

# The Social Structure of the World Polity<sup>1</sup>

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World polity research argues that modern states are shaped by embeddedness in a network of international organizations, and yet the structure of that network is rarely examined. This is surprising, given that world polity theory implies that the world polity should be an increasingly dense, even, flat field of association. This article describes the social structure of the world polity, using network analysis of the complete population of intergovernmental organizations as it has evolved since 1820. Analysis of the world polity's structure reveals growing fragmentation, driven by exclusive rather than universalist intergovernmental organizations. The world polity has thus grown less cohesive, more fragmented, more heterogeneous, and less "small worldly" in its structure. This structure reflects a recent rise in the regionalization of the world polity.

Research on the possible consequences of globalization has overshadowed research on the forms of globalization. This is particularly true for political globalization, or "the shifting reach of political power, authority and forms of rule" (Held et al. 1999, p. 32). We know a great deal about the associations between political globalization and changes in the modern state. For instance, there is evidence that involvement in international orga-

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nizations is associated with policy in the domains of human rights (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005), democracy (Wejnert 2005; Torfason and Ingram 2010), environmental protection (Frank 1997, 1999; Schofer and Hironaka 2005), same-sex sexual relations (Frank and McEneaney 1999), women's suffrage (Ramirez, Soysal, and Shanahan 1997), education (Meyer, Ramirez, and Soysal 1992; Bradley and Ramirez 1996; Schafer 1999; Schofer and Meyer 2005), population (Barrett and Tsui 1999), and women's political representation (Paxton, Hughes, and Green 2006). Much of this evidence comes from models inspired by world polity theory, an institutionalist approach that explains the unexpectedly high and rising level of isomorphism among states as a function of embeddedness in a singular and universalist "world polity" (Boli and Thomas 1997; Meyer et al. 1997), which is conceptualized as a network of states, societies, and international organizations. The network of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), in particular, has been shown to influence patterns of democratization (Torfason and Ingram, forthcoming), international trade (Ingram, Robinson, and Busch 2005), neoliberal restructuring (Henisz, Zelner, and Guillén 2005), international conflict (Boehmer, Gartzke, and Nordstrom 2004; Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2006), and transnational social movement organizations (Smith and Wiest 2005).

This article examines the structure of that network. Although debates over the effects of the world polity are ongoing (Guillén 2001*a*, 2001*b*) and critics highlight the role of power and inequality in the world polity (Beckfield 2003), the depth of existing knowledge about the policy effects and cultural content of the world polity contrasts starkly against our more shallow understanding of its structure. This contrast is all the more surprising in light of the many implications of world polity theory and other approaches to political globalization for the structure of the world polity. The world polity is said to be "a world of Durkheimian and Simmelian integration" (Meyer et al. 1997, p. 175), a "decentralized world" (p. 164), "a unitary social system, increasingly integrated by networks" (Boli and Thomas 1997, p. 172), and "a rapidly growing web of global links that envelop the world without regard for local topography and conditions" (Boli, Loya, and Loftin 1999, p. 77). Resonating with arguments in the popular press for globalization "flattening" the world (Friedman 2006), world polity theory carries largely untested static and dynamic implications. Statically, the contemporary world polity should exhibit an even, densely interconnected, decentralized social structure. Dynamically, if there is fragmentation, centralization, and structural heterogeneity in the network, these structural characteristics should be in decline.

To explore these and other structural implications and build on the sociology of the world polity, I use data on the population of IGOs as it has grown since the first IGO was established in the early 19th century.

IGOs are one type of social organization, along with international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), transnational corporations (TNCs), and other civil-society organizations, in which “world culture becomes embedded” (Boli and Thomas 1997, p. 172) and diffused through IGO-to-state, IGO-to-IGO, and other kinds of ties among organizations (Boli and Thomas 1999). IGOs, along with TNCs and states, have been characterized as “the dominant global actors” in world culture (p. 173).<sup>2</sup> I analyze IGOs because the structure of the IGO field should correspond most closely to the even field of association implied by world polity theory, given that inequality in the number of IGO memberships per state has decreased dramatically (Beckfield 2003). IGOs are also essential to the world polity because IGO memberships appear to be “practically compulsory for states” (Boli et al. 1999, p. 76), and a recent “network turn” in international relations scholarship and globalization research has shown that international organizations—and IGOs in particular—matter for a range of political and economic outcomes (Boehmer et al. 2004; Henisz et al. 2005; Ingram et al. 2005; Smith and Wiest 2005; Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2006; Torfason and Ingram, forthcoming). Still, this network turn has yet to be taken to understand the essential structural properties of the world polity itself. That is, many researchers argue that the network structure matters, but this work has not yet considered the structural implications of world polity theory or other approaches to political globalization.<sup>3</sup>

I examine 1820–2000 to show the complete evolution of the IGO field that began in the early 1800s, well after the establishment of the Westphalian system of sovereign nation-states in the 17th century, and continued through the Concert of Europe during the first half of the 19th century, the major European wars of the late 19th century, early attempts at global governance such as the League of Nations in 1919, the institutionalization of the United Nations system in 1945, decolonization in the 1960s, and the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Analyzing the world polity as an evolving social network over this period reveals

<sup>2</sup> Boli (2005, p. 384) identifies the World Trade Organization (WTO) as one such organization, noting that “while hard-boiled politicking among competing states is surely at work in this process, so too is global cultural construction. The WTO’s rules and agreements, globally applicable and reflective of universalistic principles, have the character of world law that shapes the context of action for firms, states, and other actors.” It turns out that the WTO is one of the organizations at the very center of the network of IGOs analyzed below.

<sup>3</sup> The analysis below follows previous research in considering a relation that forms world polity networks: that of membership of states in IGOs. Other relations, such as consultancies and other forms of direct IGO-IGO and state-state ties are not considered; see Boli and Thomas (1999) and Slaughter (2004) for discussions of these and other networks.

that even in the context of a declining (and now low) level of heterogeneity in the number of IGO ties per state, there is a rising (and now high) level of heterogeneity in the pattern of states' IGO ties. This social structure reflects, in part, place, as the world polity exhibits significant regionalization along with globalization.<sup>4</sup>

#### SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN WORLD POLITY THEORY

In an influential programmatic statement of world polity theory, Meyer et al. (1997) argue that “many features of the contemporary nation-state derive from worldwide models constructed and propagated through global cultural and associational processes” (p. 144).<sup>5</sup> The authors use the imaginary example of a newly discovered island society to illustrate “what has already happened to practically all of the societies of the world after their discovery and incorporation into world society” (p. 146). Focusing on the associational process of integration into the world polity, the “island society would quickly come under the scrutiny of . . . international organizations,” and “its state and its people would be expected to join international bodies” (p. 165). As the island society grew more deeply integrated into the network, “old institutionalist” and “new institutionalist” forces (Stinchcombe 1997) would work to transform the island state into a legibly modern state with globally legitimated organizational structures and practices. The state would seek legitimacy through international organizations, while international organizations would certify the rational-legal authority of the state and offer “aid” in the form of agents and material resources (Meyer et al. 1997). Structurally, this process would create dense ties between the state and international organizations, and policy scripts would diffuse more easily from the world polity to the state as the conduits from the world polity to the state grew in size, creating more and more redundant and reinforcing connections.

What international organizations would the island join? For world polity theory, the United Nations (UN) and its agencies (e.g., the International Monetary Fund [IMF]; World Bank Group; UN Education, Science, and Culture Organization; International Labour Organization; and World Health Organization) represent the ideal-typical international or-

<sup>4</sup> For a sociological conceptualization of place, see Gieryn (2000).

<sup>5</sup> Citation data from the Thomson Reuters Web of Science database indicate the significant influence of Meyer et al. (1997): as of 2009, the article was more frequently cited, at 402 citations, than any other article appearing in the last 12 years of the *American Journal of Sociology* or the *American Sociological Review*.

ganizations.<sup>6</sup> These organizations influence policy, distribute resources, and include nearly every state in the international system as members. In the language of social network analysis, in joining the UN, the island state, previously an isolated “node” in the network, would now have ties to other states in the network. This network would be “dense” (every state has a tie to every other state), “decentralized” (every state has the same number of total ties), “cohesive” (states are close together in world polity space), and “clustered” into one very “small world” (Wasserman and Faust 1994; Watts 1999). This two-mode, or affiliation, network (Breiger 1974) could be represented as a bipartite graph (Faust 2005), in which the nodes could be partitioned into a set of IGOs and a set of states.

Of course, the world polity also includes other kinds of international organizations, including organizations that restrict membership by level of economic development (e.g., the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD]), geographic region (e.g., the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), economic sector (e.g., the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries), linguistic heritage (e.g., Francophonie Institutionnelle), religion (e.g., Organization of the Islamic Conference), or geopolitical alignment (e.g., the North American Treaty Organization). This complicates the story.

Using the language of social network analysis, the above examples highlight the “dual” (Breiger 1974) or “bipartite” character of the world polity network.<sup>7</sup> That is, the network formed by IGOs includes two types of nodes, states and IGOs, making it a two-mode network that can be represented as a bipartite graph. The first mode foregrounds the state nodes; it is a network of states that are interlinked through memberships in organizations. The second mode foregrounds the IGO nodes; it is a network of organizations that are interlinked through their member states. Although each mode is part of the same overall network, each will have its own structure, and together, the networks form a bipartite network. Understanding the structure of the world polity, therefore, requires an examination of its duality—the relational networks of states and organizations. To date, work on the structure of the world polity has operationalized involvement in the world polity as an attribute of states rather than a relational structure (Wallace and Singer 1970; Jacobson, Reisinger, and Mathers 1986; Shanks, Jacobson, and Kaplan 1996; Boli et al. 1999; Beckfield 2003; Rey and Barkdull 2005), although work on international

<sup>6</sup> The UN also has extensive formal and informal ties to INGOs, and the role of INGOs in the UN has grown in the 1980s and 1990s (Pubantz 2005).

<sup>7</sup> Of course, states are linked directly to other states through bilateral relations, as are IGOs.

conflict and policy diffusion has recently taken a network turn (Boehmer et al. 2004; Ingram et al. 2005).

While world polity theory suggests a densely interconnected global network (a strong version of this hypothesis is a maximally dense network in which all states and IGOs are connected), the theory's dynamic implications are actually stronger. Nothing in world polity theory or its empirical applications suggests that the world polity has always been densely interconnected, only that it has become more so.<sup>8</sup> Friedman makes a parallel argument for economic globalization in *The World Is Flat*: "I know that the world is not flat. . . . I am certain, though, that the world has been shrinking and flattening for some time now, and that process has quickened dramatically" (2006, p. 460). Returning to the evolution of political globalization, the fact that world polity theory is fundamentally a theory of change is reflected in the use of event history analysis and other techniques for longitudinal data in so many studies that test hypotheses drawn from the theory (Strang and Chang 1993; Ramirez et al. 1997; Boli and Thomas 1999; Frank, Hironaka, and Schofer 2000; Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Polillo and Guillén 2005; Schofer and Hironaka 2005; Wejnert 2005).

For instance, Frank et al. (2000) offer evidence for the argument that "the blueprints for nation-state involvement [in environmental policy] are drawn in world society, from where they diffuse to individual countries" (p. 96). The assembly of evidence in their article follows a logic common to much world polity research: the content of world culture in a given domain is examined, and event history analysis is used to examine policy change (in this example, indicators of change include the adoption of environmental impact assessment legislation and the foundation of environmental ministries). The analysis shows that these policy changes are driven, in part, by "the extent to which countries have open conduits to world society" (p. 105), measured as memberships in IGOs and INGOs. As in many other studies, Frank et al. show significant associations between ties to international organizations and policy change. The interpretation of these associations is debated among sociologists (e.g., Buttel 2000), and it remains possible that unobserved heterogeneity, reverse causality, or omitted variables may bias the event history models. Indeed, while it has sparked much research on policy isomorphism, world polity theory remains controversial.

One current controversy surrounds the question of "decoupling" (Meyer

<sup>8</sup> Change in the structure of the world polity is said to be reflected both in the increasing connections among states and in the increasing connections among international organizations (Boli 2005, p. 387). For the structure of the network, this implies increasing density and decreasing centralization in both the interstate and the inter-IGO networks.

and Rowan 1977; Meyer et al. 1997, pp. 154–56), or the frequent disconnect between policy and practice. Buttel (2000), for one, argues that the adoption of environmental policies may reflect mere “window dressing” that has no impact on the environment itself. World polity researchers have marshaled evidence to counter these critical claims, showing that involvement in international organizations improves actual human rights practice and environmental quality (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Schofer and Hironaka 2005), but the debate continues in light of vast inequalities among states in resources and power. Researchers in the world polity tradition (and the new network research that assesses related hypotheses) have also elaborated more complex statistical models in an attempt to control for some of the domestic factors that doubtless matter for the creation, modification, and adoption of policy scripts (Buttel 2000).

