1952: "May Unesco one day develop its program as we who had the privilege of being present at its birth in London, 1945, dreamed that it might."[65]

On this point there was a direct confrontation with the U.S. Government and the U.S. Delegation which since the very inception had spoken in favor of an internationalism based on nation-states as the basic units and actors, for which the international organizations were primarily a means for

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[62] On the close relation between the U.S. National Commission and the U.S. State Department, see Selcer 2011: 108.

[63] *U.S. National Commission UNESCO News*, August 1951: 4; c.f. Cutroni 2013: 54.

[64] Sewell (1975: 72-73, 134) mentions the institutional self-determination of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF); c.f. Petitjean 2006:31 on UNESCO as a hybrid organization; Lengyel 1986: 8.

[65] "Jaime Torres Bodet leaves UNESCO", *The Courier*, Jan 1953: 3.

handling international relations. As the "utopian moment" in the direct aftermath of the end of the war faded away and the cold war geopolitical tensions increased, the inherent and potential contradiction between the two types of internationalism – cosmopolitan one-worldism and intergovernmental realpolitik – became more strained, which in its turn made the status of UNESCO and its staff appear an ever more concrete problem for the U.S. Government. According to President Truman the choice stood between "communism or democracy".[66] And for Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs Howland Sargeant, UNESCO was an instrument to strengthen the latter, he explained in a talk to the international conference of U.S. National Commission for UNESCO in January 1952:

> We Americans cannot go it alone. We need the other free peoples, even as they need us. Freedom as we know it is being subjected to an assault which has had no parallel in modern history. And we who believe in freedom must meet that assault together."[67]

On 9 January 1953, that is, only one month after Torres Bodet's resignation, President Truman introduced his Executive Order No. 10422, which stipulated that all UN employed American citizens should be investigated by an International Organizations Employees Loyalty Board in order to prove their loyalty towards the American Government – in the wake of the hunt initiated by Senator McCarthy for subversive elements within international organizations.[68] When UNESCO was contacted by the U.S. Government and asked for help to distribute the loyalty forms to its staff, this was however directly at odds with several principles in UNESCO's constitution and staff regulations. The Constitution, for example, proclaimed that the responsibilities of UNESCO's staff "shall be exclusively international in character" and that they "shall not seek or receive instructions from any Government or from any authority external to the Organization", whereas the Staff Regulations stipulated that the staff "as international civil servants […] shall at all time exercise the reserve and tact incumbent upon them by reason of their international responsibilities".[69] UNESCO's Acting Director-General, the American John Wilkinson Taylor, in consultation with the Executive Board, tried to find a compromise solution and meet the US Government halfway, with the result, however, that already in May one of the American staff members of UNESCO who failed to turn up in front of the Loyalty Board was suspended. UNESCO's Staff Association reacted directly by formulating a statement of protest in which, among other things, they argued that "[t]he action risks conveying an impression of Unesco having submitted to national pressure".[70]

But the external pressure was not isolated to UNESCO's American staff members. In March 1953, on one of her many visits to the UN headquarters in New York, Alva Myrdal was directly troubled by the effects of the new and stricter U.S. policy towards international civil servants, when she was stopped by the U.S. Immigration Authorities at Idlewild Airport – despite her official UNESCO Travel Order, a UN Laissez-Passer and a non-immigrant visa. The remarkable event immediately generated extensive international media attention, numerous formal as well as informal and

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[66] Sewell 1975: 140; c.f. Cohen-Cole 2009: 225-226n21 on US Cold War Strategy from 1947.

[67] Quoted from Evans, "The U.S. Citizen and the United Nations", *The Courier*, April 1952.

[68] See e.g. special issue on "How McCarthyism Works", *The Reporter*, July 21, 1953, and other press cuttings in ARBARK 405/5/1/1/92. C.f. Sewell 1975: 157.

[69] UNESCO Archives, *Executive Board 1953, Vol. XXII*, "Statement by the Executive Board relating to the Executive Order No. 10422 of the President of the United States of America", 33EX/32, 16 April 1953 and 33EX/SR.4, 21 April 1963. C.f. UNESCO, Constitution, Article VI, paragraph 5; UNESCO, Staff Regulation, 1.4.

