

Cross-National Measures of Party Organizations and Organizational Theory

KENNETH JANDA

Northwestern University, USA

Party organizations are the leprechauns of the political forest, legendary creatures with special powers who avoid being seen. Because no one has ever photographed a party organization, descriptions vary widely and many scholars do not take them seriously enough to investigate their being. Very few scholars study party organization in comparison to the study of concrete things like voters and nations, and you could put into a briefcase all the studies that systematically and empirically compare party organizations across nations. Why don't more people study party organization? It is not for lack of interest, for scholars often discuss party organization. It is that party organizations are so intractable for research. Unlike voters who politely answer questions and unlike nations which dutifully generate statistics, party organizations rarely tell about themselves. Because one must imagine what these invisible creatures look like, it is a very uncertain business to measure and compare party organizations.

This paper proposes measures for party organizations across nations. It begins by briefly demonstrating the paucity of studies on party organization, particularly across nations, and by pointing to a general neglect of the literature on organizational theory. After discussing the relevance of organizational theory to the study of party organization, the paper proposes four measures of party organization that have been used with some success in the study of 158 parties in 53 countries. It concludes by describing some relationships between party organization and party performance.

1. EXISTING CROSS-NATIONAL MEASURES OF PARTY ORGANIZATION

The dearth of empirical studies of party organization – domestic or cross-national – can be demonstrated with reference to the holdings of the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research. Its 1981-82 *Guide to Resources and Services* lists 74 entries under 'political parties', but nearly all of these refer to attitudinal surveys of voters' party preferences or to election returns. Only three entries deal with party organizations as the units of analysis. One (ICPSR Study 7200) is based on a 1965 survey of Republican and Democratic County Chairmen drawn from the primary sampling units of the 1964 national election survey. The

other two (ICPSR 7373 and 7534) pertain to the cross-national study described herein. These are all that exist out of more than 900 studies contained in the Consortium's archives.

Of course, the Consortium does not archive all the world's data sets, and there are a few other studies that contain measures of party organizations. Some recent research on American party organizations is summarized in Gibson *et al.* (1982). As argued below, these efforts usually produce measures that are peculiar to the American party system. Because they are not grounded in general organizational concepts, they do not travel well across nations. The set of explicitly cross-national measures of party organizations – as opposed to party *systems* – is very small. Whereas a number of scholars have devised measures of party systems to use in cross-national studies, using the *nation* as the unit of analysis (see Sigelman and Yough, 1978; Powell, 1981), only a very few have sought to measure party organizations as interacting units of party systems. An early but limited attempt was done by Pride (1970), who studied parties across 26 countries and across time: Pride (1970, 692) classified parties in every decade since their founding into five organizational types: cliques, relatively stable coalitions, cadre, mass, and devotee. However, he then moved from the party level to the party system level by multiplying the type-scores for each party by its strength and summing across all parties in the system. The resulting party organization index was then used to study political mobilization and democratic development across time and across nations. In personal communication, Pride related the difficulty of trying to classify parties across time and nations, and he did not pursue the research further.

Another limited attempt to study party organization across time and nations is reported by Wellhofer (1979). Wellhofer focused on only the socialist-labour parties in four countries – Argentina, Britain, Norway and Sweden – and relied on more objective data to fashion his measure of 'organizational encapsulation', defined as 'the elaboration of party sub-units to envelop as many of the day-to-day life activities of the membership as possible' (Wellhofer 1979, 206). Using from 18 to 27 time-points from the parties' founding to 1970 (or its demise, in the case of the Argentine Socialists), Wellhofer (1979, 207) measured organizational encapsulation by a function of three indicators: (1) the number of local party centres, (2) the proportion of the enfranchised population with membership in the party, and (3) the proportion of the enfranchised population with membership in the principal economic organization of the party. Using complex time-series analysis, he found evidence that organizational encapsulation could be represented by 'a modified Cobb-Douglas production function' that linked organizational inputs to vote outputs across all four parties. This is a careful study, but it is limited in its organizational concern to the concept of encapsulation.

A much broader and very different study is the Middle-Level Elites Project of the European Elections Study (Reif *et al.*, 1980). The project was formed to survey delegates to all party conferences in the (then) nine European Community nations for the purpose of comparing 'the structure of middle-level party élites and their attitudes towards transnational policy-making' (1980, 91). By 1981, the project had administered a common questionnaire to delegates attending conventions of 46 political parties between 1977 and 1981, with plans to include a total of 29 additional parties, many in the three additional countries (Greece, Spain, and Portugal) which applied for admission to the European Community (Reif and Cayrol, 1981).

