

# Bringing Politics Back In: Towards a Model of the Developmental State

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*The few cases of rapid economic growth in the Third World in the last 30 years have occurred in democratic, quasi-democratic and non-democratic polities. They are thus clearly not a function of common regime type. I suggest that they are best explained by the special character of their states, understood 'as developmental states'. This article outlines some common characteristics of these states. However the forms and features of these states are not simply a function of their administrative structures or principles of governance, but of their politics. The article thus also underlines the importance of political analysis in both development theory and policy, from where it has been extruded for too long.*

## I. INTRODUCTION: STATES OF DEVELOPMENT

In the last 30 years many developing countries (mainly but not only in Africa) have registered negative average annual rates of growth in their GNP per capita. A considerably smaller number have had moderate rates of growth (between 1.5 per cent and 3.5 per cent). But only a handful of developing countries achieved average annual rates of growth in excess of four per cent between 1965 and 1990. Amongst the latter category are Botswana (8.4 per cent), South Korea (7.1 per cent), Taiwan (7.0 per cent), Singapore (6.5 per cent), China (5.8 per cent), Indonesia (4.5 per cent), Thailand (4.4 per cent) and Malaysia (4.4 per cent) [World Bank, 1992a; Council for Economic Planning and Development, 1992]. By world standards, these are remarkable achievements.

Apart from their geographical concentration in East and South-east Asia, these societies have little in common. Some, like China and Indonesia, have huge populations. Some have valuable and exportable

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raw materials, like Indonesia (oil) and Botswana (diamonds). Economic policy and practice has varied widely between them: contrast China with Singapore, or Korea with Malaysia. Some may be thought of as 'plural' in their socio-cultural or ethnic structures, as in Malaysia and Indonesia; others are culturally more homogenous (though not entirely so), for instance, Taiwan and Thailand. Only a few have sustained democratic or quasi-democratic politics, like Botswana, Malaysia and Singapore; most have not.

I suggest that the single most important factor in generating sustained developmental momentum has been the presence in each of a particular type of state, a 'developmental state', which must be understood *politically*. And despite many fine studies of third world states [e.g., O'Donnell, 1973; Stepan, 1978; Dunn, 1978; Trimberger, 1978; Hamilton, 1982; White, 1984; Wade, 1990], the political analysis of this type of state and the linkage of state and development theory is still in its infancy [Evans, 1989: 584]. In drawing on the comparative literature, it is thus the main purpose of this article to elaborate the elements of a preliminary model of the developmental state. But first, I deal briefly with the provenance and meaning of the concept itself.

## II. THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATE: MEANING AND BACKGROUND

The political purposes and institutional structures of developmental states have been developmentally-driven, while their developmental objectives have been politically-driven. In short, fundamentally *political* factors have always shaped the thrust and pace of their developmental strategies through the structures of the state. These factors have normally included nationalism, regional competition or external threat, ideology and a wish to 'catch up' with the west. Thus developmental states may be defined as states whose politics have concentrated sufficient power, autonomy and capacity at the centre to shape, pursue and encourage the achievement of explicit developmental objectives, whether by establishing and promoting the conditions and direction of economic growth, or by organising it directly, or a varying combination of both.

The implicit idea of a developmental state can be traced back a long way and finds expression in the work of theorists of diverse persuasions. Friedrich List argued that 'less advanced nations' needed to use the state to catch up with the advanced nations in order to '... accomplish the economical development of the nation and to prepare it for admission into the universal society of the future' [List, 1885: 175]. Explicitly (and presciently, remembering Japan and Korea in the twentieth

century), List claimed that '... a perfectly developed manufacturing industry, an important mercantile marine, and foreign trade on a really large scale, can only be attained by means of the interposition of the power of the State' [1885: 178].

Marx, too, in the second of his major theories of the state, may be interpreted as advancing a rudimentary notion of the developmental state when he referred to the 'completely autonomous position of the state' in France under Louis Bonaparte [Marx, 1852: 238]. Arising from a balance of class forces in society, such a state was not, however, free-floating. It still had as its fundamental objective the furthering of capitalist interests in general. In Elster's opinion, the idea of this autonomous capitalist state was 'the cornerstone' of Marx's theory after 1850 [Elster, 1985: 426], and was later developed by European Marxists, such as Poulantzas [1973]. Moreover, this theory corresponds well with the historical development of the capitalist state in Europe '... as an active, autonomous agent from the sixteenth century onwards, pursuing its own interests by harnessing those of others to its purposes' [Elster, 1985: 426].

In the 1930s and beyond the idea and practice of a developmental state lay at the heart of the colonial welfare and development policies of some imperial powers [Lee, 1967]. Gerschenkron [1962] recognised the need for a state with developmental functions in the context of late development, a belief which became an article of faith of economic planners and development economists alike from the 1960s [Robertson, 1984]. The idea of the developmental state was also implicit in Fred Riggs' notion of the 'bureaucratic polity' in Thailand [1966]. This was later applied to Indonesia and defined as: '... the political system in which power and participation in national decisions are limited almost entirely to the employees of the state, particularly the officer corps and the highest levels of the bureaucracy, including especially the highly trained specialists known as the technocrats' [Jackson, 1978: 3].

The American political scientist, S.P. Huntington, also stressed the critical developmental importance of concentrating power in a 'bureaucratic polity' [1968: 167]. To be successful such a state would also need to undertake the political destruction of those existing '... social forces, interests, customs and institutions ...' which have held back development and which continue to oppose modernisation [Huntington, 1968: 141-2]. Working along parallel lines, Myrdal [1968 1970] drew the elementary distinction between 'soft' and 'hard' states in the Third World, and others have built on that since then, offering accounts of 'bureaucratic authoritarian' and 'strong' states [O'Donnell, 1973; Migdal, 1988; Leftwich, 1993b].