[70] UNESCO Archives, St.AC/217, *Association du personnell: Bulletin d'Information*, 1 juni 1953. C.f. Sewell 1975: 165.

diplomatic contacts on all levels, inside UNESCO, with the U.S. Immigration Office, the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs and all the way up to UN's Secretary-General. For Myrdal, however, who as usual was keen to sort things out and understand the full picture – and also documented the event and the correspondences in detail – the problem was not that the incident had caused her great practical problems that severely affected her tight time schedule as Director but, more importantly, that it concerned the more general principles of the status of "international civil servants" and the "[f]reedom for Unesco staff members to travel", which meant – even more importantly – that "the integrity of UN and Unesco was at stake" and the way this may "damage the Organization itself".[71]

When Luther Evans assumed office as Director-General on 1 July 1953, and replaced Taylor on his six-months interim period as Acting Director-General after Torres Bodet's resignation, Evans more or less directly had to handle the principal questions regarding UNESCO's status as an international organization, including the rights of its staff as international civil servants and its relations to the member states. For Evans, however, these issues were far from new. With his background as a political scientist and Chief Librarian of Congress, and more importantly as a former member of the U.S. delegation to the first CAME Conference and later member of U.S. National Commission for UNESCO, where he had held the positions of both Vice-Chairman and Chairman, Evans had followed the birth and growth of UNESCO and knew the organization from within.

In fact Evans was not only familiar with but had also played an active part in the development of the U.S. policy towards UNESCO's internationalism and the principal issues on UNESCO staff members' status as international officers versus citizens of their home countries. Already in the U.S. National Delegation's meetings in late October 1945, in preparation of the UNESCO Founding Conference, Evans participated in the discussions of the draft constitution in which he "thought he saw an expression of a desire to undermine governments" (Evans 1971: 35). As one of UNESCO's most explicit political realists, Evans never doubted that governments were the ones who made UNESCO's choices. In line with the same argument he was of the opinion that the members of the Executive Board should represent their respective national governments:

> Unesco is definitely an intergovernmental organization, subject to the limitations and procedures inherent in official action, but firmly based on the machinery of government within our Member States including the National Commissions. [...] The fact remains that Unesco works for its Member States, that it works largely through the governments of Member States, and that its success or failure in any Member State is a direct outcome of the degree of understanding and support it enjoys on the part of the government of that State (quoted from Sewell 1975: 166).

And when the U.S. Government in 1950 tried to convince UNESCO about the so-called "containment doctrine", that is, that international organizations contained subversive elements, Evans in his role as Vice-Chairman of UNESCO's Executive Board firmly supported the U.S. standpoint that UNESCO should awaken the conscience of the world with regard to security (Sewell 1975: 149; S.E. Graham 2006: 245). A couple of years later, when he had advanced to Chairman of the Board Program Commission in 1952, Evans was in the forefront about "program foci" and a frozen budget, in opposition to Torres Bodet's expansionist policy – and hence actively

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[71] ARBARK, 405/4/1/7/7, A. Myrdal, "Memorandum to the Acting Director-General", p. 7.

contributed to Torres Bodet's resignation (Sewell 1975: 153). And one of the very last things Luther Evans did in his capacity as Chairman of the Executive Board, before assuming the post as Director-General of UNESCO, was to present a draft resolution in which he proposed that it should be clarified once and for all "that Unesco is an organization of sovereign states" and "that it does not advocate one world government".[72]

Evans's views were on the whole in harmony with the U.S. Government's official policy towards UNESCO. The latter was explicitly expressed in a 34-page report entitled *An Appraisal of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. In it the current Chairman of the U.S. National Commission Irving Salomon and his co-authors explicitly raised the question about UNESCO as a container of communist sympathies. Furthermore it defended the legitimacy of the Loyalty Board, regretted that the Director-General was not empowered to suspend its staff in the same way as in the UN and emphasized that: "It is the view of the U.S. Government that the members of the Board should represent their respective Governments, not themselves".[73] For these reasons the report underlined the need that "UNESCO's constitution should be revised" and "that the Executive Board be composed of representatives of Member States, rather than consisting of a group of individuals". Furthermore, it was argued, in line with the traditional U.S. budget policy that "UNESCO could use its limited resources more wisely" and not try to "cover too many activities". Instead UNESCO should plan its activities in accordance with a "system of priorities", preferably the one introduced by the U.S. delegation at the General Conference in 1952. Although most points in this policy were not new, there were now, in view of Evans's new position, unusually good hopes that they could be realized, Salomon argued:

> It may be anticipated that the new Director-General, who has been a member of the United States delegations to all but one of the Sessions of the General Conference will carry into his job the convictions which he had demonstrated when speaking as United States delegate.[74]

On one point after the other Evans would also, as expected, enforce the mentioned policy. Already in his inaugural statement as the new Director-General he made it clear that he identified himself not as a cosmopolitan intellectual but as a "professional administrator" with well-developed "administrative methods" according to which "arrangements of power" were meant "to avoid […] confusion of purpose" and that he expected "widespread participation of the staff at all levels in the development of policy". Furthermore, "[a]s the member of the Executive Board with the longest tenure" Evans also wanted to emphasize, first, the central function of "the Board [as] one of the principal organs of Unesco" and, second, the even more supreme role of the Member States:

> Unesco is an instrument for the increase of collaboration among the Member States. The Secretariat is not, it should not be, an independent power. It should have no goals except your [referring to the present representatives of the Member States] goals.[75]

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[72] UNESCO Archives, Executive Board 1953. Vol. XXII. 33-34 sessions. "Draft Resolution presented by Dr. Luther H. Evans", 34EX/DR.4, c. 10 June 1953.

[73] ARBARK, 405/4/1/7/7, Irving Salomon, "An appraisal of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), July 1953", URS(53)4: 20.

[74] Ibid: 19.

[75] UNESCO Archives, *Records of the General Conference: Second Extraordinary Session*, Paris, 1953, Resolutions and proceedings, pp. 104-7. Regarding the result of the ballot – 39 votes in favor and 17 against – see p. 42.

During the next 18 months Evans systematically and insistently implemented the U.S. policy with regard to the status of international officers and the supreme role of member states, on the local organizational level. Formally, two seemingly discreet but principally important amendments of the UNESCO Statutes at the Montevideo General Conference in late 1954 were what made this possible. The first amendment concerned the Obligations and Rights of Staff Members, where it was stipulated that "The Director-General may [...] terminate the appointment of a staff member [if] the staff member does not meet the highest standards". The second concerned the composition of the Executive Board, where it was stipulated that each member "shall represent the government of the State of which he is a national". [76]

In practice the discreet reformulations of the Statutes, in the first respect, meant that Evans was given the right to suspend the staff members who had refused to witness to the U.S. Loyalty Board, not though with reference to their lack of loyalty as American citizens but to their lack of "integrity" and incapacity to live up to the "highest standards" as expected in their role as UNESCO staff members. The new staff regulations took effect on 10 December 1954 and on the very same day seven staff members were suspended or placed on special leave.[77] In the second respect, the implication was that UNESCO's Executive Board instead of being composed of a group of individual members, more directly represented the governments. In combination with the supreme role of the Board in relation to the UNESCO Secretariat, in contrast to its previous relative autonomy, this meant that UNESCO's work as a whole, including SSD, became organizationally and formally more dependent on the interests of the member states as represented in the Executive Board, and hence also more open and vulnerable to geopolitical pressures from outside the internal organizational structures.

With Sewell, Elzinga and Graham this constitutional change can be described as the final and crucial step in the transformation of UNESCO's status from a relatively autonomous hybrid international organization – encompassing international non-governmental organizations as well as governmental actors – to an intergovernmental organization more directly inscribed into the contemporary geopolitical arena.[78] Linked up to our conceptualization of UNESCO's SSD as an international boundary organization, this change furthermore gives us reason to reconnect to Guston's emphasis on the principal-agent-relation as a central component. Applied to our case, the principal-agent-theory – with its focus on the conflicting interests and the delegation of authority between the principal and its subordinated agents – allows us to highlight the organizational significance of the two amendments by interpreting the revised Statutes, almost literally, as a renegotiated contract of UNESCO's principal-agent-relations – in a dual sense. An additional point in our case is namely to recognize that this renegotiation included two separate but interlinked parts, two different principal-agent-relations, once again almost in the literal sense, one corresponding to the first amendment (regarding the relation between UNESCO's Director-General and its staff) and the other to the second (regarding the relation between UNESCO and its member states through their direct representation in the Executive Board). Combined, the two amendments interlinked all three organizational levels and hence fundamentally restructured the formal

[76] UNESCO Archives, *Records of the General Conference. Eigth session. Montevideo 1954. Resolutions*, II.42 Amendments to Regulation 9.1.1, and II.1.2 Amendments to Article V.

