

Policy process and regime forms

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The aim of this presentation is to review conceptual frameworks and methodologies for analysing the policy process under different political regime forms. The presentation is organised under the following headings:

1. The policy process
2. Social classes and forms of regime
3. Decision-making structures and the policy process

4. Policy implementation and impact
5. State autonomy and the policy process

1. The policy process

There is no consensus on how to conceptualize the policy process. In very broad terms this process comprises the various stages through which a policy is formulated and implemented. In historical-materialist and certain other approaches the concept also includes the effects or the impact of a given policy.

I propose the following terminology for the description and the analysis of policy processes in general:

A. Articulation, aggregation and selection of demands (policy formulation)

If we use David Easton's dynamic response model of a political system these are the major demand inputs which are subsequently

converted into policies and what he termed outputs from the system.⁶⁴

The terminology is not used by mainstream policy analyses mainly because - like the statist approaches - these tend to investigate the whole process from the point of view of the state apparatuses. This may lead to the following break down of the policy formulation process - taken from Hogwood and Gunn:⁶⁵

- a) Deciding to decide
 which involves a search for issues and agenda-setting
- b) Deciding how to decide and filtration of issues
- c) Issue definition (possibly some forecasting exercises)

Demands from the 'environment' may play a role here but the terminology denotes that the decision makers including the bureaucracy have the initiative and decide what to do, how and when.

The focus is on decision making and formulation of policy within the state apparatus. It is assumed that politicians and bureaucrats can and should choose correct policies. Some of these statist approaches, therefore, are called rational choice or public choice approaches.

It should be added, though, that some of the mainstream approaches to policy studies include involuntary failures to act and deliberate decisions not to act. Such *non-decisions* may be produced and reproduced by prevailing ideologies also. Certain issues never reaches the agenda simply because they are not considered issues at all - like private property rights in any modern Western society.

Classical Marxist approaches never developed any sophisticated concepts for the analysis of policy formulation. Instead, they emphasized a comparison between the policies formulated and pursued

⁶⁴ David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*, New York, John Wiley & Sons, 1965, p 29 ff.

⁶⁵ Brian W. Hogwood and Lewis A. Gunn, *Policy Analysis for the Real World*, London, Oxford University Press, 1984.

with the interests of the various classes in society. Neo-Marxist theorists have put a little more emphasis on policy formulation, e.g. by emphasizing the uneven accessibility for different social classes to the centres of decision making. As part of this perspective, these neo-Marxist approaches have also highlighted the non-decision problematic by pointing out how issues of particular interest to the working class and other non-dominant classes never get on the political agenda for discussion and action.

B. Setting objectives and priorities

This is the outcome of the policy formulation process - or the output from the demand conversion process in Eastons' terminology.

C. Policy implementation, monitoring and control

Implementation refers to the often complicated process through which declared policies are transformed into specific actions and outputs from political institutions. These outputs are normally monitored to some extent, i.e. they are compared with the outputs planned or expected.

D. Policy impact

Impact - or outcomes or effects - are distinguished from the immediate outputs produced by state institutions simply because the outputs and specific actions may not necessarily bring about the impact intended. This is generally recognized in the literature.

What is not agreed upon is whether the discrepancies between stated policies and their impact reveal a consistent pattern or not. Statist approaches would maintain that patterns may occur but that they would be different from one policy area to another and also depending on how well the policies were planned and coordinated. Historical materialist approaches would claim a more consistent pattern across all policy areas in favour of those classes and other social forces which constitute the power bloc.

The importance of the state's institutional form

As mentioned earlier there has been a general tendency among Marxist theorists to assign low priority to the organisation and institutionalisation of the policy formulating and decision-making processes. I will argue against this by claiming that if we do not include in our analysis an account of how a particular policy was decided, we lose valuable insight into the policy process as a whole. And if we do not investigate the organisational and institutional aspects of the implementation process, we may come to biased or even wrong conclusions about the determining factors.

These points I will try to substantiate during the course of this presentation.

2. Social classes and forms of regime

Let me introduce the problematic by referring to one of the overall propositions put forward by structuralist Marxism - the proposition that the main features of the class relations generate specific forms of state. Or more specifically: different types of class relations and of class power constellations generate corresponding forms of state organisation.⁶⁶

This proposition may be transformed into two basic assumptions:

The *first* assumption is that the form of regime in a society is a product of political-ideological struggles among the social classes and other social forces. In this sense, the prevailing form of regime is a dependent variable.