But it is only relatively recently that political scientists began to look more closely at the precise conditions for effective developmental action by states and some of their characteristics [Nordlinger, 1987]. Ellen Kay Trimberger [1978] sought to explain how autonomous and developmentally progressive bureaucratic states emerged in the third world. Focusing comparatively on Japan, Turkey, Egypt and Peru, she argued that a bureaucratic state apparatus achieved relative autonomy when, first, those holding high civil and military office were not drawn from dominant landed, commercial or industrial classes; and, second, where they did not *immediately* form close relations with these classes after achieving power [1978: 4]. About the same time, A. James Gregor depicted Italian fascism as a 'developmental regime' in respect of its modernising role [1979]. Seeing their main task as '... the rapid modernization and industrialization of a retarded socio-economic system' [1979: 311], the fascists stressed the expansion and importance of the '... state as a centralizing, integrative and managerial agency' [1979: 304].

But in none of these accounts was the term developmental state explicitly used, nor was there ever any attempt to identify its structural features. As in much development economics [Gillis *et al.*, 1992: 25], a major rôle for the state was announced, but the political and institutional conditions for its effective discharge of that rôle were never identified [Green, 1974]. Even recent concerns to 'bring the state back in' [Evans *et al.*, 1985] have not engaged fully with the political determinants of state autonomy and capacity. This failure to analyse the anatomy of the developmental state has been a major flaw in post-war development theory and policy. For the absence of a *political* theory of the developmental state, rather than an institutionalist one, allowed anti-statist theorists to berate all planned developmentalism (rather than discriminate between the successful and unsuccessful), denounce state failure as inevitable and to seize both the theoretical and policy initiatives in the 1980s [Lal, 1983].

It was only with the publication of Chalmers Johnson's seminal work on east Asian developmental states, and Japan in particular [Johnson, 1981; 1982], that the phrase 'developmental state' made its formal debut and that a serious attempt was made to conceptualise it. Johnson distinguished the 'developmental orientation' of such a 'plan rational' state from both the 'plan ideological' state in the Soviet-type command economies and from the 'regulatory orientation' of typical liberal-democratic or even social-democratic states. A crucial feature of the developmental state was the intimacy of its relationship with the private sector and the intensity of its involvement in the market [Johnson, 1981: 9-10]. The Japanese developmental state was pre-eminent in

'... setting ... substantive social and economic goals' [1982: 19] for the private sector to meet, whereas the regulatory state merely established the framework for components of this sector to set their own goals. The Japanese formula for this has been 'a plan-oriented market economy'.<sup>1</sup>

Just as Gregor [1979: 308] had claimed for Italy, Johnson argued that a further feature of the Japanese developmental state was the power and autonomy of its elite bureaucracy, centred in key ministries such as the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI). The developmental state in Japan was also characterised by agreed policy goals, determined mainly by the bureaucratic elite rather than the politico-legislative elite. As Johnson put it, describing Taiwan '... the politicians reign and the state bureaucrats rule' [Johnson 1981: 12]. Finally, he stressed that the Japanese developmental state must first and foremost be understood *politically*, for its provenance lay in the essentially political and nationalist objectives of the late developer, concerned to protect and promote itself in a hostile world. 'It arises from a desire to assume full human status by taking part in an industrial civilization, participation in which *alone* enables a nation or an individual to compel others to treat it as an equal' [Johnson, 1982: 25]. In this respect Johnson echoed precisely the point made by List about Germany, almost 150 years before; by Mussolini about Italy in the inter-war years [Gregor, 1979]; by Stalin in 1931 about the urgency of Soviet economic development [Deutscher, 1966: 328]; by the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party after 1949 [White, 1985], and by President Park Chung-hee in Korea in 1963 [Lim, 1986:73].

Gordon White [1984] isolated three political variables in order to construct a preliminary classification of developmental state types: state capitalist, intermediate and state socialist. First, he highlighted the nature of the social forces and interests which shaped the state and its purposes (that is the political sociology of the state). Second, he underlined the state's political, administrative and technical capacities as crucial factors. The third variable, he argued, was the mode of the state's involvement in economic activity, whether 'parametric' (framework-setting) or 'pervasive' (substantive involvement). The way in which these variables combined in any given state determined its broad position in the classificatory scheme.

Since then, there have been some valuable interpretations of developmental states [Evans, 1985; White and Wade, 1985; Deyo, 1987; Johnson, 1987; Wade, 1990], and a few important attempts to develop the theory further [Burmeister, 1986; Evans 1989; Onis, 1991; Charlton and Donald, 1992; Haws and Liu, 1993]. But the dominant focus of studies of developmental states has been on East Asia, with a few minor

concessions to Southeast Asia [*Hawes and Liu, 1993*]. Some even argue that the developmental state is *sui generis* to East Asia, a product of '... its unique historical circumstances' [*Onis, 1991: 13*]. But this is far too narrow, and my account will draw on societies in both South-east Asia and Africa.

### III. TOWARDS A MODEL OF THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

Six major components define the developmental state model:

- (i) a determined developmental elite;
- (ii) relative autonomy;
- (iii) a powerful, competent and insulated economic bureaucracy;
- (iv) a weak and subordinated civil society;
- (v) the effective management of non-state economic interests; and
- (vi) repression, legitimacy and performance.