[77] UNESCO *Report of the Director General on the Activities of the Organisation in 1954*, 1955: 178. See also ARBARK, Special Advisory Board (SAB), "Report of the first meeting", SAB/R1, 27 April 1955: 18-19.

[78] Sewell 1975: 168-9; Elzinga 1996b: 166; Graham 2006: 149-50. C.f. Lengyel 1986: 4; Petitjean 2006; Cutroni 2013: 51-52; Beigel 2013: 68.

delegation of authority and autonomy within the organization.[79] However, whereas Guston's approach is focused on how principal-agent-relations are used to stabilize the relation between science and politics, I argue, that it is more plausible to interpret the organizational change that took place during this phase as an example of a *de*-stabilization, which at least potentially meant a structural *re*-politicization of UNESCO's SSD and its mission and activities.

From the viewpoint of SSD, this re-organization drastically decreased the agency spaces of both its Director and its staff, whereas the agency spaces of the Director-General, the Executive Board and member states increased. Formulated otherwise, Alva Myrdal and the SSD staff – as well as all other departments – became more directly dependent on the new key role assigned to Luther Evans as mediator and broker in this new linear top-down-structure. However, as already mentioned, the question about structured agency spaces should be carefully distinguished from the question of how these potential agency spaces were actually used. The empirical question is then how Evans chose to use his enlarged agency space in relation to SSD. An option would of course have been to let the practical day-to-day work proceed pretty much as before. As hinted at already in his installation speech, this was not however his intention. Admittedly, new organizational routines had been introduced already with Torres Bodet, but Evans's leadership brought with them a number of principal changes and a new conception of the Organization's work, as further clarified in an retrospective article in 1963, which included the introduction of a more direct top-down leadership, a further concentration of projects to a restricted number of "skyscraper projects", and a redirection of UNESCO's role from operator to stimulator, from performer to administrator of projects.[80]

In practice this meant, as Sewell (1975: 171) notes, that "Evans acted as judge [...] of innovations advanced by others". A crucial difference in that respect is that Evans was much less engaged in the social sciences than his predecessors. Huxley had regarded the social sciences, and especially social psychology, as part of his scientific mission, whereas Torres Bodet was not only the one who recruited Myrdal but was also eager to speak about the fundamental importance of the social sciences for UNESCO more generally.[81] Evans, in contrast, had questioned expansionary moves by promoters of social science while still a member of the Executive Board and now as Director-General he inhibited several social science initiatives in their early stages by restricting the executive budget.[82]

For Alva Myrdal as SSD Director the consequence was a drastically increased administrative work-load. Under Torres Bodet she had become accustomed to a wide agency space and positive responses to initiatives in need of confirmation. The recurrent task of reporting on the activities of SSD for inclusion in the *Director-General's Report*, for example, had been a time-consuming but still smooth bottom-up process. With Evans the reporting of the departmental activities became a much more complicated two-way process, where Myrdal's early drafts often bounced back or were heavily revised. At other times Myrdal had to remind Evans and the Executive Board about

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[79] On dual principal-agent relations, where sometimes "agencies are themselves principals", see Guston 2000: 20.

[80] Evans 1963: 80-85; c.f. Sewell 1975: 171. Regarding Torres Bodet, see e.g. the introduction of a basic programme and standardised methods: ARBARK 405/4/1/7/6, "Principes guidant les activtites du department des sciences sociales" (1950); UNESDOC 19EX/5 "List of UNESCO's Methods, 17 Jan 1950; UNESCO, *Basic Programme of UNESCO,* July 1950.

[81] UNESCO/DG/146, Torres Bodet, "Unesco and the social sciences".