Although the project was devised as a study of party élites, the data could easily be aggregated by élites within parties to provide measures of party organization. Common questions on time spent on party activities, frequency and place of local party meetings, topics discussed, differences of opinion voiced in discussions, and so on, could be interpreted as indicators of organizational activity. This data set holds considerable potential for organizational analysis, although one wishes that the questions would have been devised originally to measure organizational concepts.

A fourth broad study of party organizations is being undertaken by Ersson and Lane at the University of Umea in Sweden for their study of politics and society in 16 European nations (Ersson and Lane, forthcoming). Ersson has coded 121 parties on a variety of variables, including 13 indicators of party structure. Seven are proposed as measures of party 'integration'; they are (1) form of organization, (2) organizational element, (3) frequency of leadership shifts, (4) separation between party leadership and parliamentary leadership, (5) frequency of party congress, (6) level of candidate nomination, and (7) existence of party factions. The other six are offered as measures of party 'segmentation'. They are (1) the existence of a party organizational network, and (if one exists) the extent of the party's connections with (2) industrial, (3) agricultural, (4) religious, (5) employee, and (6) other types of organizations. At present, all these variables are scored dichotomously or trichotomously. Ersson sums these indicators into preliminary 'summary variables' for his concepts of integration and segmentation, but has yet not conducted tests of reliability and validity pending completion of the scoring. His data set also contains other observations on the parties' year of origin, electoral strength across time, basis of electoral support in the 1960s and 1970s, membership structure over time, and other fruitful variables. This study too holds great promise for cross-national comparative analysis.

From the broadest standpoint of comparative analysis, however, the existing studies of party organization are lacking, to varying degrees, in three ways. First, they tend not to represent a broad enough sample of countries and parties. None of the studies, for example, includes any parties in Africa or the Middle East, and only the Pride study contains an Asian country (Japan). The two most comprehensive studies contain only Western democratic nations. Second, which is akin to the first, the studies tend to focus on 'competitive' parties in democratic countries (although Pride's is an exception). Thus they do not attend to the question of measuring the organizational characteristics of ruling parties in one-party states (of which there are many) and of subversive parties pursuing non-electoral means to power. Third, and this is related to the second, the existing studies tend not to be broadly orientated towards organizational concepts that would permit comparisons across different types of parties. Wellhofer's notion of 'organizational encapsulation' and the 'integration' and 'segmentation' concepts proposed by Ersson and Lane are steps in this direction, but the literature on organizational theory offers richer and better established conceptual frameworks.

2. THE NEGLECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY IN PARTY ANALYSES

The research on American party organizations is even more likely to neglect the organizational theory literature than is the cross-national research. (The study by

Gibson *et al.* (1982) is an exception.) American political scientists tend to approach the topic of party organization in a parochial way, using concepts that are specific to party politics in the United States. Their literature describes two dominant electoral coalitions, without party membership, operating under a presidential form of government in a context of direct primaries and numerous offices elected frequently at fixed intervals across a federal system. Hence, it deals heavily with such topics as two-party competition, amateurs vs. professionals, party-in-government vs. party-in-congress, delegate selection, voting registration, and urban machines. Research using these concepts has contributed much to our knowledge about American party organizations, but that research has not been guided by concepts general enough for integration with foreign studies of party organization.

The insularity of party organization research in the United States is striking, given its roots in Ostrogorski's (1902) comparison of the British and American party systems and Michels' (1911) analysis of organizational power in the German Social Democratic Party. Despite the rejuvenation given to broad comparisons of parties by Duverger's postwar classic (1951), the emphasis in American party research has been heavily domestic. Moreover, as Schlesinger notes (1965, 764), it has been conducted 'outside the main stream of organizational theory'. He finds it 'remarkable how little the study of party organization *per se*, as distinct from a related phenomenon as electoral behaviour, has developed beyond its state at the turn of the century'. Schlesinger's charge is not an off-hand observation; it introduces his article on 'Political Party Organization' in March's *Handbook of Organizations* (1965), which focuses, typically, on the American party literature.

