

Michael Hutter - michael.hutter@unil.ch

The logistics of systems knowledge and its international knowledge
exchange through the International Institute for Applied Systems
Analysis (between 1972-1983)

Supervisor: Thomas David

Abstract: The International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (hereafter: I.I.A.S.A.) was created as an international and interdisciplinary research center, meant to improve scientific approaches that would suggest solutions for complex problems of industrialized (or modern) societies. The community within and around the I.I.A.S.A. purported an image that was keen in advancing scientific advice for future policy planning for both, Eastern and Western states during a Cold War. This PhD project aims at uncovering the interplay of institutional, scientific and political contexts that guided I.I.A.S.A.'s research principles of systems analysis and policy planning, which were dominated by a specific scientific and political value system in the beginning of the 1970s. The ultimate goal of this PhD thesis is to inquire how systems knowledge at the I.I.A.S.A. was professed, and how it participated and shaped pathways for internal and external scientific expertise. The study furthermore regards the balances of what was integrated into research and what was left aside, as to demonstrate how the institute's own legitimacy in the international arena was maintained. The I.I.A.S.A. disseminated a methodological toolkit for global, national and regional actors: those of applied systems analysis as a non-confrontational actor in policy making. The historical investigation focuses on micro-scale controversies about research practices, the organization and development of I.I.A.S.A.'s community: (i) By means of a systematic review of I.I.A.S.A.'s research publications between 1972 and 1983 and (ii), through historicizing four research projects within I.I.A.S.A. research infrastructure. The PhD thesis endeavors how I.I.A.S.A.'s knowledge reached out into the policy-making realm through cooperation with other international organizations, through cooperation and correspondence with the participating national member organization and national academies of sciences, and through cooperation with regional research institutions and regional policy making authorities.

Keywords: Systems Analysis, Environmental Management, History of Sciences, History of International Relation, Philosophy of Sciences