The *second* assumption is that the individual classes and other social forces will seek to influence the form of regime in such a way as to gain optimal influence on the formulation of policies and their im-

⁶⁶ Cf. sub-section 7.2. in my article earlier in this volume.

plementation. In particular, they will seek to optimise their influence by bringing about a concentration of the exercise of power and functions in precisely those organs of the state where they have the best possibilities of affecting decision making and/or implementation.

Thus, if a social class is well equipped to influence decision making in the parliament, this class is expected to seek a concentration of the exercise of power in this particular state institution. If it has a much better possibility of affecting the implementation process through close relations to relevant bureaucratic apparatuses, it is expected to support their autonomy.

If we want to carry out an analysis based on these assumptions, we need a framework for distinguishing among different regime forms. We have already discussed this issue. What I propose here is a fairly simple distinction between two main forms of regime:

A. A parliamentary-democratic form of regime; and

B. A bureaucratic-autocratic regime form.

They can be described as indicated in the figure below. I have used as the frame of reference the traditional division of the state apparatuses into:

- representative-legislative institutions;
- executive institutions; and
- judicial institutions.

When we add to this division the different types of political organisations which correspond with the first and the second type of state apparatuses, the following definitions can be worked out:

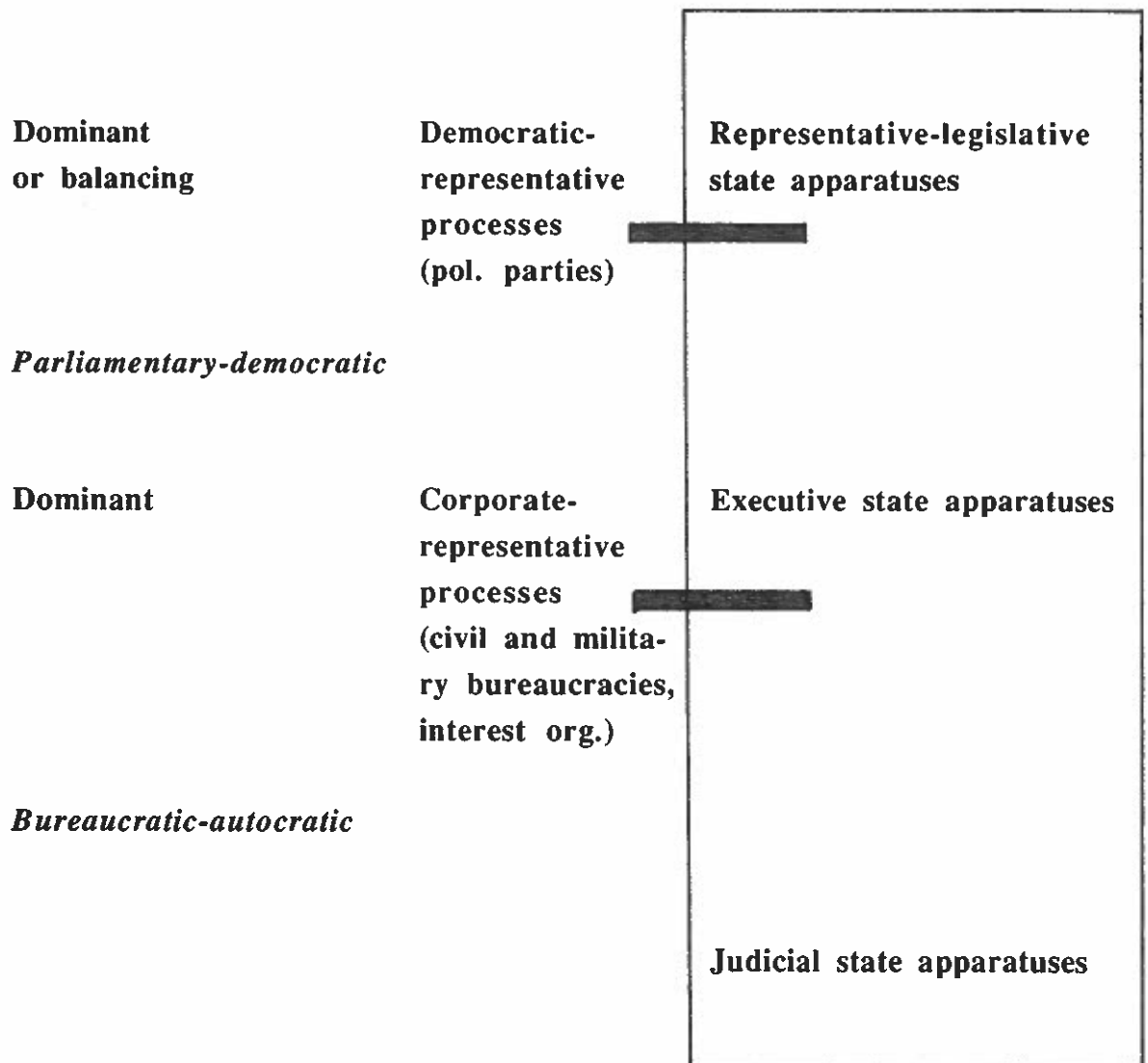
A. When the democratic-representative processes prevail in policy making or when, as a minimum, they are of similar importance as the corporate-representative and bureaucratic processes, we will refer to this regime form as *parliamentary-democratic*.