More than 15 years later, the state of research has not changed much. Parties still stand outside the mainstream of organizational theory, as shown by a count of index entries to the recent two-volume *Handbook of Organizational Design* by Nystrom and Starbuck (1981). The index refers to political parties on only 33 pages – fewer than the 39 references to churches, 48 to military organizations, 66 to schools, 69 to hospitals, 70 to voluntary associations, 94 to unions, and more than 100 references each to universities and colleges, local and regional governments, national governments, and manufacturing industries. Among these institutional sectors, business firms are by far the most frequent index entry, with 438 references. Clearly, business firms stand at the core of organizational theory, while political parties remain on the periphery.

3. WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY?

The parochial focus of American research on party organizations and its relative isolation from the literature on organizational theory has hampered the development of party research (see Crotty, 1970; Wright, 1971). The literature on organizational theory is enormous, and it would be futile to attempt to review it here for its relevance to the study of party organization. Fortunately for political scientists, organizational theorists do a good job of reviewing it periodically themselves. The interested reader is directed to recent reviews by Scott (1975) of literature on organizational structure, Aldrich and Pfeffer (1976) on organizational environments, Lammers (1978) on comparative analysis, Mitchell (1979) on organizational behaviour, Kanter and Brinkerhoff (1981) on organizational performance, and Cummings (1982) on organizational behaviour. Other assessments of topics in

organizational theory are given in the handbooks by March (1965) and Nystrom and Starbuck (1981) mentioned earlier.

Despite the great body of literature on organizational theory, Scott (1975, 1) says the field began only in the later 1940s, and its emergence as a separate subdiscipline (with sessions at professional meetings, university faculties, and so on) was not until the 1960s according to Lammers (1978, 485). Scott identified three trends in organizational research since the 1950s. The first shifted focus from the study of human behaviour in 'formal' organizations to variable properties of those organizations. The second, allied with the first, recognized organizations as 'open' rather than 'closed' systems and thus susceptible to environmental influences. The third was the movement away from case studies of single organizations to comparative analysis. Scott's own review focused on developments in the first trend, dimensionalizing organizational structure. Scott's second trend in the literature was explored by Aldrich and Pfeffer (1976) in their review of environmental influences on organizations. They compared the 'natural selection' model of organizations, which holds that organizations are formed to fit the environment, with the 'resource dependence' model (also called the 'structural contingency' model), which holds that environmental influences are important but not determining of organizational properties, and that organizations seek to, and can, manage their environment within limits. Scott's third trend was the subject two years later of Lammers's article (1978) on the comparative sociology of organizations.

Lammers's review has special relevance for the cross-national study of party organization, for the trends he detects in the organizational theory literature parallel writings on political parties. First, he finds that the search for organizational 'types' has been superseded by an interest in conceptualizing and measuring organizational variables. (Pride's early research classifying parties into types, and Ersson's recently proposed indicators of party structure fit here). Second, he notes the search for law-like generalizations, which has its critics but also yields some worthwhile results (Wellhofer's study of organizational encapsulation and party vote as a Cobb-Douglas production function is an example). Third, he notes a somewhat reactive trend: the search for regularities in one institutional area (the tendency to limit analysis to Western democratic parties is analogous). Fourth, he discovers a few pioneering efforts at cross-societal research on organizations (we mentioned some above and will discuss another below). And fifth, Lammers sees increasing interest in the study of organizations within their institutional and societal settings (political scientists have always been interested in the political context within which parties operate, but recently there has been a more focused interest in parties' social and economic environments; see Harmel and Janda, 1982). Unfortunately, Lammers does not think that the literature on organizational theory has delivered on the promise of cross-societal research on environmental effects on organizations. In spite of some early excellent work, 'no systematic comparison of organizations in divergent social settings, either by way of cross-societal studies or by way of historical analyses, were undertaken' (Lammers 1978, 500).

As Lammers suggests, research on organizational theory has its own shortcomings. Indeed, the mainstream of that research has some vocal critics. Zey-Ferrell and Aiken (1981), for example, have advanced 12 criticisms of what they call the dominant 'quantitative', comparative structural approach and the structural contingency perspective that allows for environmental effects on organizational

structure.¹ For our purposes, perhaps the most important of their criticisms is the denial that 'there are universal laws of organizational structure and functioning and that through empirical research these generalizations can be discovered'.