#### *(i) The Developmental Elite*

Developmental states are distinguished by the character of their developmental elites. Often, the core elite has been associated with a small cadre of developmentally-determined senior politicians and bureaucrats, usually close to the executive head of government who was instrumental in establishing the developmental regime and its culture. This can be illustrated by pointing to such leaders as Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew in Singapore, Presidents Khama and Masire in Botswana [*Henderson, 1990*]; President Park Chung Hee in Korea after 1960 [*Lim and Paek, 1987*]; Prime Ministers Tunku Abdul Rahman, Tun Razak and Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad in Malaysia [*Ahmad, 1989*] and President Soeharto in Indonesia [*Liddle, 1991*]. The core policy circles surrounding the leadership have often been quite small. Even in Indonesia (with over 170 million people), it has been estimated that in the 1970s the bureaucratic, technocratic and military policy elite consisted of about 1000 persons [*Jackson, 1978: 3-4*]. Maintaining the coherence of the coalition supporting the elite has been crucial for the continuity of these states [*Moore, 1988; Onis, 1991: 114*].

Another striking feature of these elites has been the intimacy and linkage of their bureaucratic (civil and military) and political components, especially at the top, as was the case, too, in Japan [*Johnson, 1981: 44-8*]. Dense traffic between senior levels of the civil and military bureaucracy and high political office, rare in western democratic states, is a particularly clear expression of this. For instance, the Park regime in Korea after

1960 may be distinguished from the prior Rhee regime by the manner in which key bureaucratic posts were 'militarised' [Cho, 1975; Burmeister, 1986]. In Botswana in 1984 almost half of the eleven cabinet members were retired civil servants [Charlton, 1991: 273]. The preponderance of military and civil bureaucrats in political office has been even more marked in Thailand and had its roots in the modernising military and civilian bureaucratic elite which overthrew the absolute monarchy in 1932 [Wilson, 1962]. In the 1960s and 1970s, especially in the long non-democratic periods, the percentage of (mainly civilian) bureaucrats in Thai cabinets (not to mention appointed legislative assemblies) has rarely been less than 30 per cent and commonly higher than 80 per cent [Egedy, 1988: 5-8]. A similar pattern may be found in Indonesia since 1966 when President Soeharto took over [Crouch, 1979: 576; Van Dijk, 1990: 118]. The cabinet has seldom had less than one-third of its members drawn from the ranks of serving or retired officers [Liddle, 1992: 448]. And in Malaysia, the close links between the civil service and political elites has resulted in a 'high degree of civil service influence in policy-making' [Puthucheary, 1978: 40].

In short, the bureaucracy has had authoritative and pivotal influence in making development policy, commonly at the expense of both political and legislative elites, although in some developmental states the balance has begun to shift back [Muramatsu and Krauss, 1984; Amsden, 1985; Picard, 1987; Ahmad, 1989; Wade, 1990].

Developmental elites are not monolithic entities but are often shifting coalitions of diverse interests. As socio-economic change has diversified the structure of societies, interests, ideas and institutions, all such states have experienced (sometimes severe) intra-elite political and policy conflict, often intensifying with time. For instance, there have always been tensions within the ruling coalition in Malaysia, and in the 1980s deep splits opened up in the dominant Malay political party, the United Malays National Organization (UMNO). In China, struggle between contending factions pursuing different 'lines' has been a continuous theme since the revolution. Arguably, it has only been since 1979 that China has begun to become a consistent developmental state, although the previous thirty years laid the foundations for this. Economic problems in South Korea from the late 1970s precipitated conflict within policy circles which ended with a commitment to structural reforms, a process made easier by President Park's assassination in 1979 and the start of a new regime under President Chun Doo Hwan [Moon, 1988; 1990]. In Taiwan, contending institutional forces in economic policy-making, have expressed the sometimes divergent priorities of various interests (security, industry, economic efficiency) within the 'intra-

governmental coalition' [Noble, 1987]. A divided military and alternating military and civilian rule has been the norm in Thailand, while in Indonesia a complex tension has existed between economic technocrats, their civilian rivals and the military [Glassburner, 1978b: 32].

Corruption is notoriously difficult to define, identify and measure comparatively [Ward, 1989], and developmental states are certainly not immune from it. In rapidly growing economies, sudden wealth generates huge temptations, especially so, perhaps, in cultures where patron-client relations are deeply embedded, and where the role of the state in economic life is intense. Hence the politics of transition in some developmental states have displayed extraordinary mixtures of patrimonialism, centralisation, technocratic economic management, coercion and corruption. Thailand and Indonesia are examples where there have been cases of spectacular high-level corruption. For instance, the Soeharto regime has been described as '... a giant patronage machine with a network extending from Jakarta to the provinces' [Crouch, 1984: 82]. Yet it has also been argued that in using a whole range of what might be termed 'corrupt' measures, Soeharto was consolidating both his power (notably over the army and bureaucracy) and the Indonesian developmental state by winning over support or buying off opposition. Despite this, developmental state elites have generally been relatively non-corrupt and developmentally determined by contrast with the *pervasive* corruption from top to bottom in so many developing societies.

Developmental states have not exhibited the one-man 'sultanism' [Weber, 1964: 346-7] of many African states [Sandbrook, 1986]. Nor do they manifest the corrupt, corrosive and pervasive patrimonialism of non-developmental states, characterised by economic stagnation, chronic political instability, endemic poverty and gross inequality, as in Duvalier's Haiti [Lundahl, 1992], Mobutu's Zaire [Young, 1978] and the pervasive cronyism of the Marcos regime in the Philippines [Hawes, 1992]. These states illustrate classically Medard's notion of 'the privatization of public affairs' in Africa [1982: 185], or the working assumption of the Haitian elite that '... the spoils of government were identical to the private finances of the politicians' [Lundahl, 1992: 38]. This has not been the rule in developmental states, nor have their intra-elite disputes, forms of patronage and corruption been so developmentally-debilitating [Jackson 1978: 6-17].