Before traveling further down this road, it is informative to step back from this debate and consider the social structure of the world polity itself. Research on the effects of integration into the world polity suggests an increasingly densely interconnected, singular world polity, in which policy scripts diffuse smoothly among organizations and states as there is less and less “friction” in the world polity. These scripts diffuse more easily to those states that have stronger connections to the world polity, and it is argued that all states are increasingly embedded into the world polity. As with the imaginary island society, states increasingly “plug in” to the world polity, joining global organizations like the UN. World polity research recognizes the tremendous growth in the population of international organizations (Boli and Thomas 1997, 1999), but these organizations are implicitly assumed to be global or at least increasingly global in scope, forming a singular world polity rather than multiple (regional?) polities.<sup>9</sup> If this assumption were true, and international organizations were increasingly global in scope (i.e., increasingly akin to the UN), then this would generate an increasingly dense world political structure in both modes of the network. That is, the world polity would have both increasingly dense interorganizational ties through states and increasingly dense interstate ties through organizations. However, if this assumption were false, and international organizations were becoming less global in scope (i.e., increasingly akin to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), then this would generate a world polity that is increasingly fragmented

<sup>9</sup> Of course, research in the tradition of world polity theory acknowledges that there is a great deal of substantive heterogeneity among international organizations: the world polity is divided into a wide range of sectors (Boli and Thomas 1997). Boli (2005, p. 394) notes that “globalized authority is highly fragmented and differentiated, and within each distinct sector or niche it is sometimes highly effective, sometimes little more than symbolic. It is, nonetheless, very much on the upswing.”

and uneven in its structure. Rather than a singular flat or even small world, the world polity would be best described as a fractured topology.

Would it mean anything for world polity theory if this assumption of an increasingly densely integrated world political structure were unrealized? To put the matter more sharply, it could be argued that assuming a cohesive social structure is unnecessary for world polity research, given that there are robust empirical associations between states' ties to that structure (whatever it might be) and national policy. It could be the "plugging in," and not the "plugging in to what," that matters for states (cf. Gartzke, Li, and Boehmer 2001; Ingram et al. 2005). This is one of the empirical questions raised by conceptualizing and analyzing the world polity in explicitly network terms.

Conceptually, the structure of the world polity should still matter for understanding its effects, for at least five reasons. First, a more complex structure might account for some of the anomalies of world polity research (cf. Cole 2005 and Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005). Second, accounting for structure might enable a higher-resolution rendering of the mechanisms through which the world polity affects states (e.g., regional organizations might intervene in the process of policy diffusion). Third, the social structure of the world polity might offer a partial account of decoupling (e.g., practice may be more tightly coupled to policy in regional polities that are more densely tied together). Fourth, if it is the intensity of involvement in the world polity and not its social structure that matters for states, then it could be that some third factor explains both involvement in international organizations and the adoption of relatively progressive policies in the domains discussed above. Fifth, if worldwide models, or global "policy scripts," are generated in a world society of international organizations, those policy scripts may cohere better and diffuse more easily among densely interconnected regional organizations (implying highly structured heterogeneity among policy scripts). Indeed, studying the world polity as a network could contribute to a better understanding of alternative processes of policy diffusion by getting closer to the proposed network mechanisms of world polity theory (Simmons and Elkins 2005; Valente 2005; Dobbin, Simmons, and Garrett 2007; Torfason and Ingram, forthcoming).

These arguments suggest that understanding the social structure of the world polity may carry important implications for world polity theory and research. To date, work on the structure of the world polity, like the research on the effects of the world polity, has operationalized involvement in the world polity as an attribute of states rather than embeddedness in relational networks of states and organizations (Wallace and Singer 1970; Jacobson et al. 1986; Shanks et al. 1996; Boli et al. 1999; Beckfield 2003; Rey and Barkdull 2005). The social structure of the world polity itself is



rarely studied.<sup>10</sup> This is an important gap in our knowledge because very different social structures result from a world in which states increase their involvement in a growing number of global organizations like the UN, compared to a world in which states increase their involvement in a growing number of regional organizations like the European Union (EU). The former world yields a flat, dense, even, cohesive social structure; the latter, a rough, disintegrated, uneven, fragmented one.

#### ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO POLITICAL GLOBALIZATION

Other approaches to political globalization come from political science, including neorealism (or structural realism) and neoliberalism (or liberal institutionalism) from the international relations subfield (Gilpin 1975; Waltz 1979; Keohane 1984; Moravcsik 1997), and sociology, including world-systems theory and field-theoretic economic sociology (Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000; Fligstein and Stone Sweet 2002; Fligstein 2008).<sup>11</sup> Although it is not the goal of this article to present a definitive test of world polity theory versus the alternative approaches, it is important to recognize that world polity theory is not the lone approach to political globalization. The different approaches tend to emphasize different explananda, and, in some cases, their structural implications are similar, but there are points of divergence that are noted below (indeed, one debate surrounds the effectiveness of international organizations, which is not addressed by the structural analysis in this article).

The key distinction between world polity theory and its alternatives—and the signal contribution of world polity theory—is that world polity theory accounts for increasing isomorphism among states by taking world culture seriously. Emphasizing culture over organizational structure, the argument is that states increasingly look alike because they are increasingly embedded in a world polity (an associational structure) that expresses a world culture (structures of meaning) that constitutes the state as an

<sup>10</sup> Wallace (1975) provides an early and partial exception to this tendency by examining the effective distance between dyads of states based on their common membership in IGOs, and Kim and Barnett (2000) examine the network of IGOs in the international telecommunications field. While the network structure of the world polity itself has tended not to be the object of empirical scrutiny, Ingram et al. (2005) and Hafner-Burton and Montgomery (2006) show that IGO network ties are associated with increased international trade and diminished interstate conflict among state dyads with more dense IGO connections. Finally, Beckfield (2008) examines part of the network at two time points: two highly visible subsets of IGOs.

<sup>11</sup> For an extended treatment of neorealist alternatives from the perspective of world polity theory, see Boli and Thomas (1997, pp. 171–72, 1999, pp. 15–19) and Meyer et al. (1997, pp. 146–48).

actor, defining what it means to be a state and prescribing what states do.

The alternative approaches, however, highlight instead conflict, power, and national (especially economic and military) interests. For instance, in world-systems theory, the argument is that the “world polity” reflects and reproduces preexisting structures of domination, as international organizations serve as “boards of directors for ruling states” (Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000, p. 238). Structurally, this implies a densely interconnected world polity but one that is also highly uneven and centralized around the dominant core actors, especially in the domain of economic rule making. Such a pattern of ties would produce a star-shaped but tightly interconnected network topology, with core states at the center. An equally plausible implication of world-systems theory would be that both the core and the periphery are closely interconnected, as peripheral states form and join exclusive IGOs as a way of representing their own interests (Beckfield 2003); such a scenario would produce a core/periphery or a global north/south fracture in the topology of the world polity. A different pattern of fragmentation would be anticipated by the field-theoretic approach to economic sociology (Fligstein and Merand 2002; Fligstein and Stone Sweet 2002), which implies that the topology of the IGO network should depend on, in part, the pattern of international trade, which generates demands for international regulation and coordination through institutionalization, which itself then generates new social fields. Given that political-economic integration has reached its most advanced expression in the EU, the structure of the world polity should be highly regionalized in Europe, especially the network formed by economic IGOs (Fligstein and Merand 2002).

A strict neorealist view implies a sparsely interconnected world polity, as states pursue their individual interests and avoid the binding obligations of IGOs (Waltz 1979). To the extent that IGOs exist, they should exist in a few limited domains in which states’ interests are enhanced by the coordination capacities of international organizations and regimes (Krasner 1985). Such a view of the world polity implies a very fragmented topology: sparsely interconnected, decentralized, not cohesive, and “large” in the sense that the paths connecting dyads of states and IGOs would tend to be longer rather than shorter. The neorealist depiction of the world polity should be an especially apt characterization of the field of military/political IGOs.

On this structural score at least, the implications of neoliberalism are similar to those of world polity theory. The neoliberal approach in the international relations field does view IGOs as subject to states’ interests (especially in the bargaining that results in IGO formation), but it also views international organizations as effective and capable of aligning and

coordinating states' interests. Cooperation can increase, and states' interests can be reshaped by the social structures within which they are embedded (Moravcsik 1997). Structurally, then, neoliberals would anticipate an increasingly densely integrated, increasingly decentralized, increasingly small world polity. The economic domain of the world polity should be more densely interconnected (and also more decentralized) than the other domains (Keohane 1984).

If the UN is the paradigmatic IGO for world polity theory, then organizations like the OECD that restrict membership to developed countries and regional organizations like the EU are paradigmatic for alternative approaches. While the use of IGOs for interstate competition, especially by noncore states to resist the liberal economic order, has been debated (Krasner 1985), the structural implications have been explored only as they apply to the level (not the pattern) of world polity involvement (Wallace and Singer 1970; Jacobson et al. 1986; Shanks et al. 1996; Boli et al. 1999; Beckfield 2003).

Structural implications follow from the types of IGOs that are established by states. For instance, the Group of 24 (G24) was founded in 1971 by 24 less developed countries to represent the interests of poor countries in international financial matters and counterbalance organizations like the Group of 7 (G7, now G8) industrialized countries. To see the structural implications, imagine that the world polity consists of just the G24 and the G8. The network formed would be bipartite, with two IGOs and 32 states. In turn, the bipartite network generates two one-mode networks: a network (here, a dyad) of two IGOs and a network of 32 states. The IGO dyadic network would be disconnected since no G24 member also belongs to the G8. Likewise, the interstate network would also be disconnected, with all G24 states tied to all other G24 states and all G8 states tied to all other G8 states. If there were no global organizations like the UN and all IGOs were formed on the basis of geographical or other attributes, the world polity as a network would be disintegrated instead of dense, fragmented instead of cohesive, and, given that resource-rich states belong to more IGOs (Boli et al. 1999; Beckfield 2003), highly centralized and structurally uneven.

Of course, the world polity is shaped by both inclusive organizations like the UN and exclusive organizations like the EU. Thus, nearly all states have at least one tie to nearly all other states (e.g., the UN forms a tie between Germany and Bangladesh), although they may have a greater number of ties to certain states than to others. And nearly every IGO is likely to be connected to nearly every other IGO by at least one common member state (e.g., Germany forms a tie from the EU to the UN), but some IGOs may share more member states than others. This suggests that in static terms, the world polity blends structural density

with disintegration, decentralization with centralization, homogeneity with heterogeneity, and cohesion with fragmentation. Given their theoretical relevance, it is essential to estimate these static properties. But the dynamics matter more. This is because the theories in question are theories of change. How has the structure evolved? Has it become more or less dense, more or less centralized, more or less a flat field of association?

Consider once again the newly discovered island society. The island state might pursue its interests on the global stage by forming strategic alliances with other states and joining international organizations. It would probably seek membership in global organizations like the UN, thereby tying itself to nearly every other state in the international system, but, assuming limited economic resources and a location in the Pacific Ocean, it would probably also seek membership in organizations of poor countries like the G24 and regional organizations like the South Pacific Community and Pacific Island Forum. If the example of the island illustrates the incorporation of all national states into the world polity (Meyer et al. 1997, p. 146), then the world polity should exhibit some degree of regionalization.

The degree of this potential regionalization of the “world” polity is unclear. Although debate over regionalization informs studies of economic globalization (Fligstein and Merand 2002; Kim and Shin 2002), scholarship on political globalization tends to neglect the substantial role of place and geography (Nierop 1989; O’Laughlin and van der Wusten 1990; Van der Wusten and Nierop 1990). World polity theory suggests that regionalization should peak after World War II, after “extensive universalistic organizing” of global IGOs encourages organizing at the regional level (Boli and Thomas 1999, p. 31). Existing political-geographic research on the question of regionalism in the world polity shows significant and growing regional clustering, but this research is restricted to 1950–80 (Nierop 1989). Further inquiry is required to determine how much the world polity resembles “a world of regions” (Katzenstein 2005).