B. If the corporate-representative processes and the executive branches of the state dominate, we will talk about a *bureaucratic-autocratic* form of regime. It may be a military regime in the strict sense, or it may be a regime dominated by the military, the civil bureaucracy, the king, religious leaders or similar non-representative institutions - in various combinations or individually.

The important matter is not, of course, what the constitution stipulates but the actual functioning of the policy process.

Another dimension which should be emphasized concerns the distinction between policy formulation and policy implementation. If the policies actually pursued by the implementing branches of the state apparatuses deviate significantly from those formulated by a parliament, this implies a considerable modification of a parliamentary-democratic regime - perhaps its effective abolition in practice.

Basic forms of regime



I have applied the analytic framework thus adumbrated to describe and explain the evolution of different forms of regime in India and Pakistan. The framework was applied in combination with other fragments of theory including some concerning the social basis and organisational characteristics of the major nationalist movements in British India. These other aspects as well as the detailed analyses are not relevant here. But I would like to extract from these analyses a

simplified model which can illustrate the approach and the general argument.⁶⁷

The comparative analysis of India and Pakistan is summarised in the figure below.

Social forces and their primary access points within the state in India and Pakistan

	<i>India</i>		<i>Pakistan</i>	
	Executive	Represen.	Executive	Represen.
<hr/>				
Bureaucratic				
social forces	X			X
Ext.				
bourgeoisies	X			X
Nat.				
bourgeoisie	X.....X		X	
Landed				
aristocracy			X	X
Working class			x⁶⁸	x
Other classes of				
direct produ- cers		x		x
<hr/>				

I have tried to indicate in this table where the different social forces have the best possibilities of exerting influence. I have taken into

⁶⁷ The analyses are presented in my, *Staten i periferie af post-koloniale samfund: Indien og Pakistan*, (The state in peripheral and post-colonial societies: India and Pakistan), Århus, Politica, 1980, pp 866-1112. A summary presentation is given in my paper, *Social Classes and Forms of State and Regime in Peripheral Societies*, Uppsala, AKUT, 1982.

⁶⁸ The smaller 'x' which is also not in bold indicates weak representation and influence.

account the general nature of the classes and the social categories mentioned, including their social bases. But in addition to that the emphasis is really on the ways in which they have been organised since independence in 1947. This is why the Indian national bourgeoisie appears with two almost equally important entry points, while the Pakistani bourgeoisie has only one. This difference reflects the different types of organisations through which the two capitalist classes have been able to promote their interests. The Indian bourgeoisie has, ever since independence, been well organised in interest organisations as well as in political parties. The Pakistani bourgeoisie, on the other, was extremely weak in political terms after 1947. It had almost no autonomous organisations to promote its interests. For almost two decades the realisation of the interests of this class relied heavily on the civil and military bureaucracies. Even today the Pakistani bourgeoisie remains weakly organised within the democratic-representative processes.

As a consequence, the Pakistani bourgeoisie has to favour a regime form that concentrates as much power and decision making as possible in the executive branches of the state.

As for the Indian bourgeoisie, its interests would vary according to the location of the principal contradiction. After independence, when the major problem was to achieve control over the state apparatuses inherited from the colonial power, the national bourgeoisie was prompted to favour a democratic form of regime. Conflicts between national and foreign capital over economic strategies and policies pushed in the same direction.