### (ii) *Relative Autonomy of the Developmental State*

A second shared aspect of developmental states has been the relative autonomy of the elites and the state institutions which they command [Reuschemeyer and Evans, 1985: 48-9]. Although everywhere the form



and extent of relative state autonomy has varied [Mackie, 1988: 295], it seems common to both democratic and non-democratic developmental states alike. The concept, causes and constituent elements of 'state autonomy' have been explored in a variety of theoretical and empirical contexts in recent years and it has been defined in various ways [Skocpol, 1985; Mann, 1986; Lipietz, 1987: 72-3; Evans, 1989: 573-6; Burmeister, 1986: 139; Cotton, 1992]. But for present purposes autonomy may be defined simply to mean that the state has been able to achieve relative independence (or insulation) from the demanding clamour of special interests (whether class, regional or sectoral) and that it both can and does override these interests in the putative national interest [Nordlinger, 1987: 361].

This does not mean that such interests, or others, have not benefited from the developmental strategies pursued by the state. Some certainly have. These include the *chaebol* conglomerates and a rapidly expanding middle and professional class in Korea, the emerging Bumiputra (native Malay) bourgeoisie in Malaysia, the larger cattle-owners of Botswana, the small industrial entrepreneurs in Taiwan, military capitalists and their associates in Thailand and Indonesia, as well as state enterprise managers and party cadres in China. But such benefits have generally (Malaysia is the important exception) been less the objectives of policy than its associated outcome. Moreover, all developmental states have not been equally autonomous or insulated from either popular or vested pressures. Despite their strong military cores, the Thai and Indonesian states [Hawes and Liu, 1993: 647-51] appear to have been less autonomous and more open to pressures from vested interests than the states of Singapore, Korea or Botswana [Crouch, 1984; Cone, 1988; Picard, 1987: 270-71].

'Autonomy' in this context also does not mean isolation. The reality, as Evans describes it [1989], is more like 'embedded autonomy'. This means that despite the power and autonomy of state bureaucracies, they have become embedded in a progressively dense web of ties with both non-state and other state actors (internal and external) through which the state has been able to co-ordinate the economy and implement developmental objectives [Johnson, 1981: 13; Evans, 1989: 575-81; Onis, 1991: 123-4; Weiss and Hobson, 1994: Ch.1].

There has also commonly been a strong '... primordial association ...' between the development of military capacity and the power and autonomy of the developmental state [Burmeister, 1986: 122]. This has largely been a consequence of their need to respond to regional competition and external threat [Migdal, 1988: 269-77]. The point underlines and extends Tilly's [1975] claim (for Europe) about the link between

state formation and war-making. Examples of this are South Korea's and Taiwan's fiercely nationalistic and competitive struggles with North Korea and China respectively; Malaysia's experience of 'confrontation' with Indonesia, internal insurgency and tensions between Malays and Chinese; Singapore's sense of vulnerability in an Islamic Malay-Indonesian environment [McVey, 1992: 28]; Indonesia's and Thailand's aggressive defensiveness in relation to perceived regional (or internal) communist threats; China's determination to build socialist industrialisation, its conflict with the USSR and its competitive stance *vis-à-vis* the west; and Botswana's need for maximum economic development given the power and threat of its South African neighbour. This potent *political* mixture of nationalism and developmental urgency generating a strong and autonomous developmental state was also central to the structure and objectives of the post-Meiji state in Japan [Burmeister, 1986: 126; Fukui, 1992].

In non-democratic developmental states, however, on both left and right, the single major *political* source of relative state autonomy has been the seizure of state power (from above or below) by a modernising developmental elite. In Thailand this was the bloodless 'revolution' of 1932 (although the contemporary features of the Thai developmental state have a later provenance); in China, it was the victory of the Chinese Communist Party in 1949; in Taiwan, the establishment of Nationalist regime over the Taiwanese after 1949; and in Korea it was General Park Chung Hee's 1961 coup. In Indonesia, from 1966, a major consequence of Soeharto's 'New Order' was to free '... the decision-making process from the constraints imposed on it by the political arrangements of (Soekarno's) Guided Democracy' [Liddle, 1991: 407]. Moreover, as Huntington predicted nearly thirty years ago, these take-overs have normally been accompanied or immediately followed by the (often brutal) elimination, subordination or marginalisation of political groups, organisations or socio-economic classes which had previously enjoyed both wealth and power, which might threaten the new regime or sabotage its developmental purposes. For instance, the Meiji bureaucrats swept aside '... the so-called feudal relations of production in the Tokugawa period' [Burmeister, 1986: 127]. A similar process was started during the revolution in China and completed after 1949. In an orgy of blood-letting, between 250,000 and a million supporters of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) were 'physically annihilated' by the army between October 1965 and January 1966 [Anderson, 1983; 1993: 5]. The bureaucracy was 'purged' and, in a general process of 'departyisation', other parties as well as student, youth, labour and peasant organisations were suppressed, restricted or co-opted as functional elements of the ruling party,

GOLKAR [*Emmerson, 1978: 90–100; Robison, 1985*]. Japanese colonial rule in Korea and Taiwan in the twentieth century established a strong administrative state structure and suppressed dominant classes. After the defeat of Japan this process was consolidated in Korea through land reform measures and by the arrival of the Kuomintang mainlanders on Taiwan after 1949.

It is important to note the key difference in this respect between developmental states and the strong, authoritarian but non-developmental states of Latin and Central America. In the case of the latter, powerful (and often opposed) class forces and organisations (both rural and more recently urban) have been active, either as dominant influences on the state apparatus or as threats to it, and often both. Their power, and conflict between them, produced major crises for the regimes and precluded the emergence of developmental state autonomy and capacity [*O'Donnell, 1973; Hamilton, 1981; Rueschemeyer et al., 1992: Ch.5*]. Comparing East Asia with Latin America, one observer noted: '... the absence of rural elite influence from the formation of state policy unites the East Asian cases and separates them from those of Latin America' [*Evans, 1987: 215*].