#### DATA

To describe the structure of the world polity, I use newly available data on the population of IGOs assembled and distributed as part of the Correlates of War Project.<sup>12</sup> Pevehouse et al. describe the data in their article

<sup>12</sup> Pevehouse, Nordstrom, and Warnke (2004, p. 103) note that “the broadest understanding of what constitutes an IGO is that the organization (1) is a formal entity, (2) has states as members, and (3) possesses a permanent secretariat or other indication of institutionalization such as headquarters and/or permanent staff. . . . IGOs are differentiated from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) based on the fact that the

in the journal *Conflict Management and Peace Science* (2004). The data and codebook are available online at <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/>.

The data consist of binary matrices of IGOs and states, where ones denote membership ties among IGOs and states in a given year, and zeros indicate nonmembership.<sup>13</sup> For the purposes of this article on the evolution of social structure in the world polity, the key advantages of this data set are its wide historical scope and its comprehensive inclusiveness of independent IGOs.<sup>14</sup> An IGO is included in the data if it (1) includes at least three member states, (2) holds regular meetings at least once per decade, and (3) has a permanent secretariat and headquarters. Conversely, an IGO is excluded if it is an “emanation” from another IGO (Pevehouse et al. 2004). This is substantively relevant because many IGOs, such as those of the UN Regional Seas Program, emanate from global IGOs and thus represent globalization rather than regionalization. Information on IGOs and their members comes from multiple sources detailed in Wallace and Singer (1970) and Pevehouse et al. (2004), including the *Yearbook of International Organizations*, published by the Union of International Associations (UIA). The UIA is the standard source for data on world polity ties (Boli and Thomas 1997; Beckfield 2003; Cole 2005). The data set includes information on the memberships of a total of 495 separate IGOs that existed at some point since 1815.<sup>15</sup> The IGOs in existence as of 2000 are listed in the appendix.

The states included are those that meet the criteria for membership in the interstate system, as defined by the Correlates of War Project (2005). The criteria restrict the list to entities that (1) “prior to 1920, . . . have population greater than 500,000 *and* have had diplomatic missions at or above the rank of charge d’affaires with Britain and France” and (2) “after 1920, [have membership in] the United Nations or League of Nations, *or* have population greater than 500,000 and receive diplomatic

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latter organizations’ memberships are composed of individual persons, interest groups, or businesses.”

<sup>13</sup> Ingram et al. (2005) use these data in a study of international trade. Oneal and Russett (2001) and Russett and Oneal (2001) employ an earlier version of the data set in research on militarized international disputes.

<sup>14</sup> Restricting the sample of IGOs to a limited subset of highly visible and especially influential organizations is an important next step. The social structure of the world polity may vary according to the prominence of the organizations that are analyzed, with prominent IGOs more likely to be global IGOs. Elsewhere, I find that the substantive conclusions reached in this article are identical in an analysis restricted to prominent IGOs (Beckfield 2008).

<sup>15</sup> For the purposes of describing the network, all IGOs are treated as structural equals, which elides important differences among the organizations that populate this field. Including all IGOs in the network arguably biases the results toward supporting world polity theory because introducing more heterogeneity into the network would likely produce a more uneven structure.

missions from two major powers.” This means that it is possible for the bipartite network to be disconnected because states need not be a member of any IGO to be included in the data set. The equivalent of the island society that enters the world polity *de novo* is thus observed in this data set, as the bipartite network is disconnected (and island societies are isolates) before 1960. Both the list of IGOs and the list of states are time varying, according to the entries and exits of states and organizations in the international system (for further details, also see Small and Singer [1982]).

Consistent with the focus of this article on long-term structural change in the world polity, the analysis uses data at 10-year intervals: 1820, 1830, and so on through 2000. Given the two-mode, or bipartite, structure of the network of IGOs and states, each year of data produces three matrices for analysis: an asymmetrical, two-mode binary matrix where cell  $x_{ij}$  indicates the membership status of state  $j$  in IGO  $i$  (1 or 0); a symmetrical, one-mode valued matrix where cell  $x_{ij}$  counts the number of IGO memberships shared by states  $i$  and  $j$ ; and a second symmetrical, one-mode valued matrix where cell  $x_{ij}$  counts the number of member states shared by IGOs  $i$  and  $j$ . In other words, there is a network of IGOs and states, a network of states tied through IGOs, and a network of IGOs tied through states (direct ties between states, such as diplomatic missions and bilateral treaties, and direct ties between IGOs, such as consultative statuses, are omitted). Each network reveals distinct aspects of the social structure of the world polity. The first two-mode network, which can be represented as a bipartite graph, reveals the density of the world polity as a whole, while the one-mode networks reveal the centralization (or lack thereof) around key nodes and structural heterogeneity (or lack thereof) among positions in the network. The bipartite graph can then be analyzed for the overall cohesion and clustering of the network. Finally, the network of states can also be examined for evidence that states from the same geographic region share more IGO ties than states from different regions.

Both the network of IGOs and the network of states can be analyzed as a valued matrix, where the cells are counts of ties, or as a binary matrix, where the cells take the value of one if there is at least one tie. For instance, in the valued IGO network, the value of the tie between the EU and the IMF in 2000 is 15 because all 15 EU member states in 2000 were also members of the IMF. However, in the binary IGO network, the value of this tie equals one. Analyzing both valued and binary networks allows for the assessment of the strength of connections as well as the presence of connections. It is important to examine each aspect of the social structure of the world polity because there may be less structural unevenness in the presence/absence of network ties than in the strength of ties. Moreover, the

strength of connections, or volume of conduits to the world polity, is argued to be the network mechanism for the diffusion of policy scripts.<sup>16</sup>

In sum, at each 10-year interval between 1820 and 2000, the original data matrix is two mode and binary, where the ties are between IGOs and states. The rows in this matrix are IGOs, and the columns are states. From this data matrix derive five matrices that capture distinct aspects of network structure: (1) a valued matrix where the rows and columns are IGOs and the cells count ties between IGOs, (2) a binary matrix where again the rows and columns are IGOs but the cells indicate the presence or absence of a tie between IGOs, (3) a valued matrix where the rows and columns are states and the cells count ties between states, (4) a binary matrix where again the rows and columns are states but the cells indicate the presence or absence of a tie between states, and (5) a bipartite symmetric graph where all IGOs and states appear in both the rows and the columns and the cells indicate IGO-state ties. These matrices generate decennial "snapshots" of the structure of the world polity, in which both the composition of IGOs and the composition of states vary with time as the world polity evolves.

#### ANALYSIS

World polity research to date has emphasized cultural content over organizational structure, but the structural implications of the theory, which are developed above, are clear: the network should be (increasingly) densely interconnected, (increasingly) decentralized as states join IGOs in similar patterns, (increasingly) equal in the extent to which states hold memberships in IGOs, (increasingly) cohesive in topology as states become more reachable to each other through shared IGO ties, (increasingly) small worldly in global structure, and (decreasingly) regionalized. Following these structural implications (and the implications of alternative theories developed above), I use network analytic techniques to examine change in several essential structural properties: density, centralization, heterogeneity, cohesion, and clustering.<sup>17</sup> To examine regionalization in the world

<sup>16</sup> Of course, even the valued matrix weights every IGO (and every state) equally in the network analysis. The structure of the world polity could be more heterogeneous if IGOs were weighted differently (according to some measure of influence or resources), but the analysis in this article is not designed to assess this conjecture.

<sup>17</sup> Following the Simmelian insight that triads make more stable groups than dyads, Moody and White (2003, p. 103) operationalize structural cohesion in a social network as a function of connectivity: "structural cohesion is defined as the minimum number of actors who, if removed from a group, would disconnect the group." As with many graph-theoretic properties, connectivity is a property of binary networks that does not extend readily to valued networks such as those analyzed here (Wasserman and Faust

polity, I calculate correlations between the observed network and a model network in which ties are based on region. Analyses were performed using the programs Ucinet 6 (Borgatti, Everett, and Freeman 2002) and Pajek (Batagelj and Mrvar 2007).

Density, a fundamental property of social networks, is calculated as the percentage of possible ties in the network that are actually observed (Wasserman and Faust 1994). The numerator is a simple count of ties, but the denominator differs according to the modality of the network. In a one-mode network (e.g., a network of just IGOs), the denominator is the number of nodes in the network multiplied by the number of nodes minus one (nodes in these networks cannot be tied to themselves). In a bipartite network, ties can only be observed between actors in different modes (here, between IGOs and states), so the relevant denominator is the number of actors in the first mode multiplied by the number of actors in the second mode (Borgatti and Everett 1997). Density is calculated only for the binary networks and ranges from 0 (where no ties are observed) to 1 (where all possible ties are observed). It is important to note that network density (or relative density) differs from population density (or absolute density) in that network density measures the realization of possible ties, not the volume of possible ties itself. That is, there is no question that one indicator of world polity formation is the dramatic increase in the number of IGOs and states in the system—or the increase in the absolute density of world polity ties. This distinction is akin to that between an increase in the population of a given neighborhood—and thus an increase in the potential for interaction—and the actual realization of ties among people in that neighborhood.

The centralization of a network is the degree to which it resembles a “star” network, in which one central node has ties to every other node but the other nodes do not have ties among themselves. For instance, if the UN shared a member state with all the other several hundred IGOs that populated the network in 2000 but these other IGOs did not overlap in their membership, the IGO network would be perfectly centralized. Like density, centralization is a structural property of the network as a whole. It is calculated as

$$C_D = \sum \frac{C_D(n^*) - C_D(n_i)}{(g - 1)(g - 2)},$$

where  $C_D(n^*)$  represents the degree centrality of the most central node,  $C_D(n_i)$  represents the degree centrality of node  $i$ , and  $g$  represents the total number of nodes in the network (Wasserman and Faust 1994, p. 180).

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1994, p. 76). Also, this measure of structural cohesion produces trivial results when applied to the interstate network because it is disconnected until 1960.



Centralization is calculated for binary networks, and ranges from 0 (perfectly decentralized) to 1 (perfectly centralized).<sup>18</sup>

While centralization captures one sense of structural heterogeneity or unevenness, it is limited in that networks can have more than one central node. For instance, some networks resemble a core/periphery structure, with a set of tightly interconnected nodes and a peripheral set of sparsely interconnected nodes (Borgatti and Everett 1999). In core/periphery structures, it is possible to assign a “coreness” score to each node that quantifies how “close” it is to the dense core of the network. In a maximally dense network, all nodes would have the same coreness score because every node would belong to the dense core, and no sparse periphery would exist. Thus, dispersion in coreness scores can be used to assess overall network-level structural heterogeneity. I use the genetic algorithm developed by Borgatti and Everett (1999) to assign coreness scores, and I use the Gini coefficient to measure dispersion in the scores. The Gini coefficient is a commonly used measure of dispersion (see Firebaugh [1999] for an application) that varies from 0 (perfect homogeneity) to 1 (perfect heterogeneity).

To measure the cohesion of the IGO-state network, I use the bipartite graph to calculate the average path length, diameter, and connectivity of the graph (Wasserman and Faust 1994). A path is the smallest number of ties (or links) between two nodes—for instance, if a policy script must travel from the UN to APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) through a shared member state to reach Taiwan, the UN-Taiwan path would be three ties long, and the UN-APEC path would be two ties long. The average path length is calculated over all dyads in the network. The diameter of the graph is the maximum rather than the average path length. Diameter is useful for comparing bipartite graphs because it measures how far apart the two most distant nodes are. The third measure of cohesion is connectivity: the minimum (node) connectivity of a graph is a count of the number of nodes that would have to be removed from the graph to disconnect it. To provide a baseline for comparison, I also calculate these cohesion indexes for random networks (the random networks

<sup>18</sup> Supplemental analysis indicates that using the binary network to calculate centralization, as is conventional given that centralization for binary networks is bounded between zero and one and thus has a ready interpretation, results in understatement of the increased centralization of the IGO network and overstatement of the decreased centralization in the state network. Using the valued networks, the increase in the centralization of the inter-IGO network is more pronounced, while the decrease in the centralization of the interstate network is less pronounced. Thus, the figures below can be seen as conservative depictions of the trends in world polity centralization.

were generated by holding constant the size and tie distributions of the networks and creating random connections between nodes).<sup>19</sup>

I follow Uzzi and Spiro (2005) in calculating the clustering ratio, path length ratio, and small-world  $Q$  for the bipartite graphs.<sup>20</sup> Their indexes quantify the “small-worldly-ness” of an observed bipartite graph, relative to a baseline random bipartite graph with a constant tie distribution. Small-worldly graphs are marked by the unusual combination of a short average path length and a high level of local clustering (Watts 1999). World polity theory suggests just such a small world: if one IGO is linked to two other IGOs, those two other IGOs should also be linked, and the path from any one IGO to another should be short. For instance, in a completely linked graph with density equal to 1.0, the clustering coefficient reaches its maximum value of 1.0. Realist approaches also anticipate clustering—friends of friends should be friends if conflict and regionalization drive the system—but a longer path length since overlap among IGOs through shared member states should be less common. The clustering ratio is the fraction of the observed clustering over the baseline clustering for a random bipartite graph. In turn, the path length ratio is the fraction of the observed average path length over the baseline average path length for a random bipartite graph (in the random bipartite graph, the tie distribution is identical to that of the observed graph). The small-world  $Q$  is calculated as clustering ratio/path length ratio. Below, I report all three indexes, given that both world polity theory and its realist alternatives predict clustering but differ on average path length.