Later, when major conflicts emerged between the national bourgeoisie and the landed aristocracy, the former supported a gradually increasing concentration of policy making in the bureaucratic set-up in order to reduce the influence from the very strong landed interests in parliament. This process culminated with the declaration of the emergency in 1975 which - during a crucial period of just 18 months - suspended the political influence of the landed aristocracy

and thus paved the way for far-reaching land reforms that facilitated the 'Green revolution'.

I have focused here on the political interests of the respective national bourgeoisies not because these are always the determining factors. Generally speaking, the outcome of any struggle concerning the form of regime will depend on the political interests in combination with the relative power each "alliance" of social forces can muster in support of its demands. Besides, to change an institutional set-up would probably require a larger favourable margin than the preservation of *status quo*.

But the lesson learnt from the analyses of India and Pakistan indicated that in these cases the national bourgeoisies were the keys to understanding and explaining the forms of regime.

Based on these analyses I propose a number of *generalisations* for further discussion:

In a Third World society the form of regime depends primarily on the economic and political position of the national bourgeoisie. Thus, *if* the national bourgeoisie holds the position of hegemony and *if* that class is well organised on the political scene and capable of exercising a 'strong influence' upon decision making in the representative state institutions, *then* a parliamentary-democratic form of regime will emerge.

Hegemony is defined as a position of relative power which ensures the realisation of the essential interests of the particular class (or class fraction). The realisation of these interests will not depend on the use of oppression and coercion. Rather the interest of the hegemonic class have been elevated into the position of 'national interests'.

'*Strong influence*' is defined as influence to such an extent that the vital or essential class interests are reflected in the decisions taken

and the policies formulated. The influence is not confined to policy formulation but comprises also the implementation.

If, on the other hand, the national bourgeoisie is economically weak and poorly organised in relation to the democratic-representative processes, as in the case of Pakistan, we should expect some form of bureaucratic-autocratic government.

It is worth noting that it is only a necessary - not a sufficient - precondition for democracy that the national bourgeoisie is economically dominant. Only when this class is also politically strong within the democratic-representative processes a democratic form of government will emerge under certain more specific conditions.

'More specific conditions' here refers to the contemporary political conjuncture, especially the location of the principal contradiction in relation to the conflict between the social forces favouring democracy and those opposing it. Thus, if social forces opposed to the national bourgeoisie concerning overall economic policies became strong enough to dominate the democratic-representative processes, this could prompt the bourgeoisie to side with the civil and military bureaucracies in order to bring about an autocratic regime.

These general propositions may be transformed into an outline of an explanatory paradigm if they are combined with the differentiation of peripheral societies into P-1, P-2, and P-3. The paradigm is summarised in the figure below.

I believe the causal relationships indicated with this paradigm apply in a large number of cases but I dare not propose that they are valid for peripheral societies in general.

Forms of regime: An outline of an explanatory paradigm

<p>P-1 societies (No nat. bourg.)</p>	<p>Autocratic forms of regime (or bureaucratic-autocratic forms of regime)</p>	
	<p>The national bourgeoisie is organised: -primarily in rel. to the <i>executive</i> inst. -comparatively well in relation to the <i>representative</i> inst.</p>	
<p>P-2 societies (A nat. bourg. but not hegemonic)</p>	<p>Bureaucratic-autocratic (Pakistan)</p>	<p>Parliamentary-democratic (India 1947-ca. 1975)</p>
<p>P-3 societies (A hegemonic nat. bourg.)</p>	<p>Bureaucratic-autocratic</p>	<p>Parliamentary-democratic (India 1975-)</p>

3. Decision-making structures and the policy process

Regime form and the more specific institutionalisation of the decision-making processes have significant impacts on the whole relationship between the state and the wider society. The decision-making structures embody certain biases in favour of particular interests, simultaneously blocking or inhibiting access for other social classes and groupings. As a corollary, the political structures have their own impact on the formulation and implementation of economic and other policies.

Rather than pursuing these observations at a very abstract level let me try to illustrate some of points by briefly summarising my analyses of the situation in Pakistan from the early 1950s and till the

late 1980s. This particular case can, at the same time, be used to illustrate the roles played by the civil and military bureaucracies in several Third World societies of the P-2 type (and perhaps also of the P-1 type).

The decision-making structure

At independence, Pakistan inherited highly developed and well-organised executive state institutions, a very weak party system and only embryonic democratic and parliamentary institutions.