An alternative view, which we call the specificity or particularistic approach, holds that different types of organizations have different processes, structures, environments, customers, clients, employee aspirations, and contingencies. Under this assumption, it is considered more fruitful to try to understand organizations in terms of those elements that are unique or specific to them rather than in terms of those things that are general to all organizations (Zey-Ferrell and Aiken, 1981, 16).

This criticism invites both a narrow and a broad interpretation. The narrow interpretation supports the search for generalizations about organizations in one institutional area, but not the search for generalizations about all organizations (this might permit generalizations about party organizations as an institutional type; certainly it would permit generalizations about competitive parties in democratic societies). The broader interpretation, however, is more hostile to the notion of organizational theory itself. As they conclude this criticism, Zey-Ferrell and Aiken (1981, 16) state, 'The universalistic and particularistic assumptions lead to different strategies of organizational analysis. The particularistic holds that it is premature, if not impossible, to develop universal generalizations about [even] a given type of organization'.

Political scientists (least of all) should not be surprised that the field of organizational theory is experiencing some paradigmatic conflict. If the 'particularistic' position wins out, however, there may not be much value in relating the study of party organizations to organizational theory. Because most of the literature on organizational theory is based on non-voluntary organizations (overwhelmingly business firms), it would have little relevance (under either a narrow or broad interpretation) to parties as a type of voluntary organization.

Even if the 'universalistic' position should prove valid, there is some question about the utility of mainstream organizational research methods and findings for the study of party organizations. The dominant perspective, as labelled by Zey-Ferrell and Aiken, is 'quantitative, comparative structural' or, more recently, 'structural contingency'. Political scientists might reasonably expect this literature to offer fruitful examples of research on organizational structures to guide the empirical study of party structure. Unfortunately, the research record is not encouraging. In his current review of the literature on organizational behaviour, Cummings (1982, 568) admits, 'As we all know, the study, and more particularly the results produced by the study, of organization structure has been a major disappointment for many of us working within organizational behaviour'.

This conclusion is discouraging to learning about party organizations from organizational theory. If the study of organizational structure has been disappointing to those in the field, what is the payoff for the study of political parties? First, we must determine the cause for disappointment with the study of organizational structure. Cummings (1982, 568) sees one of the central reasons as 'inadequate attention to questions of construct validity'. Price (1972, 3) author of the *Handbook of Organizational Measurement* that we will consult later, agrees that organizational research usually does not deal explicitly with the problem of validity. Regretfully, this charge does not distinguish the literature of organizational theory from the rest of social science. What the organizational research literature does well is develop broad

concepts for dealing with organizations in general, across societies as well as across institutions. A prime example of such research is *Organizations Alike and Unlike*, edited by Lammers and Hickson (1979), which reports studies that are comparative across institutions and cultures. The lesson and the payoff for the study of party organization across nations lies in the conceptual scope of organizational theory.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL CONCEPTS FOR ANALYSING PARTIES

There is no single conceptual framework that is accepted within organizational theory, but there are numerous concepts known by relatively standard terms that figure in most organizational studies. Most of these have relevance to party analysis and some are especially applicable to cross-national studies of diverse party organizations. A dated but still useful review of concepts in organizational theory applicable to the study of political parties was done by Anderson (1968). Anderson identifies the concepts of survival, effectiveness, autonomy, control, consensus, involvement, formalization and goals as being especially relevant to party organizational research. All of his concepts are prominent in organizational research, although they may appear under different terms. For example, his 'control' may be termed 'centralization' or 'power' by others, while 'involvement' may be 'motivation' to some. While it is also true that identical terms do not imply identical concepts, the similarity is sufficient to establish conceptual comparability with Price's *Handbook of Organizational Measurement* (1972). Price identified 28 concepts 'about which there is the greatest degree of agreement among organizational researchers' (1972, 7). Although some organizational researchers would disagree with Price's list (see Mohr, 1974), it should serve our limited purposes of illustration. Price, who does not cite Anderson, includes all of Anderson's concepts except survival in his list of 22 concepts for which he could find suitable measures: absenteeism; administrative staff; alienation; autonomy; centralization; communication; complexity; consensus; co-ordination; dispersion; distributive justice; effectiveness; formalization; innovation; mechanization; motivation; bases of power; routinization; satisfaction; size; span of control; succession.