Finally, to assess the regionalization of the world polity, I calculate the correlation between the observed network of states and a hypothetical model network in which states are interconnected only within geographic regions. The regions are the six “world macro-regions” designated by the UN: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Northern America, and Oceania (United Nations 2005). In the model regional network, all African states are connected to all other African states but to no other states, all European states are connected to all other European states but to no other states, and so on for each region. The Pearson correlation between this model network and the observed world polity network is calculated using the Quadratic Assignment Procedure (QAP) as implemented in Ucinet 6, which randomly reorders, or permutes, the rows and columns of the observed data matrix 2,500 times, recalculating the correlation with the model matrix for each permutation of the observed matrix. This procedure

<sup>19</sup> The random networks are not used to calculate baselines for the preceding measures since density, centralization, and heterogeneity are also functions of the tie distributions.

<sup>20</sup> Latapy, Magnien, and Del Vecchio (2006) develop additional clustering measures for bipartite graphs.

gives a nonparametric test of “statistical significance” that is appropriate for nonindependent network data (see Padgett and Ansell [1993] and Kadushin [1995] for applications of the QAP technique). The Pearson correlation ranges from  $-1$  to  $1$ .

Throughout the presentation of results, I compare the characteristics of the observed world polity networks to three ideal-typical networks to give the reader context for interpretation of the results and to demonstrate that the changing network structure is not simply a function of the changing size of the network. The first ideal-typical network is a completely interconnected and maximally dense network—a strong version of the structural implications of world polity theory. The second ideal-typical network is a random network of the same size and density as the observed network—the results for this random network are used to contextualize the centralization and coreness analyses. The third ideal-typical network is a random network of the same size, density, and degree distribution—these results are used in the calculation of the clustering statistics, following the models developed by Newman, Strogatz, and Watts (2001) and Uzzi and Spiro (2005). As with any ideal-typical or random network structure, these comparisons are offered as baselines for comparison and to facilitate interpretation. They underscore the characteristics of the world polity that are relative to a theoretical model, as well as to size- and density-independent stochastic models (cf. Anderson, Butts, and Carley 1999).

## RESULTS

I present the results in a series of figures. Figures 1–9 trace change in the relevant properties of the interstate and inter-IGO networks as they evolved over 1820–2000. Figures 10–15 are maps that depict the binary, valued, and domain-specific networks for 2000, in which the nodes in the network are placed at the location of states’ capital cities.

Figure 1 verifies the world polity structuration that has been noted in previous work (Boli and Thomas 1997, 1999). The population of IGOs grew slowly from one (the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine, whose members were Baden, Bavaria, France, Germany, Hesse, and the Netherlands) to 67 in 1930, declined to 63 in 1940, and then grew rapidly to a total of 330 IGOs by 2000. The 1930–40 decline in the population of IGOs is consistent with the decline in international trade in the interwar years (Chase-Dunn, Kawano, and Brewer 2000) and the “steep fall” in the formation of INGOs leading up to the Second World

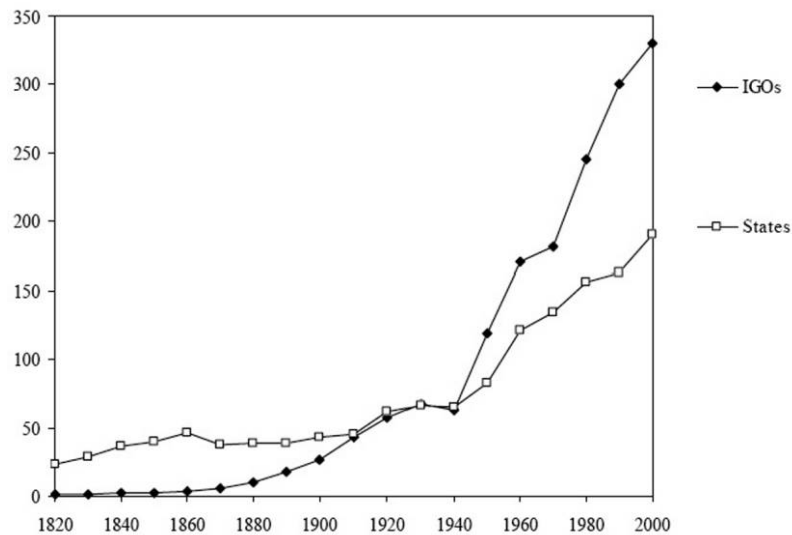


FIG. 1.—Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and states in the world polity

War (Boli and Thomas 1997, p. 175).<sup>21</sup> But in the later period, the growth trend in this population of IGOs matches other measures of world polity formation such as growth in the population of INGOs. This was a massive increase in the total volume of world polity ties, and there is no doubt that the amount of world polity activity (or what could be called absolute population density of the world polity) increased dramatically over the course of the 20th century (Boli and Thomas 1997; Meyer et al. 1997). Given that the volume of activity is the network mechanism for diffusion identified by world polity theory, there is doubtless a very large potential for policy diffusion in this network.

Figure 1 also shows the widely noted increase in the number of sovereign states in the international system. Through the Concert of Europe in the early 1800s and the European wars of the later 1800s, this number grew steadily but very slowly. There was a noticeable increase after the establishment of the League of Nations in 1919, and then the rate of growth changed dramatically around 1940. After 1940, the number of states in the international system grew from 65 to 190 by 2000. The overall trend, especially the rapid increase since 1940, is consistent with insti-

<sup>21</sup> Interestingly, this correspondence between political globalization (as represented by IGOs and INGOs) and economic globalization (as represented by international trade) offers some support for the argument that international markets demand international rules (Fligstein 2001; Fligstein and Stone Sweet 2002).

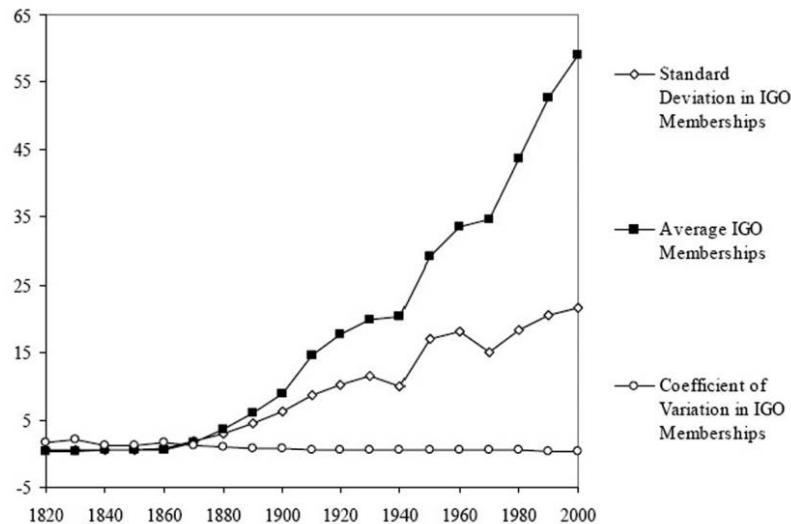


FIG. 2.—Standard deviation, mean, and coefficient of variation in intergovernmental organization (IGO) memberships.

tutionalist arguments that the world polity (precisely, through the UN system) legitimizes the state as a form of governance: “World society contains much cultural material authoritatively defining the nation-state as the preferred form of sovereign, rational actor” (Meyer et al. 1997, p. 158). Of course, the overall trend of increasing state formation is consistent with other arguments as well, such as the dissolution of empires (Wimmer and Min 2006, p. 871); the network approach taken here cannot adjudicate these inferences.

Critical for understanding the structural implications of these trends is the fact that the rapid growth in the number of states and IGOs in the world polity—the growth in absolute population density in the world polity—could have various consequences for the overall structure of the network. If the new IGOs are universal or nearly universal in their membership (like the UN, founded in 1945) and if states join IGOs on entry into the international system (like the example of the island society), then the network as a whole should become more densely interconnected and less centralized. States should become more even in their levels of embeddedness in the world polity, and states should become more densely interconnected through their common IGO memberships. Likewise, IGOs should become more densely interconnected through their common member states. Conversely, if the new IGOs are less like the UN and more like the EU (founded as the European Economic Community in 1957) or

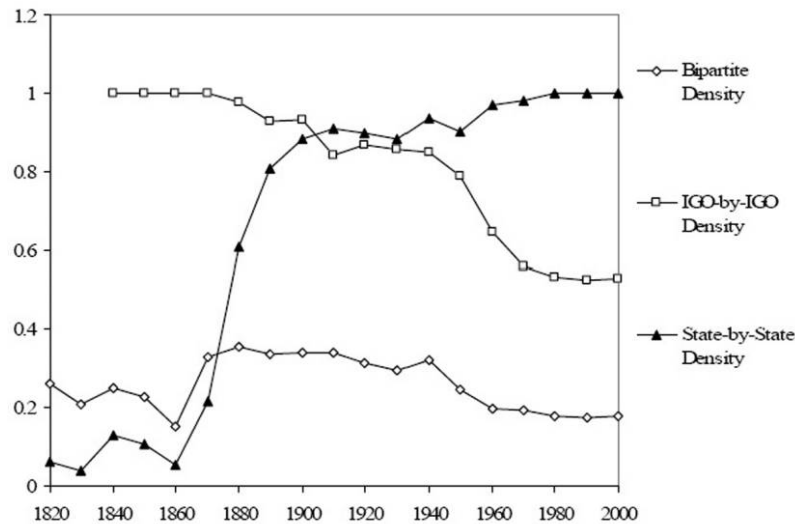


FIG. 3.—Density of the bipartite, intergovernmental organization (IGO)-by-IGO, and state-by-state graphs.

if states resist IGO membership, then the network would become increasingly disintegrated and fragmented. Growth in the populations of IGOs and states does not, by itself, determine the nature of change in network structure. Instead, because the field of IGOs changes over time, the structure of the network depends largely on “births” and “deaths” in the demography of the world polity. These population increases by themselves are consistent with all the theoretical approaches outlined above.

Figure 2 shows trends in descriptive statistics on IGO involvement—as an attribute of states—to facilitate comparison of these results with results from previous world polity research. Consistent with world polity theory, the average number of IGO memberships held by states increased rapidly, from less than 1.0 through 1860 to 59.1 by 2000 (again, a dramatic increase in the absolute population density of world polity ties). The standard deviation also increased but not as quickly as the mean. Consequently, the coefficient of variation decreased from 1.68 in 1820 to .59 by 1910 and further to .37 by 2000. States are growing more similar in level of involvement in IGOs. These results are consistent with the findings that inequality in IGO and INGO ties decreased from 1960 to 2000 (Beckfield 2003), but they extend this work by showing that there has been an even longer-term trend toward evenness in the depth of states’ embeddedness in IGOs. This growing evenness, like the increases in the pop-

ulations of IGOs and states, is also consistent with the structural implications of all the theoretical approaches discussed above.

So far, the results shown here replicate previous work using newly available data compiled by Pevehouse et al. (2004). Next, I turn to the network analysis, which examines involvement in the world polity as a relational network rather than an attribute of states. Figure 3 shows trends in the density (or network density, as opposed to population density or volume) of three networks: the two-mode network of IGOs and states, the network of states with overlapping IGO memberships, and the network of IGOs with shared member states. The density of the two-mode network decreases from 1820 through 1860, increases and remains at a higher level from 1870 through 1940, then decreases slightly through 2000. The increase from 1860 to 1870 was driven by the founding of two universal IGOs in the intervening years: the International Telecommunications Union and the Universal Postal Union. The post-1940 decrease in the density of the two-mode network is somewhat surprising in light of the founding of the UN and other universal IGOs after World War II. Also surprising (relative to the maximally dense ideal-typical network drawn from world polity theory) is the sparseness of the bipartite network throughout the period: in every decade, fewer than 40% of the possible ties between IGOs and states are realized.