Under the circumstances prevailing during the first decade after independence, these legacies from the colonial period paved the way for an extreme *centralisation of the exercise of power* within the state apparatuses. Even though parliamentary institutions were established at federal and provincial levels these could not prevent the concentration of political power in the hands of the military-bureaucratic state organs.

This concentration was reinforced during the military dictatorship of Ayub Khan and maintained under Yahya Khan until 1971.

Authority was centralised even further under Bhutto - 1972-77 - although it was shifted away from the military and concentrated more in the hands of the ruling party bureaucracy. Zia ul Haq re-introduced the patterns from the earlier military regimes. And Bhutto's daughter, Benazir, replicated her father's approach.

Although elections have been held and some form of parliamentary-democratic institutions have played some roles during certain periods since 1947, the general picture is one of a very high degree of concentration of authority in the hands of top civil servants and high-ranking military officers.

This has had important consequences for the decision-making procedures. These consequences have been accentuated because of the

so-called 'professionalism' of the top echelons of the bureaucracy and the military.

This 'professionalism' refers to the entire process of recruitment, training, and socialisation of these government employees - a process which, ever since the colonial period, has aimed at separating the civil servants and the military officers from the rest of society. It is a process which has produced an elite set apart from and rising above the rest of society. A process which has created closed groups of men with authority to act independently of outside group pressures.

The promotion of professionalism in this sense was part of a deliberate policy designed by the British in order to create a bureaucratic 'steel frame' that could rule the vast colonial empire in South Asia. Once created it proved extremely difficult to transform for the politicians favouring such a transformation after independence.

The bureaucratic and military elites distrusted politicians in general and urban professionals like lawyers and journalists in particular. These were the groups they had to deal with as trouble makers before independence. They were the same groups they had to oppress after 1947 when they tried to interfere with the privileges of the top civil servants and the military commanders.

The bureaucratic arrogance and non-responsiveness in relation to outside influence went even further than that during the early period. Individual businessmen were accepted as partners but organised representatives of business were treated with suspicion.

This non-responsiveness of the executive branches of government and their effective blocking of access for almost all organised interest groups have remained essential features of the decision-making structure throughout most of the period. The established state institutions have provided very little room for dialogue, bargaining and organised citizen participation.

As a corollary, the two major bureaucracies share intolerance of public criticism for which reason they have tried to protect themselves by casting a veil of secrecy over their actions. When this has not functioned effectively, they have attempted to identify any kind of public criticism with opposition to Pakistan as an independent nation or to Islam. Both strategies have helped to criminalize - and often silence - the critics.

Simultaneously, the bureaucratic and military elites have tried to build support on an individual basis. They have rewarded selected supporters and harassed opponents. This personalized system of patronage and coercion is in many respects similar to the systems found in several African societies under personal rule.

The decision-making structure and interest groups

The decision-making structure in Pakistan has affected the *organisation of interest groups* as well as *their role* in the policy process.

This, in turn, has affected the outcome whether in the form of policy declarations or in the form of policies actually being implemented. I shall come back to the effects on certain economic policies. But let me first refer briefly to some of the implications for the organisation of interests groups in the country.

The highly centralised structure of decision making combined with the 'professionalism', the non-responsiveness, and the controlled, individualised participation have effectively limited autonomous organisations from developing outside the state apparatuses.

An exception was made during the Ayub Khan period when the government actually assisted the large number of associations of commerce and industry in amalgamating into more effective national interest organisations. But apart from these the general picture features the following characteristics:

- a) Interest groups have not been allowed access to government - i.e. the executive branches - as organised groups but only as chosen and coopted individuals.
- b) Organised interest groups have not been allowed co-responsibility for policy making and implementation. Instead, the military and bureaucratic elites have secured for themselves a monopolisation of the authority to allocate scarce resources (like foreign currency).
- c) Interest organisations have been used primarily as instruments of control - not as instruments to facilitate the articulation and aggregation of demands.
- d) Interest organisations in Pakistan so far have not been capable of overcoming these barriers to their effective participation in the governmental processes. Therefore, the form of regime remains bureaucratic-autocratic in the more extreme sense where even corporate representation is weak.

This has seriously affected economic policies in general.

The decision-making structure and economic policies

As a rule, economic policies have been decided and enforced on the bases of very limited official information.

This follows from the lack of genuine consultations with organised interests and from suppressing public criticism and open discussions.