Price was unable to locate suitable measures for six other concepts: conformity, co-optation, efficiency, ideology, shape, and sanctions (1972, 195-6). His inability to find measures for his key concepts in organizational theory reflects Cummings's disappointment with study of organizational structure. As Price (1972, 1) says, 'The level of organizational measurement could be significantly improved, to state the matter charitably'. Certainly there is not much sophistication reflected in the measures that Price reports for his key concepts. Most measures are based on single items rather than multiple indicators, and almost all are at the nominal or ordinal levels. Very few measures are accompanied by information on reliability and validity (Price, 1972, 1-3). These observations leave little to recommend adopting measures from this literature for research on party organizations. Moreover, cross-national researchers who cannot question party members but who must rely on library materials will find even less guidance from organizational research, most of which is 'based on data obtained through questioning individuals' (Price, 1972, 4).

Although few measures in the organizational research literature may merit direct transference to the study of party organizations, the concepts motivating the measures can stimulate the formulation of more satisfactory ones for similar party

concepts. The enterprising party researcher would do well to look to the *Handbook of Organizational Measurement* for ideas about operationalizing concepts. Unfortunately, the book did not exist when the International Comparative Political Parties Project was undertaken, but Anderson's conceptual review was available and had a great impact on the shape of the research on party organizations.

5. ICPP CONCEPTS OF PARTY ORGANIZATION

The ICPP Project was established in 1967 to conduct the first systematic, empirically based, comparative analysis of political parties across the world. It studied all the parties meeting minimum standards of strength and stability in a random sample of 53 countries stratified according to cultural-geographic area of the world. Information for the project was collected from library materials stored in a microfilm and computer information retrieval system (Janda, 1968, 1982a). The conceptual framework that guided coding of party variables from this information base was proposed in 1969, before a single party was scored on a single variable (Janda, 1970). That framework is explained at length elsewhere (Janda, 1980) and will only be outlined here. The conceptual framework is also discussed briefly in the coding manual that accompanies the data set deposited with the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (Janda, 1979a).²

The ICPP conceptual framework consists of 12 main concepts grouped for convenience into two categories: eight concepts pertaining to a party's 'external relations' with society, and four dealing with its 'internal organization'. Each concept was measured using multiple indicators called 'basic variables'. The concepts and the basic variables underlying each are as follows:

<i>External Relations</i>	No. of Indicators
Institutionalization	7
Governmental Status	8
Social Attraction	6
Social Concentration	6
Social Reflection	6
Issue Orientation	13
Goal Orientation	33
Autonomy	5
<i>Internal Organization</i>	
Degree of Organization (complexity)	7
Centralization of Power	8
Coherence	6
Involvement	6
Total	
111	

The four concepts pertaining to a party's 'internal organization' were adapted from Anderson (1968). The concepts of goal orientation and autonomy were also included in his organizational concepts, but they are regarded as aspects of a party's

'external relations' with society rather than its internal organization. Only the internal organization concepts will be considered here.

Degree of Organization: This concept conforms to Anderson's 'formalization' dimension, which he describes as structured patterns of interaction that are prescribed either by formal rules of procedure or by traditions and unwritten rules (Anderson, 1968, 398-9). The more formalized the organization the more structured the behaviour patterns – with 'structure' meaning 'complexity'. Price (1972, 107) identifies one concept for formalization – 'the degree to which the norms of a social system are explicit' – and another for complexity – 'the degree of structural differentiation within a system' (Price, 1972, 70). My degree of organization conforms closer to Price's concept of complexity, especially as I defined the concept as the complexity of regularized procedures for mobilizing and co-ordinating the efforts of party supporters in executing the party's strategy and tactics. Seven basic variables were advanced as operational measures of degree of organization, which has come to be known more simply as 'complexity':

Structural Articulation
 Intensiveness of Organization
 Extensiveness of Organization
 Frequency of Local Meetings
 Frequency of National Meetings
 Maintaining Records
 Pervasiveness of Organization

Note that none of these indicators tap explicitness of norms, and that all deal with structural differentiation in some form. These indicators were expected to be positively intercorrelated, but Frequency of National Meetings was less strongly related than the others. A scale formed from the remaining six items had a reliability of .82 as measured by Cronbach's alpha.