The density of the one-mode interstate network is more consistent with world polity theory than with the alternative approaches: very low proportions of possible ties among states are realized until the founding of universal IGOs after 1860, and then the density increases rapidly and to a very high level by the turn of the century. By 1900, fully 88% of possible ties among states are realized. With the exception of two slight dips, the density of the interstate network continues to increase through 2000 to 97% of possible ties realized. This means that nearly every state holds at least one IGO membership in common with every other state (unsurprising, given the near-universal membership of the UN). If density eases institutional diffusion and enhances normative emulation (DiMaggio and Powell 1983, p. 152; Henisz et al. 2005, p. 876), world polity models circulate easily among states in the international system. Of course, it is important to emphasize that density is calculated for binary networks, so that information on the strength of ties is reduced to a binary indication of the presence/absence of at least one tie. The ultimate significance of a single tie would then depend on the significance of the one organization that formed the tie.

Turning from ties among states to ties among IGOs, we find a trend in density that is almost the mirror image of the trend in the density of interstate ties: IGOs are very densely interconnected through their member states at first, but this density slowly declines through 1940, then

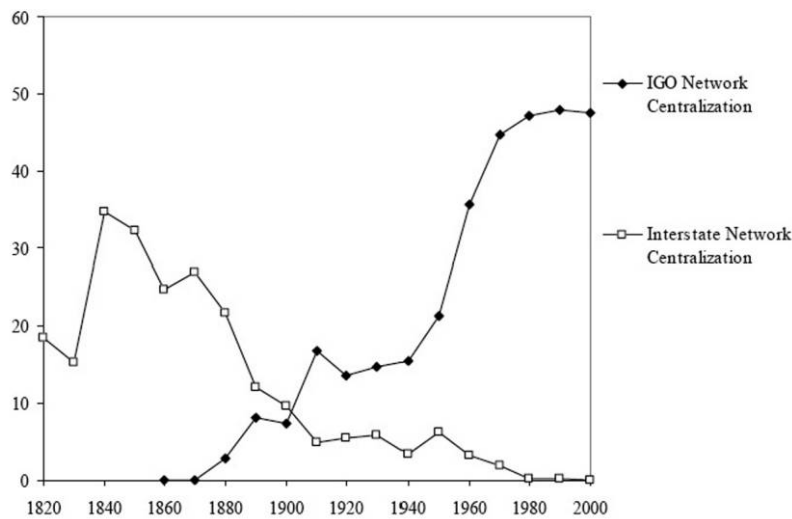


FIG. 4.—Centralization in the intergovernmental organization (IGO) and interstate networks.

declines more rapidly through 1990, when it appears to level off at just over 50% of possible inter-IGO ties observed. While this remains a fairly dense network in a static sense, the pattern of change is more consistent with the field-theoretic economic-sociology and international-relations approaches than with world polity theory. The decreasing density of the IGO network suggests a more fragmented world polity, with fewer connections among organizations. This means that the pattern of IGO ties contrasts starkly against the number of IGOs they belong to: while states are growing more even in the number of IGOs they belong to, they increasingly belong to different IGOs. In contrast to a world of UNs, WTOs, International Labor Organizations, and World Banks, the decreasing density of the IGO network results from a world of EUs, North American Free Trade Agreements, Mercosurs, and Association of South East Asian Nations.

Moving from the density of interconnections in the world polity to its potentially stratified structure, figure 4 shows the trends in centralization, a measure of structural heterogeneity that assesses how closely a network corresponds to a star shape with one central node and many peripheral nodes. Again, we find opposite trends for the inter-IGO and interstate networks. Centralization of the interstate network drops sharply from 1840 to a low level in 1910 and decreases even further through 2000. In 2000, the centralization of the interstate network fell to .07, very close to the perfect structural equality of a circle-shaped network in which all nodes are interconnected (and actually less than .11, which is the cen-





FIG. 5.—Heterogeneity in coreness of states

tralization for a random network in which size and density, but not the tie distribution, are held equal to that of the 2000 world polity network). Decreasing centralization of the interstate network is consistent with the image drawn from world polity theory of an increasingly even field of association and inconsistent with the world-systems approach.

In contrast, the centralization of the IGO network increases throughout the period. The IGO network exhibits no structural heterogeneity until 1880, but the level of centralization then increases slowly through 1940, when the network is 16% as centralized as possible given its size. Centralization then rises more steeply through 1970 and ultimately levels off near 48% (much greater than the 17% centralization in the equivalent size and density random graph). This suggests that the IGO network is increasingly star shaped, with central IGOs that share many member states in common with each other and peripheral IGOs that share member states in common with central IGOs but not with other peripheral IGOs. This increasing centralization of the IGO network is more consistent with the neorealist and world-systems images of a world polity structured by international competition and conflict.

Centralization, like density, is calculated for binary networks, which measure only the presence or absence of ties and waste information on the strength of ties among IGOs and states. Centralization also has limited utility for measuring structural heterogeneity in these networks because centralization assesses the resemblance of a network to an ideal-typical

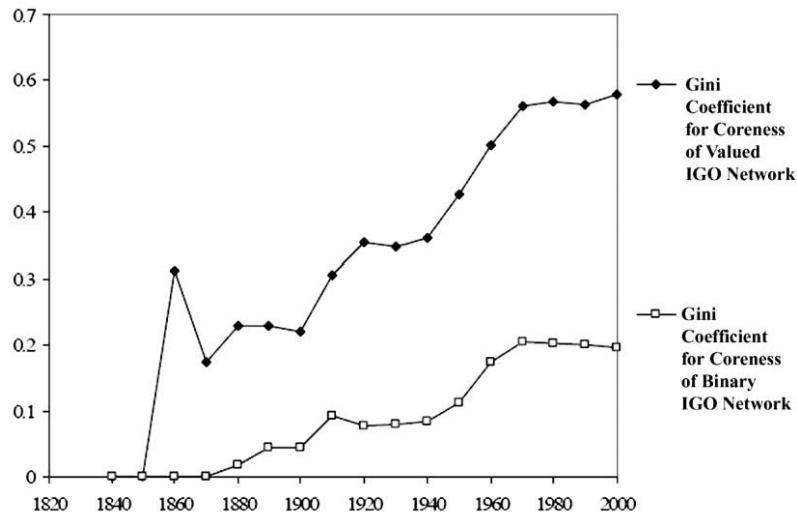


FIG. 6.—Heterogeneity in coreness of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)

network with only one central node. Borgatti and Everett (1999, p. 376) generalize this restricted sense of centralization and define a core/periphery structure as one in which “the network . . . consists of just one group to which all actors belong to a greater or lesser extent,” when a “center and periphery” can be defined. That is, core/periphery networks can be characterized as having a multicentric core of nodes that are tightly interconnected, with a surrounding periphery of less interconnected nodes.<sup>22</sup> The overall level of structural heterogeneity in a core/periphery network can then be measured as dispersion in the closeness of the nodes to the core. Figure 5 shows trends in the Gini coefficient, a common measure of dispersion, calculated for the binary and valued interstate networks.

Figure 5 confirms that the binary network understates the level of structural heterogeneity among states: from 1860 onward, the Gini coefficient is always lower for the binary network than for the valued network. For instance, in 2000, the Gini coefficient for coreness scores in the valued network is .144, while in the binary network it is .001 (for random graphs of the same size and density, these quantities are .063 and 0). Nevertheless, the trends are similar: in both state networks, structural heterogeneity declines steeply after 1960 to a very low level by 2000. For

<sup>22</sup> Correlations between the observed valued networks and idealized core-periphery structures (Borgatti and Everett 1999) are substantial. For all years of observation, the correlation coefficients for the valued networks surpass .80.

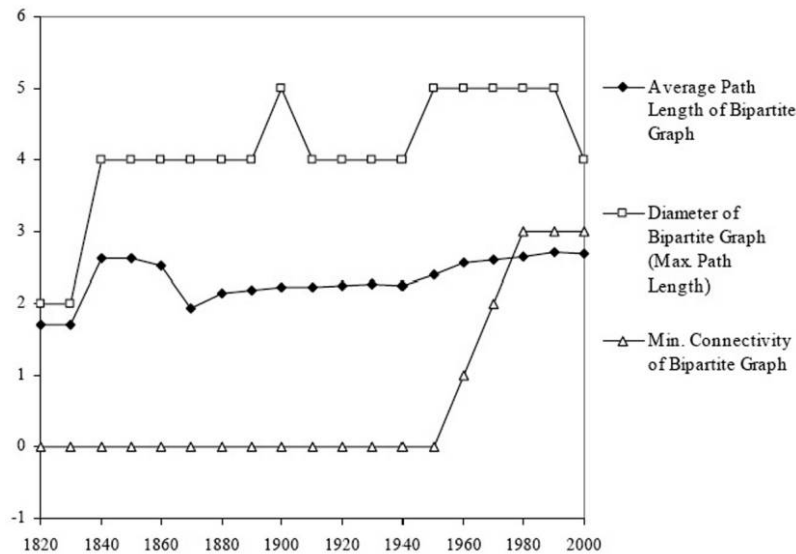


FIG. 7.—Cohesive world polity? Average path length, diameter, and connectivity

comparison, the level of inequality in world income has been estimated at a Gini coefficient of .543 (Firebaugh 1999, p. 1613). The level and trend are consistent with world polity theory: all states are nearly equal in position within the world polity.

Moving from the interstate network to the inter-IGO network, figure 6 shows the trends in this measure of structural heterogeneity for the binary and valued networks of IGOs. The key distinction between figures 5 and 6 is that figure 5 shows results for the state mode, whereas figure 6 shows results for the IGO mode. And, once again, the IGO structure appears to be at odds with the state structure: in both the binary and valued IGO networks, structural heterogeneity trends upward after 1870, with notable growth in the rate of increase during 1940–70. The level of heterogeneity is, predictably, higher in the valued network (Gini = .578 in 2000) than in the binary network (Gini = .197 in 2000). Both coefficients are much larger than those for random graphs of the same size and density (.087 and .001, respectively). For the IGO network, the level and trend are consistent with the global neorealist approach: central IGOs like the UN and WTO are much closer to the structural core of the world polity than peripheral IGOs like the Baltic Council and the Central Asian Economic Community. The implications for diffusion are that policy scripts diffuse much more easily through the core of the world polity,

creating the potential for a fragmented and “bumpy” pattern of policy diffusion.

Figure 7 shows the cohesion indexes: average path length, diameter, and minimum connectivity. These measures begin the assessment of network topology: recall that several theoretical approaches to political globalization, including world polity theory, world-systems theory, and neo-liberalism in international relations, all imply a small, cohesive world polity, with very little network distance separating IGOs and states. The average path length (geodesic distance) of the bipartite graph increased at first through the mid-19th century, decreased again briefly, then increased fairly consistently through the 20th century. This is preliminary evidence that the world polity looks less, not more, like a small world, even since the 1940s and the emergence of the UN system. It is worth noting that the average path length for a random graph of identical size and density is 2.298, less than the 2.678 average path length observed in the world polity in 2000. This decrease in the cohesion of the world polity is also reflected in the graph’s diameter, which grows to five links long during 1950–90 (it decreases again to four in the 2000 network, which is equal to the diameter of a random graph of the same size and density). The results for connectivity show a network that is disconnected through 1950, after which the connectivity increases. Still, in 2000, only three nodes would have to be removed to disconnect the graph. For comparison, a random graph of the same size and density shows a connectivity of 21 nodes. The results for average path length, diameter, and connectivity, thus, suggest that the IGO network more closely resembles the fragmented world of the realist approaches than it does the cohesive world of world polity theory. It is no more cohesive than a random network of the same size.