Official information sources in Pakistan have often proved insufficient and the policies based on these sources therefore ineffective.

Secondly, complicated and mutually opposed interests have often been ignored. This, in turn, has hampered effective implementation.

Thirdly, the narrow social basis of Pakistan's governing elites have compounded the problems created by extensive bureaucratic controls.

These controls have always been primarily discretionary. And they have always to some extent been applied with a view to building political support and punishing opposition.

But the degree to which this is so seems to have increased appreciably during the last decade - under military as well as under civilian rule. It is just the beneficiaries which have changed somewhat over time.

As a result, corruption has been on the increase. And more important, perhaps, is the widening discrepancy between '*rational economic criteria*' and the selection of beneficiaries on the basis of *political considerations* and the size of the bribes offered.

To illustrate: Quite often industrial licences are given to people who haven't got the resources or the expertise to use them for productive purposes. They sell the licences to industrialists and traders at exorbitant prices thus adding 'irrational' costs to their activities.

Fourthly, the so-called *Islamisation* of the economy, which was quite popular during the Zia regime and has now be re-introduced under the present regime, has been confined to the concepts that suit the ruling elites.

The Islamisation is not based on Islamic concepts in general. Only on traditionalist and fundamentalist interpretations. There is a strong emphasis on *regulation, obedience and punishment*. But Islamic concepts of *egalitarianism, compromise and rulers' accountability* in relation to the community have almost no roles to play in the present wave of Islamisation.

Irrespective of the interpretations prevailing, however, it remains an open question whether economic policies shaped by middle age

Islamic ideology are adequate and expedient for the economic development of Pakistan.

Fifthly, the concentration of authority in the hands of the military and bureaucratic elites has led to several continuing biases in the economic policies pursued. I shall mention only a few major implications:

a) The influence of the military establishment has reinforced the transfer of scarce resources from development to military spending.

b) Punjabi dominance within the bureaucracy and among high-ranking officers in the army has added to the regional bias in favour of the province of Punjab.

c) The governing elites of Pakistan have never paid much attention to social development, distribution or basic needs. Those in need have had far too little power and influence to shape economic and social policies in a decision-making structure completely dominated by the military and civil bureaucracies. And these bureaucracies, on the other hand, haven't had enough imagination or knowledge to understand how social development and meeting basic needs could promote economic development of the country.

I have dwelled on this account of the situation in Pakistan partly because I think it may be taken as a more generally valid description, partly because the approach and the vocabulary may provide a little inspiration for other similar studies.⁶⁹

4. Policy implementation and impact

The form of regime in the sense we have discussed so far is important for the realisation or non-realisation of class interests. It is also important for the distribution of benefits among social categories and other groupings of society. This is so because the state appara-

⁶⁹ The above account is based on my own studies in Pakistan as well as on a quite comprehensive literature on the subjects referred to.

tuses provide access to command over substantial resources - economic as well as political. Through its intervention in economic and other societal processes the state can affect in a very significant manner the interests and positions of social classes and other social forces.

But - and this is a major point in any historical materialist analysis - the ways in which the state actually acts and the wider consequence of its actions are not necessarily determined by the policy formulation which has been the focus of our attention thus far in the presentation.

Once a policy has been decided and formulated, administrators at various levels of the bureaucratic hierarchy will normally have considerable discretion when *implementing* that policy. This is the case in Third World countries with highly developed bureaucracies in the Weberian sense - like in India, Pakistan and Thailand.⁷⁰ It is also true of African and other countries with poorly developed bureaucracies, although for different reasons.

The general observation that I am trying to state here is that the policies actually being implemented *may or may not* deviate from those decided and formulated by the national government. This applies equally in a democratic and an autocratic political system.

To complicate things further it should be added that the *impact* of the policies implemented may deviate from both the stated objectives and the expectations of the administrators who - consciously or

⁷⁰ As Gunnar Myrdal has emphasized there has been a widespread preference in South and South East Asia for discretionary controls - i. e. policies that involve individual decisions by an administrative authority with considerable power to act on its own discretion. This has increased the opportunities for outside influence, discrimination not envisaged in the policy documents and other deviations from declared policies. In several cases, the policies pursued have promoted the achievement of objectives which have been in contradiction with those declared. An example is the operational controls over the private sector in India. Cf. Myrdal, *Asian Drama*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, Ch. 19 (p 901 ff).

unconsciously, voluntarily or involuntarily - have pursued other policies.