The autonomy of the formally democratic developmental states (such as Singapore, Botswana and Malaysia), on the other hand, appears in large measure to have been a function of the dominance of a single party. In Malaysia, this has been UMNO, controlling the dominant coalition in the Alliance Party (later the Barisan Nasional). Its commitment to securing Malay hegemony in the state, and to promoting Malay interests, especially after the Malay–Chinese conflict of 1969, has been the basis of its dominance. This has given its leadership both the power and autonomy to take all major policy decisions in conjunction with senior levels of the predominantly Malay bureaucracy, leaving parliament and public debate without any significant role [*Means, 1976: 441–3; Puthucherry, 1978: 40–44; Ahmad, 1989*]. In the 'administrative state' of Botswana [*Picard, 1987: 13*], the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has won every election since independence with overwhelming majorities, thus ensuring continuity of policy, without serious threat from political rivals [*Holm, 1988*]. In quasi-democratic or one-party democratic Singapore [*Humana, 1987*], often also described as an 'administrative state' [*Crouch, 1984: 11*], the dominance of Lee Kuan Yew's People's Action Party (PAP) has generated 'great policy autonomy' [*Cone, 1988: 261*] for the state.

This contrasts sharply with other democratic but non-developmental states – such as Jamaica or Sri Lanka – where there has been no such single-party dominance. And it also contrasts with India where the pre-

eminence of the Congress Party has been disintegrating in the last 20 years. But even before that, the prospects for developmental state autonomy under the earlier hegemony of Congress were negligible, given the dominant coalition of 'proprietary classes' in party and state [Myrdal, 1968; 1970; Bardhan, 1984: 39].

The internal autonomy of some of these states in relation to their societies has been strengthened, furthermore, by the inflow of substantial amounts of foreign aid, loans and state-directed private investment which reduced government dependence on locally-generated revenue capital. In Korea, for instance, aid-financed imports in the 1950s regularly accounted for well over 50 per cent of all imports (largely financed by grants from the US). Although this declined in the 1960s, it was balanced by new multilateral loans and, later, by private foreign loans [Krueger and Ruttan, 1989: 232-3]. The channelling of both aid and private loans *through the state machinery* simultaneously enhanced both its developmental capacity and its autonomy [Lim and Paek, 1987]. US aid and military expenditures in Thailand between 1951 and 1970 had a similar effect [Hewison, 1985: 269]. In Indonesia, after 1966, President Soeharto adopted the development strategy proposed by Professor Widjojo Nitisastro and a group of economic technocrats, involving liberalisation of the economy and a policy of attracting external financial support [Robison, 1989: 61]. Coordinated by IGGI (Inter-governmental Group on Indonesia), there followed massive annual inflows, which in some years covered 50 per cent of imports. Moreover, this money (and the huge oil revenues of the 1970s) went directly to the centre, thus helping Soeharto to build '... the most powerful state in Indonesia since Dutch colonial times' [Anderson 1983: 489] and generating 'considerable financial autonomy' for the state [Robison 1985: 306]. Botswana became independent in 1966, but the British government continued to provide almost 60 per cent of the state's development spending between 1968 and 1973. With the proliferation of North American and European aid donors in the 1970s, external funding of development expenditure reached 72 per cent in 1977-78 [Stevens, 1981: 58]. An improved customs union agreement with South Africa in 1969 brought further direct state revenues [Holm, 1988: 197].

### *(iii) The Economic Bureaucracy: Power, Competence, Insulation and Penetration*

Economic co-ordination and development in these states has been managed by specific institutions, whose task has been to organise the critical interactions between state and economy. These have been the economic bureaucracies, the core centres of strategic economic

direction in developmental states, or their 'pilot agencies' as Johnson described them for Japan [1982: 26]. What differentiates these economic high commands in developmental states from the generality of planning institutions in so many developing countries appears to be their real power, authority, technical competence and insulation in shaping development policy, although of course this, too, varies from state to state.

The East Asian capitalist developmental states provide the clearest examples. Describing this core economic bureaucracy as an 'economic general staff', Robert Wade has identified its major components in Taiwan in three key agencies: the Council for Economic Planning and Development (its most recent name), the Industrial Development Bureau and the Council for Agricultural Planning and Development [Wade, 1990: 196]. In Korea, the Economic Planning Board (EPB), set up in 1961, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry constituted the core economic bureaucracies [Luedde-Nuerath, 1985: 96] of which, until recently at least, the EPB has been pre-eminent. Described as a 'super ministry' [Shinohara *et al.*, 1983: 44] and headed by a deputy prime minister, it crucially combined both budgetary and planning powers and '... wielded tremendous power over economic decision-making' [Haggard, 1990: 64-50].

The pattern is repeated in the other developmental states outside east Asia. In Singapore, the core economic bureaucracy has been the Economic Development Board (established in 1961). Not accountable to Parliament, but having high-level political support in the *de facto* one-party state, it has been central in shaping development policy and managing growth [Haggard, 1990: 113-14]. In Botswana, too, combined planning and budgetary functions are concentrated in the powerful Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) [Raphaeli *et al.*, 1984]. Growth in Botswana has been '... state-led and state-directed' [Charlton, 1991: 265], with the MFDP serving as its economic high command, generating policy and taking an '... aggressive role in planning investment', against the background of a 'fairly passive' parliament [Holm, 1988: 187-97]. The Malaysian economic bureaucracy, perhaps less powerful than these others, has none the less enjoyed 'great policy autonomy' [Cone, 1988: 261]. Key economic planning, implementation and monitoring institutions (the Economic Planning Unit, the National Development Planning Committee and the Implementation and Coordination Unit) have been concentrated in the Prime Minister's Department, and have had a major influence in national development planning [Young *et al.*, 1980: 92; Robertson, 1984: 271-4], especially in the period of 'state-led industrialization' under Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad after 1980 [Bowie, 1991: 111-25]. Malay dominance of politics

and the bureaucracy (through UMNO) has helped insulate these institutions. It has also meant that the powerful Chinese (and foreign) business interests have had 'relatively limited special influence on economic policy' [Crouch, 1984: 34].