[82] Sewell 1975: 113-4, 184.

proposals that "disappeared" along the way and – like many other proposals that did not fit the general agenda, according to Sewell (1975: 103) – "were gently laid to rest, quietly forgotten, or left for others".[83]

Without being able to offer any more robust empirical support, I would like to suggest in more tentative terms that it is not too bold to set Alva Myrdal's decision to leave her post in relation to her drastically decreased agency space as SSD Director during this very phase. And she was not alone in doing so. The Director of the Education Department, Lionel Elwin, who like Myrdal had been recruited by Torres Bodet, chose to leave at the same time. Others, like Paolo de Berredo Carneiro and Vladislav Ribnikar, had left the Executive Board already when Torres Bodet resigned in 1952 (Sewell 1975: 122, 154-5). Myrdal stayed on that time. But it is probably no co-incidence that in late December 1954, more or less directly after the constitutional changes had been accepted by the General Conference in Montevideo, with its far-reaching consequences for UNESCO in general and for her work at SSD in particular, she sat down and drafted the very first version of a private letter that only a couple of months thereafter would result in a new job offer. Less than one year later, on 3 December 1955, Alva Myrdal took up the post as Sweden's first woman envoyé, later Ambassador, at the Swedish Embassy in New Delhi.[84]

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

This paper has aimed at analyzing the creation and early formation of UNESCO's Department of Social Sciences during its first decade with a special focus on its organizational aspects. Interpreted as an "international boundary organization", that is, as a transnational institution that mediated the relation between science and politics during the early post-World War II period, and with regard to the intra- and inter-organizational structuration of multilayered agency spaces, it has been argued that SSD went through a number of important organizational changes – principal and explicit ones as well as minor and discreet administrative ones – that indirectly but fundamentally affected the direction and character of its activities. More specifically four phases have been discerned.

During the first visionary founding phase, it was pointed out that UNESCO's SSD emerged out of a geopolitically structured and highly contingent setting, characterized by the optimistic and utopian one-worldism underlying UNESCO's birth, and that it was only at a late stage of this process that SSD was included and qualified as an international boundary organization. Once set up, however, an epistemic network centered around a core of people within the UNESCO Secretariat, backed up by outer layers, played an important formative role for the intellectual projection of SSD's work.

However, when it was time to translate the ideas into practice, during the second phase, SSD as well as UNESCO at large confronted several organizational problems in their efforts to establish a "working machinery of cooperation" due, among other things, to the rapid organizational expansion, frequent rotations in the post as Head of SSD, a diffuse aim and strategy as well as growing frictions between different traditions and conceptualizations of social science where the

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[83] See e.g. UNESCO Archives, 34EX/CP/SR.1-2, Programme Commission meeting, 4 August 1953, p. 3; UNESCO Archives, H.S.4-6, Record of Meeting, 12 April 1954: 3; ARBARK 405/4/1/7/8-9.

[84] ARBARK, 405/6/3/1/6, drafts and letters A. Myrdal to and from G. Myrdal, U. Lindström and Ö. Undén, Dec 1954-April 1955; A. Myrdal-L. Evans 8 Aug 1955.

day-to-day work, according to one if its Heads, was characterized as an *ad hoc* approach. It has been argued that these organizational problems can be interpreted in terms of a lack of stability as well as a lack of boundary objects, that is, common goals, workable standards and shared objectives for collaboration across the social worlds represented. In practice, the basic infrastructure in the form of networking was mainly centered around a group of American social psychologists and public administrators, which in one way or the other was also reflected in the practical outcomes by the end of the period. In similar ways the number of international disciplinary organizations that were being set up are typical for the dominant discipline-based way of thinking around SSD's work. The department remained limited in size and the single most important project during this phase was the Tensions Project.

From around 1950 a revitalization and consolidation of SSD's activities took place. During this third phase, previous initiatives matured into concrete results, with a "cascade of publications" from the Tensions Project and a number of new more interdisciplinary and collaborative projects with other departments, other specialized agencies and the UN. The ISSC was set up, as well as research institutes and regional social science officers. The large Technical Assistance program on the general UN level started, besides projects on human rights, race and women's political role. A number of "infrastructure" projects concerned with the communication among international social science were initiated. I have argued that SSD during this phase matured into an almost ideal-typical international boundary organization, and that part of the explanation for this is to be found in Alva Myrdal's cross-organizational collaborative approach and her way of making use of the available agency space as SSD Program Director.

However, this period of consolidation was soon ended, during the fourth phase, by a series of events around 1953 which in the following year resulted in two constitutional amendments of the UNESCO Statutes, which radically changed not only the official status of SSD's staff, but also the relative autonomy and integrity of SSD in general and the agency space of its Director in particular, as well as the organizational status of UNESCO at large. These changes have been analyzed in terms of a renegotiated contract between principals and agents on multiple levels.