This has to do with the fact that state actions in general may prove insufficient for attaining stated or expected goals. Circumstances may be different from those assumed or powerful groups or influential individuals may prove capable of preventing the policies from bringing about the intended impact.

These very general and vague observations may be transformed into more specific proposals if we apply historical materialist concepts and focus on a typical Third World setting.

Access *versus* autonomous organisation of interests

We have noted earlier that the *foreign* bourgeoisies, the centre bourgeoisies, in the case of India were not in a position to secure for themselves the most appropriate form of regime. Their political interests implied preference for an autocratic regime. That would provide these classes with the best opportunities for influencing policy making because they are organised primarily in transnational corporations and other forms of private enterprise. These types of organised representatives can attain only marginal influence in the representative processes but have good opportunities for influencing bureaucratic decision making and policy implementation.

The question I want to raise now is: What has been the wider implications of the decision-making structure prevailing in India for foreign capital operating in the country? Has this structure prevented foreign capital from defending and promoting effectively its vital interests?

The answer, in my opinion, is 'no'. A number of studies have indicated that even after the national bourgeoisie took over the position of hegemony in the mid-1970s, foreign capital has retained very strong power positions in the Indian economy.

I will not go further into this. It is beyond the scope of this presentation. What should be noted here are the following more general observations which can be extracted from the empirical studies. They all relate to methodological issues involved in the studying of policy processes:

a) The promotion of foreign capital's interests in India has been organised primarily in the form of TNCs and other organisations with limited access to the representative-democratic institutions. This has weakened their influence upon *policy formulation*, although it remained considerable till the mid-1970s and continues to shape Indian economic policies.

b) The influence upon Indian policies does not derive primarily from foreign capital's direct participation in the policy-making processes. It rather emerges from the fact that *foreign capital interests are embodied* or "built into" the Indian economic structures to such an extent that any "responsible" decision maker has to take these interests into consideration when shaping government policies.

c) *When* the Indian government has decided to pursue policies contradicting vital interests of foreign capital, these policies have often not been *implemented* fully because of strong pressure from representatives of the foreign bourgeoisies, including pressure from groups within the Indian bureaucracy.

d) *When* policies contradicting vital interests of foreign capital *have been* implemented they have often not brought about the *impact* intended. The reason being that foreign capital, the transnational corporations in particular, have held sufficiently strong economic positions to prevent these impacts. In other words, their *autonomous organisation* within the economic processes has been sufficiently strong to prevent the state from achieving its declared objectives.

State autonomy in different stages of the policy process

Provided these observations can be generalised - which I believe they can - they have some interesting implications for our discussion of state autonomy. Stated very briefly they indicate that the degree of state autonomy decreases when we move from policy formulation through implementation to impact. Actually, I find it difficult to talk about state autonomy when it comes to impact because so much here depends upon the positions and the powers of the major social classes in society.⁷¹

But what about societies with weakly articulated class structures? Societies without national bourgeoisies and without a strong presence of foreign capital within their own borders?

Let me pursue this point a bit further adding some other dimensions concerning the role of state personnel in the implementation of policies and in achieving impact.

5. State autonomy and the policy process

We have acknowledge the significant influence of the civil and military bureaucracies in policy formulation. We have noted that their opportunities for influencing the policy process at this stage are probably of greater scope in autocratic as compared with democratic states.

We have further proposed that the autonomous influence of the bureaucracies and particular segments thereof may be even greater with respect to implementation.

The pertinent question then is whether this also implies a similarly strong position when it comes to bringing about impact.

In my own work I have found no justification for a conclusion along these lines. As briefly mentioned, I have found that the role

⁷¹ This is a more specific proposition within the framework referred to in my first lecture when I talked about consirable differences in the various stages of the policy process. Cf. section 9 of the first lecture.

of the bureaucracies depend to such an extent on the class relations and the power constellations prevailing that I have basically concluded that the dynamic and determining/decisive social forces in peripheral societies are the centre bourgeoisies and the national bourgeoisies. Where these classes are established as autonomous social forces they have a decisive impact on the form of regime as well as on the effects of state action. Where they are not established they are still decisive although in a negative sense, so to speak. By their absence they "create"- in a theoretical sense - different circumstances for the functioning of the state apparatuses.

It is interesting to compare this point of view with more statist arguments like those suggested by e.g. Gorm Rye Olsen.