In Indonesia, Thailand and China, despite the strong authoritarian bases of these states, the power, compactness, unity and efficacy of the economic bureaucracies appears to have been less. In this respect, at least, they conform less closely to the pure model of the developmental state. From the start of the New Order in Indonesia, the army realised that growth was critical. A team of economic technocrats was brought to the political heart of the presidency [Crouch, 1979] where their influence was considerable. Professor Widjojo Nitisastro, one of the key figures in this group, became Minister Co-ordinator of Economic and Financial Affairs and was put at the head of Soeharto's National Planning Council [Glassburner, 1971: 433; 1978b: 29]. Though their number and influence in the cabinet grew at the expense of military personnel throughout the 1960s and 1970s, these technocrats never had the kind of authoritative autonomy enjoyed by their counterparts in Botswana or Singapore and had to share power with civilian rivals and the military [Glassburner 1978a: 166-7; 1978b: 32]. Moreover, the technocrats in the National Economic Planning Board had little control over the huge national oil company, Pertamina (described as a state within a state, with its own patronage empire), or the rice agency, Bulog [Crouch, 1984]. Their base was thus less institutional and more personal, in the form of strong presidential support from Soeharto with his vision of an 'Indonesian industrial superstate' [Hill, 1992: 226].

In Thailand, too, the economic bureaucrats never developed the power and insulation of the kind found in Botswana or Korea. Attempts were made, especially from the time of Prime Minister Sarit's modernising regime in 1958, and on the urging of a World Bank mission (1957/8), to establish institutional developmental capacity to direct Thai development with technocrats at the helm [Girling, 1981: 81-3; Samudavanija, 1990: 278]. A National Development Plan was initiated, a National Economic and Social Development Board was established as well as was the Board of Investment and the Industrial Finance Corporation of Thailand (IFCT) to promote national industrialisation [Hewison, 1985: 278-284]. Despite this, the technocracy never prevailed and political factors largely explain this. Divisions in the military, competing bureaucratic-business factions, popular pressures and alternating civilian and military rule all served to disrupt continuity and undermine technocratic policy-making by the aspirant economic bureaucracy [Crouch, 1984; Cone 1988].

Although its record of growth has been impressive, China has till recently (1980s) been the major exception with regard to this aspect of developmental states. While the dominance of the Chinese Communist Party and the army has assured state autonomy, China provides the weakest example of an effective economic bureaucracy. Modelled on the Soviet system, the State Council was (formally) the highest organ of state administration. It comprised two main planning commissions, the State Planning Commission (for long term plans) and the State Economic Commission (for short-term plans), plus a jungle of other national agencies, commissions, ministries, bureaux and offices [Donnithorne, 1967; Burns 1983; You, 1986], all subject in turn to instructions from the Politburo and, in theory, from the National People's Congress. Specialists insist that, despite the long and strong bureaucratic tradition in China, there has been no '... effective central planning system in China' [White, 1984: 109]. The bureaucracy has been in a mess and it is thus not surprising that current interest in reform focuses on how the system can be made *more like* other East Asian developmental states, combining the political authority of a dominant party with a more technocratic economic bureaucracy, coordinated by the Economic Commission [You, 1986: 136-8; White, 1991]. Current developments in China thus suggest that a 'developmental state', or 'market-facilitating state' [Howell, 1993a: 2], is emerging [White, 1995].

An important feature of these core bureaucracies has been their technical competence [Amsden, 1985: 83; Johnson, 1987: 152; Evans, 1989: 573-4; Wade, 1990: 217-24; Onis, 1991: 114; Charlton, 1991: 265]. Many of the top officials have received advanced training abroad, such as the new Thai technocrats from the 1960s [Girling, 1981: 82], and the so-called 'Berkeley mafia' of Indonesian economists in and around Soeharto's cabinet [Glassburner, 1978a: 166]. The literature suggests that most of these senior people have generally shared or helped to shape the modernising objectives of the political leadership and hence have been active in defining the developmental consensus over time. In East Asia, especially, they have also often had common educational backgrounds and party loyalties. Competition to enter these prestigious bureaucracies has been fierce and only the best graduates have been chosen, with very good career prospects at first inside and then later outside the bureaucracy [Johnson, 1982: 21]. Interestingly, expatriates have also often played important roles within these core economic institutions, as senior employees, advisers or consultants, thereby heightening the autonomy of these bureaucracies. This was the case early on in Taiwan, Korea and Malaysia, and has been an enduring feature of the economic bureaucracy in Botswana [Raphaeli *et al.*, 1984].

*(iv) Developmental States and Civil Society*

Developmental states have generally operated in social contexts where civil society has been crushed or was weak to start with. By 'civil society' I mean the web of all privately-organised interests and groups, above the family level but below that of the state [Rueschemeyer *et al.*, 1992: 6]. Developmental states have also been 'strong states' enjoying much 'infrastructural power', '... to penetrate and centrally coordinate the activities of civil society through its own infrastructure' [Mann, 1986: 114]. As Migdal [1987: 401] has pointed out, strong states are also not seriously threatened by other 'rule-making' organisations which exercise or claim control over certain groups in the society, thus challenging the pre-eminence of the state, such as Sendero Luminoso in Peru or the Tamil Liberation Front in Sri Lanka.