Figure 8 extends the analysis of network topology from general size and cohesion to small-world structure (Watts 1999). The world polity has also become less small worldly over time. The clustering ratio decreases from 1.0 (meaning that the graph is exactly as clustered as a baseline random graph with equivalent size, density, and tie distribution) in the early years to around .94 for 1890–1940, then decreases more rapidly to .84 by 2000. What this means is that the bipartite graph is actually less clustered than would be expected given that states are automatically clustered within IGOs in this bipartite graph. That is, there is less between-IGO clustering than would be expected for a random bipartite graph with this tie distribution. What clustering does exist remains within IGOs. Interestingly, this decreasing clustering coincides with an increasing path length ratio, meaning that the states and IGOs in the bipartite graph are more distant from each other than would be expected given the bipartite structure of the graph. All this results in a small-world  $Q$  that follows a

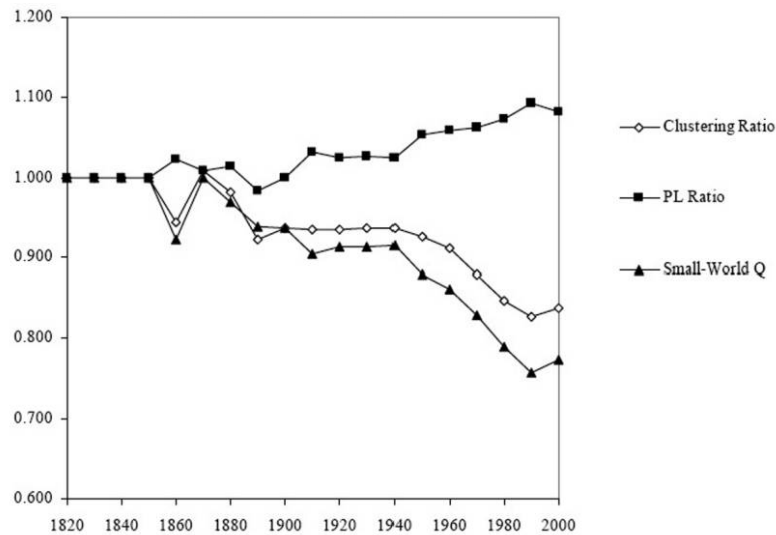


FIG. 8.—Small world polity? Clustering ratio, path length (PL) ratio, and small-world  $Q$

generally negative trend throughout the period and declines more rapidly after the 1940s. Since this is precisely the period when the development of the UN system could have been expected to produce more crosscutting ties among states, it would seem that the regionalization of the system in the later period outweighed this development in structural implications.

The results so far are consistent with the regionalization of the world polity, but a more direct test is required, in light of the divergent theoretical implications developed above for the degree of regionalization of the world polity. To what degree does the regionalization of the world polity shape its structure? Figure 9 shows trends in the correlation between the observed interstate networks and a model regional network (in which states share IGO ties only to other states in their geographic region, as defined above).<sup>23</sup> For the binary network, regionalization increases until 1870,

<sup>23</sup> To assess the sensitivity of these results to the UN's definition of region, I reestimated the correlations using the alternative, more culturally oriented scheme of Huntington (1996), as operationalized by Henderson and Tucker (2001). The nine "civilizations" identified by Huntington correspond fairly closely to a strictly geographical grouping, except that some North African and Middle Eastern countries are classified as Islamic, North American countries are classified with Western European states as Western, and the Asian countries are divided among the Buddhist, Japanese, and Sinic civilizations. Using this alternative semiregional classification, the results are consistent with those shown: the association between region and IGO ties increases through 1900, decreases through 1920, increases through 1940, falls off sharply through 1970, then increases again (to the level of .325). Details are available from the author.

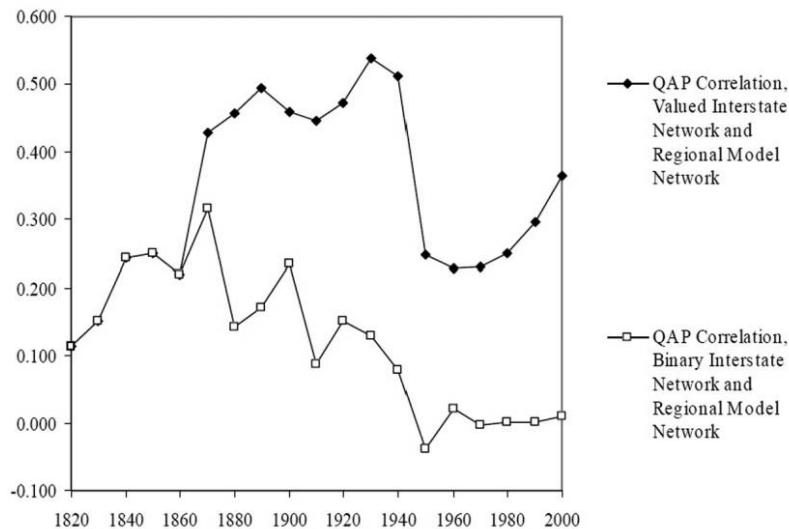


FIG. 9.—Correlations between observed networks and regional model networks

decreases until 1950, and stabilizes at a very low level through 2000 (Pearson's  $r = .009$ ). For the valued network, the trend is rather different: regionalization increases sharply and peaks in 1930, decreases dramatically after 1940 because of the founding of the UN, and increases again after 1960 to a correlation of .365 in 2000. The prewar peak of regionalization contradicts the argument that universal IGOs dominated the field in the first half of the 20th century and fostered regional organizations only after the war (Boli and Thomas 1999, p. 31). The overall pattern of findings, especially the contrast between the results for the binary versus valued networks, suggests that sharing a geographic region may not predict the presence or absence of ties among states, but it does predict stronger ties among states. States do have some connections that span regional boundaries, but connections among states are strengthened within regions. More important than the static patterning of interstate ties is the direction of change: the regionalization of the world polity has actually increased since 1960, and world polity ties have become more rather than less bound to place. This is consistent with Nierop's (1989) finding that the regional clustering of states grew during the postwar period through 1980. Taken together, the results shown in figures 8 and 9 indicate that the world polity more closely resembles a regionalized world than a singular small world.

Before turning to a more detailed examination of the contemporary structure of the world polity, I note two aspects of its long-term evolution

in the context of some of the key historical changes in the geopolitics of the period. For nearly all the structural measures, stasis, or at least trendless fluctuation, characterizes most of the period before the late 19th century. This relative lack of change in the IGO system may reflect the conclusion of the nationalization period of state formation (Tilly 1990, p. 185), when “national interests” surpassed dynastic ones within European states. The static structure of the world polity during this period of modern state formation reinforces the link between national sovereignty and the institutionalization of the world polity (Meyer et al. 1997) and accords with the identification of the late 19th and early 20th centuries as the crucial period of world polity formation (Boli and Thomas 1999). But the truly transformative geopolitical moment that ripples through the structure of the world polity is the regionalization of the world polity that occurs largely after the establishment of the UN system. After 1945, the world polity grows more disintegrated, more centralized, more structurally uneven, and more fragmented by increasingly regionalized IGOs. It resembles less and less one small world—when the structure of the inter-IGO network is accounted for.

Conversely, the generally placeless, even, flat structure of the interstate network is shown in figure 10, which is a mapping of the network data to geographical coordinates (i.e., longitude and latitude of capital cities) for 2000. As will become clear with the comparison to figure 11, the key distinguishing feature of this map is that it does not display the strength of the IGO ties connecting states: on this map, states are linked if they have at least one IGO membership in common. That is, all IGOs are treated equivalently, and the structure of the IGO network itself is thus ignored. The resulting network of states exhibits a notably even, decentralized, flat structure. The ties (lines) are so dense that they cannot be distinguished, as every state is tied to nearly every other state through their common IGO memberships.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, the locations of capital cities

<sup>24</sup> Supplemental analysis (available on request) of the IGO network shows that the central, nonregional IGOs include highly visible, prominent organizations such as the UN, the WTO, UNESCO, Interpol, the World Bank, and the IMF. Their visibility and influence accord with their central position within the IGO network. Another prominent IGO, the OECD, occupies a potentially strategic brokerage position (Burt 1992, 2004) between the European cluster and the Americas cluster. Following Burt (1992, 2004), this suggests that the OECD may act as a bridge between these regions and thus more effectively diffuse policy scripts among them. While the influence of the OECD's structural position on its ability to diffuse policy scripts is, of course, somewhat speculative, this speculation provides an example of the kind of hypotheses that can be generated and tested by conceptualizing and observing the world polity as a network. Viewing the world polity as a network also generates specific hypotheses concerning how the institutional environment created by international organizations shapes other organizations, such as transnational social movement organizations (Smith 2005; Smith and Wiest 2005).

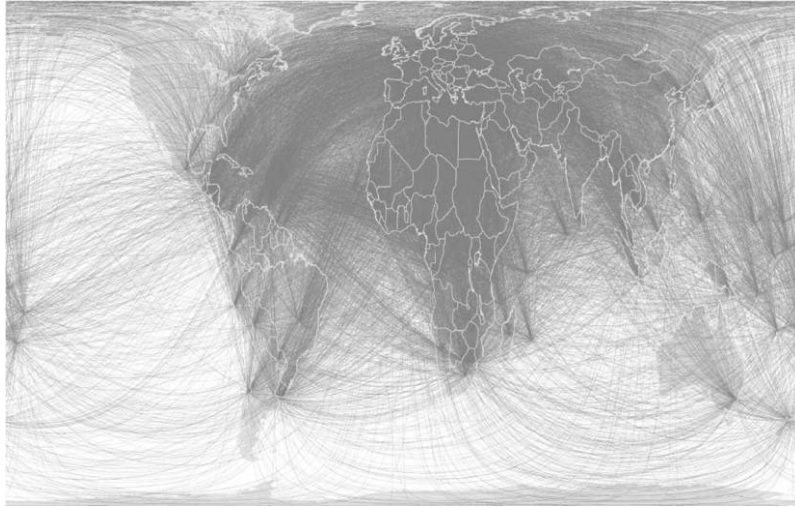


FIG. 10.—Network of states formed by common intergovernmental organization memberships (binary ties).

(the locus of ties sent and received on this map) in Europe, Africa, and Asia cannot be discerned because they are washed out by the dense, globe-spanning network ties (for the mapping technique, see Nag [2009]).

In contrast, figure 11 incorporates the structure of the inter-IGO network by varying the color and thickness of the connections among states according to the number of common IGO memberships. Here, the centralization and regionalization of the structure of the world polity are apparent: Europe is the most densely integrated region, and it is also the region with the closest ties to states in the other world regions. South America and West Africa also display a strong regionalization, while such regionalization is dampened in North America (note the absence of a triangle connecting Mexico City, Ottawa, and Washington, D.C.), Asia, and most of the African continent.

Of course, the field of IGOs is quite heterogeneous, and so it is informative to consider the subnetworks of IGOs classified by function (Ingram et al. 2005). For instance, in light of world polity theory's emphasis on global rationalization, standardization, and culture, one could anticipate a more global pattern of network ties formed by "general purpose" IGOs that focus on international communication and harmonization and by "social/cultural" IGOs that focus on the environment, human rights, education, and science. Conversely, a world-systems account implies the dominance of core states in all areas, especially in "economic," "military/political," and general purpose IGOs. Using the coding procedure and



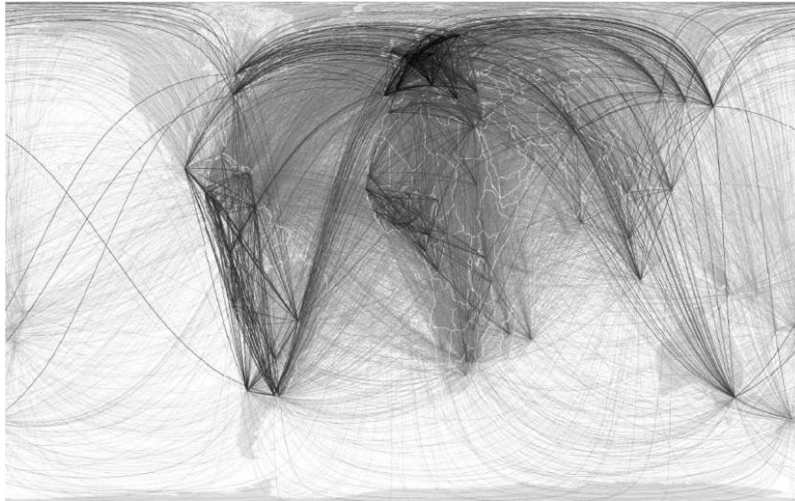


FIG. 11.—Network of states formed by common intergovernmental organization memberships (valued ties).

classifications employed by Ingram et al. (2005, p. 853), who distinguish four broad categories of IGOs (general purpose, military/political, economic, and social/cultural), figures 12–15 show separate network maps by category. The results reveal regionalization in all four IGO fields, although the specific pattern of regionalization varies in interesting ways. The network of general purpose IGOs is globalized, although it is surprisingly not as densely integrated as the networks of economic IGOs or social/cultural IGOs. However, regionalization is especially pronounced in Europe in the very dense economic network. Regionalization is also notable in Europe, West Africa, and Latin America in the social/cultural network, and the political/military network is sparse, with the exception of strong ties within the global south.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> I thank Paul Ingram for sharing the coding data that made the function-specific analysis possible. Further analysis of IGOs classified by Ingram et al.'s finer-grained eight-category scheme is available from the author. This coding disaggregates economic IGOs into three subcategories: general (including monitoring and industry specific), standardization, and development. It also disaggregates social/cultural into three subcategories: environmental, general, and education/research. The general economic network has a very high overall volume of ties and is highly regionalized. The general social/cultural network and the education/research network are regionalized as well. The other networks are more global in structure. This less aggregated analysis suggests that the regionalized structure of the world polity is driven primarily by economic IGOs (although education/research and social/cultural networks intensify this regionalization).