In his major work, his doctoral dissertation,⁷² he proposes a sort of anti-thesis to mine. His hypothesis is that the centre bourgeoisies and the national bourgeoisies "cannot universally be considered the dynamic forces in peripheral societies." With this I fully agree. But he adds to this a conclusion which I find unwarranted:

*"On the contrary, the civil bureaucracies and the armed forces are conceived as the most important social forces determining the development of peripheral societies."*⁷³

From his more detailed discussion it becomes clear that this general conclusion is confined essentially to societies of the P-1 and the P-2 types. He is also a little more cautious when he concludes that "the social categories based in the state apparatuses can be identified as the dynamic and decisive forces in many peripheral societies."⁷⁴ But in these "many peripheral societies" the civil and military bureaucracies may act "quite contrary to the interests of all other social forces, only taking care of their own specific interests."⁷⁵

⁷² Gorm Rye Olsen, *Økonomi of politik i den arabiske verden. En sammenlignende analyse af udviklingen i Egypten, Irak og Saudi-arabien siden 1950erne*, København, Akademisk Forlag, 1988.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p 670 f. (in the English summary)

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p 739.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p 700.

When formulated in this way, the propositions put forward by Gorm Rye Olsen are indeed in contradiction with my way of thinking - and, I believe, a profound deviation from the very basis of historical materialist class analysis. If his propositions could be substantiated by empirical evidence, we would have to question this very basis. But I have searched in vain for such evidence in Gorm Rye Olsen's own work.

Let me summarise my criticism. Not so much in order to correct what I believe are misinterpretations but more to illustrate some important points from historical materialist reasoning.

As mentioned, Rye Olsen suggests that the bureaucracies can be identified as the most *dynamic forces* in at least the three societies he himself analysed. However, his analyses indicate that the powerful bureaucracy and armed forces in Iraq have blocked the country's economic development. A similar outcome, still according to his analyses, was avoided in Egypt due to the existence of a comparatively strong national bourgeoisie.⁷⁶

But these conclusions do not fall in line with Rye Olsen's own general thesis. Quite the contrary. They point to the more common historical materialist thesis that the national bourgeoisie is the most critical *dynamic* force in the economic development of a peripheral society, i.e. a society which is linked in an asymmetrical relationship to the centre formations.

Now let us take a closer look at the other aspect of Rye Olsen's anti-thesis: the contention that the personnel of the state apparatuses are *decisive*, at least in societies of the P-1 type. This implies that the social categories of the state are capable of realising their own "category interests" even when opposed by all other social forces. The explanation given is simply that the civil and military bureau-

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p 611 *et passim*.

cracy are more powerful and better organised than the other existing social forces in these societies.

If by *decisive* is meant that the bureaucracies are in a position to maintain *status quo* in P-1 societies even when other social groupings try to change it, then I tend to agree with the conclusion. If by *decisive* is implied that the bureaucracies are capable of expropriating large amounts of economic resources thus possibly detracting them from productive use and thereby inhibiting economic growth, I also tend to agree.

But if Rye Olsen's thesis, which appears to be the case, implies that these bureaucracies are able to bring about any major changes in the societal structures in accordance with their particular "category interests", I disagree. Firstly, they do not have that kind of interests. As social categories they are sort of "neutral" or "open" to different modes and forms of production. They may have preferences as individuals and groups. But as social categories *per se* they do not have that kind of interests. Secondly, when certain preferences have prevailed, like a general preference for capitalist development, I can't think of any cases where the bureaucracies have been instrumental and decisive in bringing about capitalist development.

This brings us back to the discussion of the various stages in the policy process. Re-stated within that framework I will acknowledge that in P-1 and several P-2 societies the bureaucracies play major, probably leading roles in the formulation of policy - often assisted by foreign institutions and experts. When it comes to impact and achieving particular objectives, the whole state construction in these societies is far too weak to determine in any *decisive* way the shape and direction of societal change.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ This general conclusion may be extracted from several studies of P-1 societies, especially in Africa. I will refer specifically to Göran Hydén, *No Shortcuts to Progress. African Development Management in Perspective*, London, Heinemann, 1983; and Richard Sandbrook, *The Politics of Africa's Economic Stagnation*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

These points should be borne in mind also when we design our research strategies. It is perfectly alright to focus attention upon the state apparatuses and their personnel but they should be analysed and understood in their proper context.