The common use of internal security legislation and agencies, secret police and party organisations has been standard practice in bolstering the state and controlling civil society in all developmental states. Everywhere mass media and labour organisations have been strictly controlled. Weakness of civil society has often been a result of a direct attack upon it by the new developmental state, as in the extreme cases of China after 1949 where the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) set out to '... eliminate all organizations and interactions not governed by the CCP ...' [Gold, 1990: 21], in Indonesia after 1966 when the PKI and other parties were effectively eliminated, and in Korea [Cotton, 1992: 523-4].

Socio-economic class formation and differentiation is the typical medium for the emergence and growth of an active civil society. Generally, this has been very limited in the early years of developmental states. In Indonesia, for instance, there has been no recent history of *hacienda*-like estates, with legacies of intense social class conflict, as in the Philippines and Latin America [Liddle, 1992: 445]. Even the small capital-owning classes (despite their previous curtailment by Soekarno) knew from the start of the New Order that their influence would be minimal. Their organisations were ignored in favour of new ones sponsored by the state [Robison 1987: 61-2]. First under Soekarno's Guided Democracy and then under the New Order, civil society was 'gradually strangled' [Sundhaussen, 1989: 462]. The prohibition on discussing ideological alternatives (for example, Marxism or Islam) to the official Pancasila ideology had the effect of far-reaching depoliticisation in Indonesia [Van Dijk, 190: 123]. Likewise, in Korea, the weakness of social classes was a condition of the emergence of the developmental state. The working class was small, the capitalist class was largely dependent on the state and the aristocracy, such as it was, had been 'dissolved by land reform' [Amsden, 1989: 52].



Low levels of economic development in primarily rural societies at the inception of developmental states, as in Malaysia or Thailand, has everywhere meant that civil society was weak. Botswana is a good case in point, where the most numerous classes was the 'peasantariat' [Parson, 1984], people with a rural base on the land, but who were also involved in (often migrant) wage employment as well. The other main class was the so-called petty-bourgeoisie of teachers, civil servants, shopkeepers and the more prosperous cattle-farmers. They had generated few serious independent organisations, and the few which did exist (such as farmers' institutions, co-operatives and parent-teacher associations) were absorbed in the BDP and its affiliates or financed by the state. Civil society in Botswana thus lacked '... the capacity and initiative to organize itself' [Molutsi and Holm, 1990: 327]. The single main potential opposition to the secular state, the chiefs, have thus far been carefully managed to support the developmental state. Nationally, they have only an advisory role through the House of Chiefs, while retaining some influence at local level, despite the redistribution of their powers to local councils after independence [Holm, 1988].

This general weakness, flattening or control of civil society appears thus to have been a general condition for the constitution and continuity of developmental states. But, paradoxically, the economic success of these states has promoted the growth or re-emergence of a potentially active civil society. Regular participation in modern economic life, expanding educational provision, rising levels of consumption, strengthening of the organisations of both labour and capital and the functional requirements of economic growth and diversification have all been achievements of developmental states. These successes have helped to stimulate demands for decentralised decision-making, greater individual liberty and the establishment or extension of democracy. Comparable evidence from China [Gold, 1990; White, 1991], South Korea [Han, 1988; 1989; Moon, 1988; Cotton, 1989], Thailand [Anderson, 1990; Samudavanija, 1990], Indonesia [Liddle, 1992] and Botswana [Holm, 1988] confirms this and raises important questions about the future of developmental states.

#### (v) *Developmental States and Economic Interests*

These factors all strengthened the capacities of developmental states *vis-à-vis* their dealings with private economic interests, internal and foreign. The key point here is that in the developmental states under review, state power and autonomy was consolidated *before* national or foreign capital became influential. This is clearly the case now in China as it becomes more open to foreign capital. In the formative years of

East Asian developmental states, private economic interests were either suppressed (as in China), or were generally politically weak, if not insignificant, relative to state power. Where landed power existed, it was destroyed through direct political attack and programmes of land reform, classically in China, but also in Taiwan and Korea. Local bourgeois classes were insignificant and private foreign capital barely existed as an important economic or political factor at the time of the formation of the developmental states. Where it did exist to some extent (as in Malaysia and Singapore) it was cautious and weak, relative to the state which was thus the most powerful player in town.

This differentiates these states decisively from Latin America where historically powerful landed interests, an emerging bourgeois class and foreign capital were deeply entrenched. Thus compared even with the Latin American 'bureaucratic authoritarian' regimes in the 1960s and 1970s, East Asian developmental states were from the start '... in a much better position to determine what role transnational capital would play in the industrial division of labour ...' [Evans, 1987: 215]. By using a battery of policy instruments covering conditionality (for instance about joint enterprises and local content requirements), screening and monitoring of foreign capital, these states have '... given a virtuoso performance ...' [Johnson, 1987: 163] in setting terms which have attracted foreign capital while making it serve the state's domestic economic developmental priorities [Haggard and Cheng, 1987; Amsden, 1989; Mardon, 1990; Stallings, 1990].

Moreover, developmental states have played a major part in encouraging the emergence and growth of private economic institutions, their shape, scope and focus of activity, even in China after 1979. As Amsden [1989] describes so effectively for South Korea, the state has been active in promoting, pushing, persuading and bullying these interests in directions which conform to its development strategy. The patterns of intimate and intense state-private sector relationships have inevitably led to these political economies being described as 'corporatist' [Onis, 1991: 118-19], in which the 'leadership' role of the state has been far more important than its 'followership' role [Wade, 1990: 295]. Commonly, close relations between the state and the emerging private sector power groups have followed [Evans, 1989; Onis, 1991].