Whereas earlier studies have tended either to treat the period under scrutiny as a relatively coherent unit, in terms of a pioneering era or as characterized by one major conceptual change in the very middle of the period under scrutiny, that is around 1950, my organizational focus has put greater emphasis on the processual and more fine-grained administrative changes as well as the series of events during the latter half of the period that – on the whole – not only *de*-stabilized UNESCO's SSD as an international boundary organization but also fundamentally transformed it from a hybrid organization, which shared the optimistic vision of one-worldism, to an intergovernmental organization considerably more open and vulnerable to external geopolitical pressures.

In terms of the intra- and inter-organizational structuration of agency spaces on different levels of UNESCO during this formative period, the paper has argued that these were relatively wide on all levels of the organization especially during the early phase. Julian Huxley made use of this in his role as Director-General, and so did Jaime Torres Bodet – until he confronted resistance, first in 1950 and then even more so in 1952 when he resigned. Among the Heads and Directors of SSD, both Arvid Brodersen's and Robert Angell's leaderships left footprints on the discipline-based activities. But the one who really made use of the wide agency space available was Alva Myrdal – until she started to face problems during the fourth phase and chose to leave SSD and UNESCO in 1955. On the level of project leaders, Edward Shils, Hadley Cantril, Otto Klineberg and Angell set

their marks on the Tensions Project, as did Alfred Metraux on the Race Project and Margaret Mead on the Technical Assistance Project. This also to a certain degree pertains to the general UNESCO staff with their initially relatively independent status as international officers. These observations are also in line with earlier accounts of the relative autonomy of the UNESCO Secretariat during the early period as well as on the leadership of UNESCO (Lengyel 1986: 42-43; Sewell 1975: 18-20).

This pattern was however drastically changed by the series of events culminating in the constitutional amendments in 1954, which instantly decreased the agency spaces of Program Directors, project leaders and international officers, while at the same time increased the agency spaces of the Director-General, the Executive Board as well as the National Commissions and the Member States – the latter in proportion to their relative strength within the UNESCO system. This discreet but fundamental alteration of the administrative structures, I argue, was the single most important change during the period – not only for the formal administrative practices, but also indirectly with its far-reaching consequences for the very scope and contents of SSD's activities.

The renegotiated multilevel relationship between principals and agents has been interpreted as a new "contract" in David Guston's terms. The crucial difference is that our case offers an example of how UNESCO's SSD was *de*-stabilized as an (international) boundary organization, in contrast to Guston's case on the formation of U.S. science policy where he focuses on the introduction of boundary organizations as new *stabilizing* institutions after the 1970s and 1980s crises. As already emphasized in the introductory conceptual discussion, my use of the concept has been explicitly decontextualized from Guston's historically situated definition and used as an analytical concept. I am also in agreement with Miller's critique that it is important to be aware of the increased complexity in dynamics when scaling up to an international level of analysis (Miller 2001), as well as Leith *et al.*'s argument to view "stability" as a means rather than an end and a defining criteria of boundary organizations (Leith *et al.* 2016). Nevertheless, there are some striking similarities between Guston's empirical case and ours in that both are concerned with processes of reorganization. But where Guston focuses on the stabilization *after* the organizational change in question, that is, after the breakdown of the so-called "social contract for science"-era with its prevailing principal-agent relations in terms of self-regulative science and the linear model (Guston 2000: 19, 70, 141), our case has been concerned with the process of destabilization leading up to a major organizational change. One way of turning this around could be to argue that the two cases are concerned with different sides of one and the same phenomenon, namely processes of reorganization. In that sense, my revision of Guston's concept can be understood as a positive critique, speaking in favour of (international) boundary organizations as an analytic concept with an even broader applicability.

Finally, a general argument in this study has been to highlight the decreased agency spaces on several levels within the organization and its increased vulnerability to geopolitical pressures from the outside. Here it needs to be emphasized that this does not imply that the subsequent development of UNESCO's SSD can be reduced to the role of a handmaiden of external geopolitical interests (c.f. Solovey 2012: 13-18; Heyck 2015: 15-16). Instead the analytical point of the notion of "agency space" has been to clearly distinguish the empirical question about the *potential* agency space available from the question about how the actors within these dynamic organizational structures *actually* made use of these spaces (sometimes in order to change the structures themselves). In that sense the post-1955 development of UNESCO's SSD as an international boundary organization is, evidently, an open empirical question, though outside the scope of this article.

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