Centralization of Power: Anderson (1968, 392-6) identified several ideas in the notion of organizational 'control', one of which referred to the distribution of power within the organization, which I term the centralization of power. This is exactly Price's meaning of centralization: 'the degree to which power is concentrated in a social system' (1972, 43). Specifically, I define a centralized party as one that features the concentration of effective decision-making authority in the national party organs, with a premium placed on a smaller number of individuals participating in the decision. It is measured by these eight indicators:

Nationalization of Structure
 Selecting the National Leader
 Selecting Parliamentary Candidates
 Allocating Funds
 Formulating Policy
 Controlling Communications
 Administering Discipline
 Leadership Concentration

These eight variables were positively intercorrelated as expected, and formed an

overall scale with a reliability of .83. This scale could be broken into two subscales, one tapping 'structural' power and the other 'personal' power.

Coherence: Anderson's (1968, 396-7) concept of 'consensus' referred to the 'degree of congruence in the cultural orientations of various individuals and groups comprising an organization'. This is virtually identical with Price's definition: 'the degree of agreement on values among the members of a social system' (1972, 78). Because Anderson's concept (and Price's) dealt with agreement on attitudes and values, information which was unlikely to be obtained for foreign political parties from library materials, I devised the somewhat narrower concept of 'coherence' - the degree of congruence in the attitudes and *behaviour* of party members. I operationalized the concept with six variables that emphasized party behaviour:

- Legislative Cohesion
- Ideological Factionalism
- Issue Factionalism
- Leadership Factionalism
- Strategic or Tactical Factionalism
- Party Purges

The last variable proved not to correlate with the other five, which formed a coherence scale with a reliability of .72. Because legislative cohesion is often used as a dependent variable by itself, it has been dropped from the scale in some subsequent research, and the four remaining measures have been used to measure the concept of 'factionalism'. This subconcept seems to be peculiarly suited to the study of party organizations rather than organizations in general. The term 'factionalism' does not appear at all in Price's discussion of organizational concepts, and it is not included in the comprehensive index to Nystrom and Starbuck (1981).

Involvement: Anderson (1968, 397-8) does not exactly define involvement but discusses it in terms of the amount and type of participation in the organization. Price mentions 'involvement' as a synonym for his concept of 'motivation' - the degree to which members of a social system are willing to work (1972, 137). This is close to my definition of involvement as the intensity of psychological identification with the party and as the commitment to furthering its objectives by participating in party activities. It is measured by these indicators:

- Membership Requirements
- Membership Participation
- Material Incentives
- Purposive Incentives
- Doctrinism
- Personalism

Personalism did not correlate as expected with the other indicators, and the remaining five produced an involvement scale with a reliability of .78.

What is the value of formulating such abstract concepts as organizational complexity, centralization of power, coherence, and autonomy for the comparative analysis of political parties? Apart from the intellectual interest in relating one field of study, political parties, to a broader field, organizational theory, there are two

definite gains. One is that the more general concepts facilitate comparisons among very different political parties in various regions of the world, by giving additional meaning to the parties' particular organizational features. Consider these facts: the Democratic Party of the United States has its Congressional candidates nominated in primary elections involving party supporters in each congressional district, while the Democratic Party of Guinea nominates its legislative candidates locally but the choices are subject to approval by a national election commission. These facts have little significance until they are viewed as indicators of the concept of centralization of power. Viewing these facts and other information on the indicators of centralization, one can amass evidence to show not only that the American Democratic Party is less centralized than the Guinean Democratic Party, but also *how much* the two differ and how they compare with other parties across the world in the centralization of power.³ Such comparative analysis is possible only when party organization is broadly conceptualized and indicators are carefully matched to conceptualizations.

The second advantage of using broad organizational concepts in comparative party research is that organizational theory can help one theorize about party processes. An example will be given to make the point. In *Parties and Their Environments*, Harmel and Janda (1982) try to assess environmental effects on party characteristics to determine whether national environments impose limits to party reform. They found that country identity (hence, 'environment') explained about 57% of the variance in organizational complexity measured for 95 competitive parties in 28 democratic nations. The next task was to discover what specific factors in the country environment explained that variance. The organizational theory literature was a helpful source of hypotheses about non-political environmental factors. Stinchcombe (1965) proposed that 'modern' environments gave rise to complex organizations, while Hall (1977) suggested that 'complex' environments (which we interpreted as population density) fostered complex organizations. These two social factors from the literature on organizational theory were included with four political factors (electoral system, restrictions on suffrage, recency of democratic experience, and party competition) in a model predicting to party organizational complexity (one of several concepts analysed). These six variables explained 77% of the environmental variance associated with party complexity. Perhaps we would have uncovered these social factors through our own devices, but the organizational theory literature readily offered the hypotheses for testing.