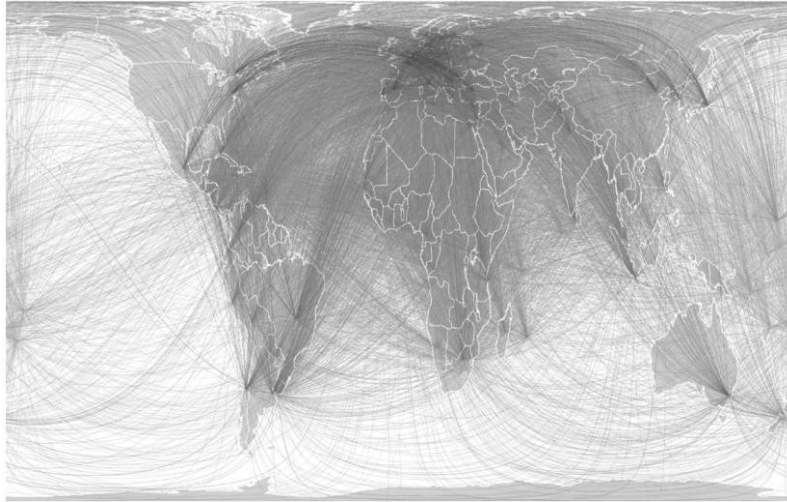


FIG. 12.—Network of states formed by general purpose intergovernmental organizations

#### DISCUSSION

While previous work has shown that ties to IGOs are associated with policy diffusion, international conflict, and international trade (Boli and Thomas 1999; Ingram et al. 2005; Hafner-Burton and Montgomery 2006) and that states are becoming more equal in their levels of IGO memberships (Beckfield 2003), the relational structure of the network of IGOs and states has not been examined. This article examines the evolution of the structure of the world polity since 1820 and finds that while states have become densely interconnected through common memberships in IGOs, the field of IGOs has become less densely interconnected, more centralized, less cohesive, and more uneven in its structure. Overall, there is evidence of growing disintegration, fragmentation, heterogeneity, and regionalization in a world polity that has become ever less like the small world envisioned by several approaches to political globalization.

The findings presented in this article highlight a crucial distinction in the types of ties that bind the world polity into a bipartite network. On the one hand, global and inclusive organizations such as the UN create common ties among (almost) all states; these universalistic organizations are ideal typical for world polity theory. On the other hand, regional and exclusive organizations such as the EU and Association of Southeast Asian Nations create common ties among only some states; these particularistic organizations are divided by their nonoverlapping membership. The simultaneous growth of global, inclusive ties and regional, exclusive ties

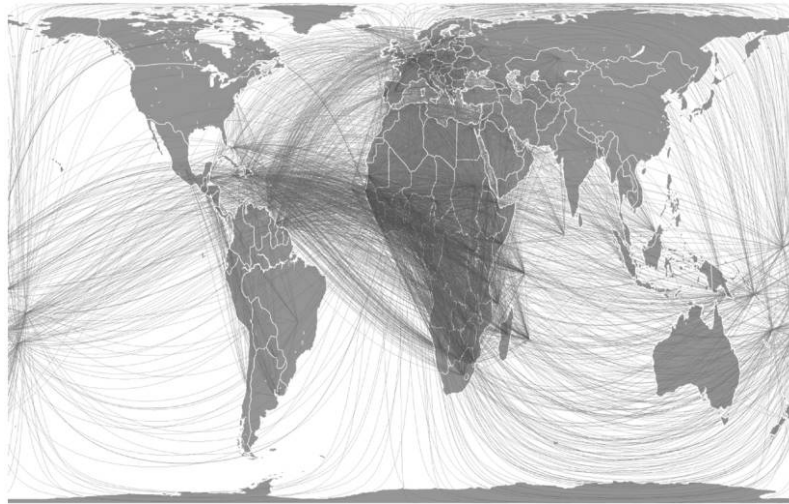


FIG. 13.—Network of states formed by military/political intergovernmental organizations

has produced a world polity in which states are increasingly interconnected through common membership in global organizations, but the field of international organizations is increasingly fragmented. States are coming together. Organizations are coming apart. In sum, the world polity shows no evidence of flattening (cf. Friedman 2006, p. 460). Nor is it becoming a small world. Instead, the world polity more closely resembles “a world of regions” (Katzenstein 2005).

This heterogeneity, fragmentation, disintegration, and regionalization is at odds with implications drawn from world polity theory for world political structure. The structural implications of world polity theory hold truer for the world political network formed by general-purpose IGOs that work toward global standardization and coordination and less true for the networks formed by military/political, economic, and social/cultural IGOs. This suggests that world polity theory may be more applicable to modernizing, rationalizing IGOs than to the economic IGOs that dominate the field. Of course, these conclusions are subject to the limitations of network analysis: to draw strong inferences, we need rich data on not just the presence or absence but also the content of world polity ties and the within-IGO dynamics of the world polity. Such information is necessary to determine precisely how we should interpret the regionalization of the world polity. One interpretation is that states join IGOs according to local interests (and common interests then cause common policy changes), but the demonstration of substantial structural heterogeneity and regionalization by this network analysis is merely the point of de-

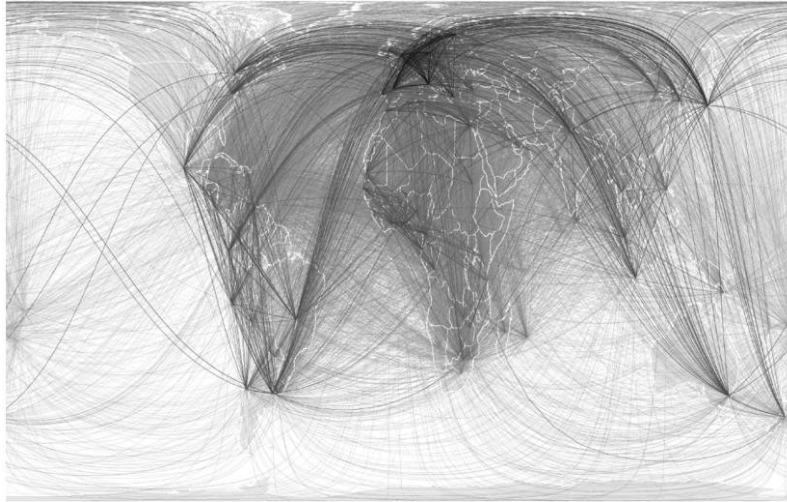


FIG. 14.—Network of states formed by economic intergovernmental organizations

parture for research that might determine the relative roles of interests, homophily, and script diffusion in policy change.

Setting aside the limitations of network analysis, that the social structure of the world polity has evolved toward sparseness and centralization is especially intriguing because it contrasts with the finding that the international trade network grew increasingly dense and decentralized between 1959 and 1996 (Kim and Shin 2002).<sup>26</sup> This contrast suggests that political globalization and economic globalization may not necessarily be reinforcing processes (cf. Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000), and it supports Guillén's (2001a, p. 255) call for more research on the relations among the various dimensions of globalization. Ultimately, the potential correspondence between political globalization and economic globalization is an open empirical question. It is merely suggestive that the global structures of the world polity and international trade have evolved somewhat differently in the postwar period, except that both indicate evidence of substantial regionalization.

In addition to the problems of political and economic globalization, the fragmented social structure of the world polity carries implications for

<sup>26</sup> Kim and Shin (2002) also find increased regionalization of trade, which they interpret as evidence of the symbiosis of globalization and regionalization.

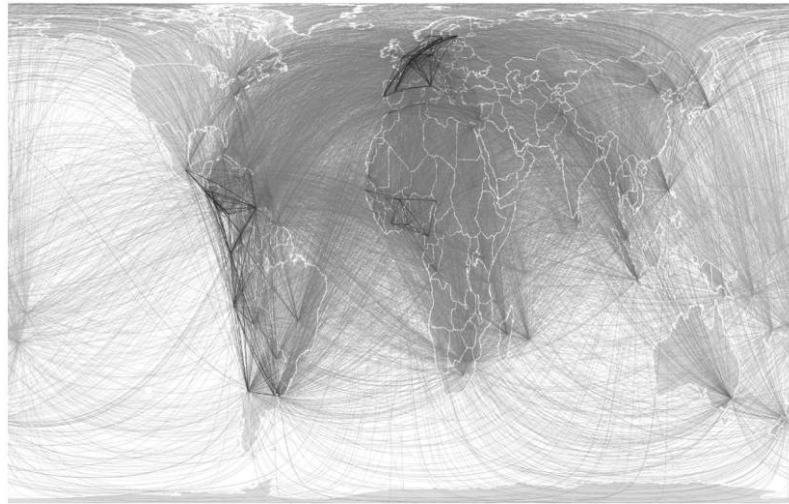


FIG. 15.—Network of states formed by social/cultural intergovernmental organizations

three key debates in the globalization literature.<sup>27</sup> First, there is debate over the very existence of globalization, with Ohmae (1990), Reich (1991), and Held et al. (1999) arguing for extensive or transformative globalization, while Hirst and Thompson (1996), Wade (1996), and Fligstein and Merand (2002) argue that “globalization” is better characterized as a process of internationalization or even Europeanization, given its geographical unevenness. This article contributes to this debate, most of which remains centered on the economic dimension, with evidence that political ties among states and international organizations have become less dense and cohesive overall and are substantially structured by place.<sup>28</sup>

Second, there is controversy over whether globalization causes increasing isomorphism among states, with many arguing for the maintenance of international difference in the face of global institutional pressures for isomorphism (Garrett 1998; Guillén 2001*b*; Hall and Soskice 2001; Campbell 2004). The fragmented structure of the world polity suggests that these institutional pressures may be channeled through regional polities, which might produce local convergence and global divergence. Third, there is disagreement over whether globalization undermines the sover-

<sup>27</sup> Given space constraints, I recapitulate only some of the key details, but I refer the reader to the reviews of these and other debates by Ó Riain (2000), Guillén (2001*a*), and Brady, Beckfield, and Zhao (2007).

<sup>28</sup> This geographical structuring—regionalization—could also be interpreted as “globalization” (Robertson 1995), as regional forms of international organization spread globally and as regional IGOs model themselves on other IGOs in far-flung regions.

eignty of the nation-state. Waters (1995), Albrow (1997), and Evans (1997), for instance, note that international organizations and associated neoliberal economic policies favor multinational capital at the expense of the state, while others see globalization as creating demands for new forms of territoriality, sovereignty, and regulation that may reinforce the state (Sassen 1996; Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000; Ó Riain 2000). Evidence of growing regionalization in the world polity supports the latter perspective, as it may be that states assert and transform sovereignty through the construction of regional polities such as the EU to forward their interests (Moravcsik 1998).

The findings presented in this article address the social structure of the world polity, and although they have implications for the content of world culture, they do not speak directly to that content.<sup>29</sup> A potentially fruitful direction for future research would be to examine the content of global scripts in the context of the structure of the world polity, given the implications of social structures for ideational structures (Friedkin 1993, 2001; Martin 2002; Moody 2004). For instance, if policy scripts are generated in international organizations, it is reasonable to expect less variation in scripts within clusters of densely interconnected IGOs than between these clusters. Information on the social structure of the world polity could also be combined with data on the content of specific scripts to explore the relationship between the timing of network formation and diffusion (Moody 2002). Given the argument that it is the strength of ties to the world polity that facilitates diffusion, policies should diffuse easiest in and through the most densely integrated regions. Conversely, it could be that world scripts are reinforced, or at a minimum translated, through densely interconnected regional organizations. If the culture of the world polity reflects its social structure, this study of the evolution of the social structure of the world polity suggests the growing potential for substantial difference, centralization, fragmentation, and disintegration. The world (polity) is not flat.

<sup>29</sup> Several scenarios are possible. First, the associations between world polity embeddedness and policy adoption may have actually been understated. Ties to global organizations like the UN may have stronger effects than ties to other organizations, which would mean that including all international organizations in a measure of world polity embeddedness would attenuate the association between embeddedness and policy adoption. Second, the content of world culture could be increasingly independent from the structure of the world polity (Strang and Meyer 1993). Third, memberships in international organizations and the adoption of largely progressive policies in the domains examined by world polity research may be driven by an omitted, difficult-to-measure factor, such as national or regional ideology, international power imbalances, or domestic political factors. This research could incorporate insights on the interaction of international norms with national contexts (Fourcade-Gourinchas and Babb 2002). Such work would advance the critical debate over whether globalization produces a distinctly global culture or reproduces existing differences (Guillén 2001a).

APPENDIX

Intergovernmental Organizations in the 2000 Data

Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development (AAID)	Arab Gulf Program for United Nations Development Organizations
Association of African Central Banks (AACB)	Arab Investment Company (AIC)
Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee	African Intellectual Property Organization
Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction Organization	Arab Labour Organization (ALO)
Association of African Tax Administrators (AATA)	African Malagasy Coffee Organization
Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO)	Arab Monetary Fund (AMF)
Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa	Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)
Arab Cooperation Council (ACC)	ANZUS Council
Agence de La Francophonie (ACCT)	Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD)
African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group)	African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing (AOCRS)
ACP-EU Joint Assembly	Asian-Oceanic Postal Union/Asian-Pacific Postal Union
Association of Caribbean States (ACS)	Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC)
African Civil Service Observatory (ACSO)	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)
Administrative Center for Social Security for Rhine Boatmen	Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council/Asia Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC)
Asian Clearing Union (ACU)	Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD)
Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD)	Asian Productivity Organization
African Export Import Bank (Afreximbank)	Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT)
African Fund for Guarantee and Economic Cooperation	Asian Reinsurance Corporation (Asian Re)
African Postal Union	Regional Cooperation Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science
African Foundation for Research and Development (AFRAND)	African Regional Industrial Property Organization (ARIPO)
Arab Federation for Technical Education (AFTE)	Arab Postal Union/Arab Permanent Postal Commission (APPC)

## World Polity Social Structure

African School of Architecture and Town Planning	Global Network for Biosystematics (BI)
Association of Supervisors of Banks of Latin America and the Caribbean	International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM)
Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries (ANRPC)	Bank for International Settlements
Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)	Agreement for cooperation in dealing with pollution of the North Sea (Bonn Agreement)
Agency for the Safety of Aerial Navigation in Africa and Madagascar	Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)
Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)	Convenio Andrés Bello de integración educativa, científica y cultural
African Timber Organization (ATO)	CAB International
Association of Tin Producing Countries (ATPC)	Conferencia de Autoridades Cinematográficas de Iberoamérica (CACI)
Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center (AVRDC)	Central Asian Economic Community (CAEC)
African Development Bank	Central American Institute for Public Administration
African Oil Palm Development Association (AFOPDA)	African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education
African Reinsurance Corporation (AFRICA RE)	Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Sustainable Development
Amazonian Cooperation Council	Caribbean Community (CARICOM)
Andean Common Market (ANCOM)	Central American Research Institute for Industry
International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS)	Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)
Arctic Council	Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Cocoa Producers Alliance
Baltic Peacekeeping Battalion (BALTBAT)	Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
Baltic Council	Central and Eastern European Privatization Network (CEEPN)
British Commonwealth Scientific Committee/Commonwealth Science Council (CSC)	Central European Free Trade Association (CEFTA)
Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF)	
Benelux Economic Union	
Benelux Economic and Social Consultative Committee	
BioNET INTERNATIONAL—	



- Central European Initiative (CEI)  
Communauté économique et monétaire d'Afrique centrale (CEMAC)  
Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries  
European Organization for Nuclear Research  
Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF)  
Common Fund for Commodities (CFC)  
Conférence interafricaine des marchés d'assurances (CIMA)  
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)  
Conference of Ministers of Agriculture of West and Central Africa  
Council of Ministers of Health of the Arab States of the Gulf  
Council of Europe  
Council for Technical Cooperation in South and Southeast Asia (Colombo Plan)  
Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)  
Conférence des ministres de la jeunesse et des sports des pays  
Conference of Posts and Telecommunications Administrations of Central Africa  
Comité Regional de Sanidad Vegetal del Cono Sur (COSAVE)  
Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries  
Caribbean Postal Union (CPU)  
Commonwealth Telecommunications Board/CTO  
Imperial War Graves Commission/Commonwealth War Graves Commission
- Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)  
Commonwealth Secretariat (ComSec)  
Development Bank of the Great Lakes States  
Desert Locust Control Organization for East Africa  
Danube Commission  
Secretariat of the Commission for East African Cooperation (EAC)  
East African Development Bank (EADB)  
Euro Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)  
Eurasian Patent Organization (EAPO)  
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)  
European Central Bank (ECB)  
Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)  
Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB)  
Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)  
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)  
European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations  
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions  
European Free Trade Association  
European Investment Bank  
European Molecular Biology Conference (EMBC)  
European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL)  
European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization

## World Polity Social Structure

European Postal Financial Services Commission (EPFSC)	Hague Conference on Private International Law
European Patent Office (EPO)/E.P. Organization	Ibero-American Office of Education
European Space Agency (ESA)	Inter-American Children's Institute
European Southern Observatory	Inter-American Conference on Social Security
European Training Foundation (ETF)	Inter-American Development Bank
European Union (EU)	Inter-American Defense Board
European Commission for the Control of Foot and Mouth Disease	International Atomic Energy Agency
European Organization for the Safety of Air Navigation/EUROCONTROL	Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Science
European Company for the Financing of Railway Rolling Stock	Inter-American Investment Corporation
European Collaboration on Measurement Standards (EUROMET)	Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation (IAIGC)
Council of the Entente/Entente Council	International Association of Supreme Administrative Jurisdictions
FAO	Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America	International Bank for Economic Cooperation
Group of Fifteen (G15)	International Bureau for the Protection of the Moselle against Pollution
Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-four on International Monetary Matters	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank)
Group of Three (G3)	International Cotton Advisory Committee
Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)	International Commission of Agricultural Industries
Global Environment Facility (GEF)	International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
Group of Latin American and Caribbean Sugar Exporting Countries	International Cocoa Organization (ICCO)
Gulf Organization for Industrial Consulting (GOIC)	International Center for the Study of the Preservation and the
Gambia River Basin Development Organization	

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| Restoration of Cultural Property   | International Jute Organization (IJO)   |
| International Commission on Civil Status   | International Labor Organization  |
| International Council for the Exploration of the Sea                             | International Lead and Zinc Study Group   |
| International Commission for the Hydrology of the Rhine Basin                    | International Monetary Fund   |
| International Committee of Military Medicine and Pharmacy                        | International Maritime Organization (IMO)   |
| International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries                    | International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO)                                  |
| International Bureau for the Protection of the Rhine against Pollution           | Institute of Nutrition for Central America and Panama (INCAP)                       |
| International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)                                       | Intergovernmental Organization for Marketing Information and Technical Advisory     |
| Intergovernmental Committee of the River Plate Basin Countries                   | Centre for Marketing Information and Advisory Services for Fishery/INFOSAMAK        |
| International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea | International Nickel Study Group (INSG)   |
| International Copper Study Group   | International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT)                  |
| International Coffee Organization  | International Criminal Police Commission  |
| International Civil Defense Organization (ICDO)                                  | Inter-state Organization for Advanced Technicians of Hydraulics and Rural Equipment |
| International Energy Agency (IEA)  | Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)   |
| International Exhibitions Bureau   | International Office of Epizootics  |
| International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)                           | International Organization for Legal Metrology                                      |
| International Finance Corporation (IFC)  | Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration                                  |
| Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)                                | International Olive Oil Council   |
| International Wheat Advisory Committee (IW Council)                              | International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds 1971 and 1992                        |
| International Hydrographic Bureau/International Hydrographic Organization        | Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission  |
| International Institute of Refrigeration   | International Pepper Community (IPC)  |
|  | International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI)                             |

## World Polity Social Structure

International Rice Commission	Latin American Energy
International Red Locust Control Service	Organization
International Rubber Study Group	Latin American Fisheries Development Organization
International Seabed Authority (ISBA)	Latin American Integration Association (LAIA)
Inter-state Bank	Latin American Educational Film Institute
Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)	Latin Union
International Tea Promotion Association (ITPA)	Commission of the Chad Basin/Lake Chad Basin Commission
International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)	Liptako-Gourma Integrated Development Authority (LGA)
International Telecommunication Union	League of Arab States
Intergovernmental TV & Radio Corporation (ITRC MIR)	Multi-Country Posts and Telecommunications Training Centre, Blantyre
International Union for the Publication of Customs Tariffs	Ministerial Conference of West and Central African States on Maritime Transport
International Union for the Protection of Industrial Property	Middle East Mediterranean Travel and Tourism Association (MEMTTA)
International Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works	Multinational Force and Observers (MFO)
Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)
International Vine and Wine Office	Mano River Union (MRU)
International Whaling Commission	Mediterranean Water Network (MWN)
Interoceanmetal	Mercado Común del Cono Sur (Common Market of the Southern Cone)/MERCOSUR
Joint Anti-locust and Anti-avian Organization	Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol
Joint Institute for Nuclear Research	Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA)
Joint Nordic Organization for Lappish Culture and Reindeer Husbandry	North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)
Latin American Civil Aviation Commission (LACAC)	Non-aligned Movement (NAM)
Latin American Center for Physics	North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO)

- North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO)  
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)  
Nordic Council of Ministers  
Nordic Council for Tax Research  
Nordic Development Fund (NDF)  
Northeast Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC)  
Nordic Investment Bank  
International North Pacific Fisheries Commission  
North Pacific Fur Seal Commission  
Niger River Commission/Niger Basin Authority  
Nordic Council  
Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC)  
Pan American Union (OAS)  
Organization for African Unity  
Organization of Coordination for the Control of Endemic Diseases in Central Africa  
Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)  
Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)  
Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne  
Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)  
Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean  
Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)  
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)  
OSPAR Commission  
Central Office for International Railway Transport/OTIF  
Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PA-S-Organization/  
PAHealthOrganization)  
Pan American Institute of Geography and History  
Permanent Court of Arbitration  
Permanent Commission for the Conservation of the Maritime Resources of the South  
Pôle européen de développement (PED)  
Permanent International Association of Road Congresses/ World Road Association  
Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel  
North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES)  
South Pacific Forum (SPF)  
Partners in Population and Development—a South-South Initiative  
Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA)  
Postal Union of the Americas and Spain  
Regional African Satellite Communications Organization (RASCOM)  
Regional Council for Adult Education and Literacy in Africa  
Regional Commonwealth in the Field of Communications (RCC)  
Réserve internationale maritime en méditerranée occidentale (RIMMO)  
International Regional Organization against Plant and Animal Diseases

Rio Group	International Institute for the
South Asian Association for Re-	Unification of Private Law/
gional Cooperation (SAARC)	UNIDROIT
South Asia Cooperative Environ-	United Nations Educational, Sci-
ment Programme (SACEP)	entific, and Cultural Organiza-
Southern African Customs Union	tion (UNESCO)
(SACU)	United Nations Industrial Devel-
Southern African Development	opment Organization (UNIDO)
Community (SADC)	Universal Postal Union
Société arabe des mines de	University of the South Pacific
l'Inchiri (SAMIN)	(USP)
Southeast Asian Ministers of Edu-	Group of Temperate Southern
cation Organization (SEAMEO)	Hemisphere Countries on the
Latin American Economic Sys-	Environment
tem/SELA	Vision and Strategies around the
Central American Integration Sys-	Baltic Sea 2010 (VASAB 2010)
tem (SICA)	West African Examinations
General Treaty on Central Ameri-	Council
can Economic Integration	West Africa Rice Development
South Investment, Trade and	Association (WARDA)
Technological Data Exchange	Working Community of the Dan-
Centre	ube Countries
South Pacific Commission/Secre-	European Customs Union Study
tariat of the Pacific Commission	Group (Customs Cooperation
(SPC)	Council)
South and West Asia Postal Un-	Western European Union (WEU)
ion (SWAPU)	World Health Organization
Tropical Agriculture Research and	World Intellectual Property Or-
Higher Education Center	ganization (WIPO)
Trade and Investment Council	World Meteorological
Joint Administration of the Turkic	Organization
Culture and Arts (TURKSOY)	West-Nordic Foundation
United Arab Shipping Company	World Trade Organization (WTO)
(UASC)	World Tourism Organization
Union économique et monétaire	(WTO)
Ouest africaine (UEMOA)	Wassenaar Arrangement
United Nations	

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