If one needs a second example to prove the value of organizational theory to comparative party research, consult the article by Child (1981), on 'Culture, Contingency and Capitalism in the Cross-National Study of Organizations'. Child deals generally with the factors of culture and type of economic system that Janda and Gillies (1982b) investigated in their study of regional effects on party characteristics. Janda and Gillies not only found cultural effects on party characteristics in the major regions of the world, but they also found that when countries are divided by political economy into the 'first', 'second', and 'third' worlds, 124 of 138 parties (90%) are correctly classified into 'their' worlds by a discriminant function analysis based on the parties' organizational characteristics. Child contends that countries' political economy has an effect on organizations in general, not just parties. Lammers and Hickson (1979, 420-9) review some organizational studies that corroborate Child, and produce a cross-national typology of organization on the concepts

of power and rule-orientation that parallel the findings of Janda and Gillies concerning the division of countries into first- and third-world categories. Surely, the literature on organizational theory has relevance to the comparative analysis of political parties.

6. CONCLUSION: PARTY ORGANIZATION AND PERFORMANCE

The case up to now has been made for the value of studying party organizations, especially across nations, in the context of organizational theory. Even if organizational theory proves useful to the study of party organization, it has not yet been established what the study of party organization itself yields in the way of useful knowledge. What does it matter whether some parties are more centralized than others; whether some are higher or lower on complexity, factionalism, and involvement? Some evidence from American studies indicates that party organizational effort has some impact on party performance, as measured by election returns. Crotty (1971) reviews some of this literature and, with his own research, finds that party activity can increase the vote for party candidates from 5 to 20 percentage points.

Cross-national research on the effects of party organization has been lacking due to the absence of suitable cross-national data. Research using the four concepts discussed above has shown, however, that variations in party organization have substantial effects on party performance, measured according to electoral success, breadth of activities, and legislative cohesion (Janda, 1979b). Almost 30% of the variance in electoral success enjoyed by competitive parties in democratic systems could be attributed to differences in party complexity, centralization, and involvement. More than 33% of the variance in breadth of party activities (e.g., propagandizing and providing for members' welfare) could be explained by the concepts of complexity and centralization for competitive parties and by centralization and involvement for non-competitive parties. Nearly 50% of the variance in legislative cohesion among competitive parties in systems with effective legislatures could be explained by complexity, centralization, involvement and factionalism. Note that all of these explanatory models utilized only organizational variables – without reference to party ideology, distribution of public opinion, state of the economy, or any other factors that might intrude on the relationship between organization and performance. This suggests that organizational effects on party performance are substantial.

We are still a long way away from understanding the exact relationship between party organization and party performance, but the existing evidence from cross-national research indicates that the relationship is sufficiently robust to be detected in initial investigations of variations in party organization. It appears that party organizations, like leprechauns, do have special powers, but some use their powers better than others.

NOTES

- 1 The 12 criticisms of Zey-Ferrell and Aiken (1981, 2) are that analysts who use the comparative structural and structural contingency approaches: (1) endorse asociological views of organizations; (2) conduct ahistorical analyses of organizations; (3) generate ideologically conservative assumptions and

- methods of analysis; (4) construct theory which reifies organizational goals; (5) hold to an overly rational image of the functioning of organizations; (6) view organizational systems as integrated through the value consensus of its employee members; (7) hold images of humans as non-volitional; (8) view organizations as overly constrained; (9) emphasize only the static structural aspects of organizations; (10) view organizations as the exclusive unit of analysis; (11) construct universal generalizations about the structure and functioning of organizations; (12) give inadequate attention to the analysis of power relationships in organizational studies'.
- 2 Unfortunately, the list of variables published in the front of the ICPSR codebook for study 7534 is very confusing, even to me: I have prepared a revised listing that is available on request. Write me at the Department of Political Science, Northwestern University; Evanston, Illinois 60201.
 - 3 Some might object to the equivalence of indicator variables for parties of different types and in different regions. The problem of indicator and conceptual equivalence is discussed in Janda (1971). Suffice it to say here that in so far as the problem of conceptual inapplicability in comparative party research lies in using 'Western' concepts for non-Western parties, the 'fit' of indicators across five of seven concepts tested is actually better for the non-Western than the Western parties.

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