In Indonesia [Robison, 1987], the role of the state in the economy has been predominant, at least until recent moves in the 1980s to privatise and deregulate [Soesastro 1989]. Dutch corporate interests were nationalised in the 1950s. Foreign capital was unwelcome and hence uninterested, apart from oil and mineral companies which were in partnership with the state. The small domestic capital-owning class was divided

(between indigenous and Chinese sectors) and concentrated in trade and small-scale commodity production. Though increasingly unsteady under Soekarno, shaken internally by political conflict, enervated by bureaucratic entropy and undermined by economic deterioration, the state was still the pre-eminent force [Emmerson, 1978; Anderson, 1983]. Soeharto's New Order was quick to rationalise and consolidate state power, using its dominance to establish a developmental momentum, encouraging, protecting and helping local capital. Given its bulging oil revenues in the 1970s, the Indonesian state was not dependent on foreign funding and though it wished to attract it, and did, it could impose conditions upon it. But, crucially, as in East Asia, the Indonesian developmental state was in place *before* local and foreign capital interests expanded in the 1970s and 1980s.

The New Economic Policy (NEP) in Malaysia after 1969 also succeeded in limiting foreign ownership in Malaysia while simultaneously using legislation, state funds and large public corporations to promote Bumiputra (native Malay) interests *vis-à-vis* the politically weakened but economically dominant Chinese [Bowie, 1991: 22]. Even in the case of the relatively small and weak Botswana economy, the state was able to persuade the powerful de Beers diamond mining corporation of South Africa to accept a 50-50 share-owning arrangement in the Botswana diamond mines in 1975 (de Beers had previously had an 85 per cent stake). This has given the state influence over many aspects of mining policy, such as wages and the licensing of exploration and mining operations [Parson, 1984], but has not (as in Jamaica or Zambia) given rise to major or disruptive conflicts with the mining corporations.

(vi) *Developmental States: Civil Rights, Performance and Legitimacy*

A grim feature shared by developmental states is the combination of their sometimes brutal suppression of civil rights, their apparently wide measure of legitimacy and their generally sustained performance in delivering developmental goods. I suggest these are intimately connected.

The non-democratic developmental states are not particularly attractive states and some have appalling human rights records, at least when set against liberal standards. Even in the softer and quasi-democratic Singapore, official attitudes to opposition and dissent have hardly been tolerant, as Lee Kwan Yew indicated in 1982: 'Every time anybody starts anything which will unwind or unravel this orderly, organized, sensible, rational society, and make it irrational and emotional, I put a stop to it and without hesitation' [Harris, 1986: 61].

But using Humana's assessment of a world average of 55 per cent for

human rights ratings in all countries, the comparative records of developmental states in a global context have not been especially bad. Most have been better than South Africa, the ex-Soviet Union, Iran, Albania and the Central African Republic, for instance. In the non-democratic developmental states, records range from slightly better than average (Thailand and South Korea at 57 per cent and 59 per cent) to the very poor (China at 23 per cent) with the others in between (Taiwan, 47 per cent and Indonesia 30 per cent). Democratic and quasi-democratic developmental states range from 71 per cent in the case of Botswana, through 59 per cent for Singapore, to 53 per cent for Malaysia [*Humana*, 1987: xiv–xv].

It is notoriously difficult to measure legitimacy, especially under non-democratic conditions. None the less, case studies suggest a widespread legitimacy, even genuine popularity [*Liddle* 1992: 450], for developmental states. However, there has also been widespread opposition to many aspects of developmental policy, such as the often bloody labour struggles in the 1980s in Korea and Taiwan [*Bello and Rosenfeld*, 1992 *Tables 1.4 and 13.1*], the major disturbances by students and the urban poor in Djakarta in January 1974, the frequent student and popular mobilisations in Bangkok, as in 1973, 1976 and most recently in 1992 [*Samudavanija*, 1990], and of course the events of Tiananmen Square, Beijing, in June 1989. While these protests have often shaken the regimes (bringing changes of government in Thailand), they have not seriously challenged their legitimacy.

It is probable that this mixture of repression and legitimacy is best explained by the well-distributed benefits of the high growth rates these developmental states have attained, at least as measured by the Human Development Index or HDI [*UNDP*, 1992], a combined measure of national income, life expectancy and educational attainment, ranking 160 countries from best (1) to worst (160) in relation to each other. The developmental states I have concentrated on here are ranked globally, as follows: Korea (34), Singapore (40), Malaysia (51) (all therefore in the top third on a world basis); Thailand (69), China (79), Botswana (94), and Indonesia (98) (in the top two-thirds) with data for Taiwan not being available [*UNDP*, 1992: 20]. This places them well above countries such as Bolivia, Kenya, Zambia, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Pakistan, India and Vietnam. Developmental states have generally been serious and effective in bringing schools, roads, health centres, public housing and other facilities to an expanding circle of people. This has increased life expectancy in these states, which is nowhere less than 62 (Indonesia) and is as high as 74 in Singapore [*World Bank*, 1992a], though this is not to say that sharp inequalities do not exist (especially along regional and

urban-rural cleavages), as in Thailand and Indonesia [*Phongpaichit, 1989; Booth 1992*].

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Clearly, more comparative research is needed on developmental states, but some working conclusions are worth making. First, this survey suggests a composite model or ideal type of the developmental state as a distinct, but changing, sub-type of state in the modern world which is not confined to Confucian East Asia. It is found also in Islamic and Buddhist Southeast Asia as well as in Africa and, historically, in Europe. Such states are dominated by strongly nationalist developmental elites and combine varying degrees of repression and legitimacy in contexts where civil society has been weak or weakened. These states concentrate considerable power, authority, autonomy and competence in the central political and bureaucratic institutions of the state, notably their economic bureaucracies, and generate pervasive infrastructural capacity [*Mann, 1986*]. They have established and maintained close co-ordinating links with key economic interests in the private sector [*Weiss and Hobson, 1994*]. State-determined incentives have ensured that such domestic and foreign interests have been harnessed both to pursue their own advantage and serve national developmental goals.

Second, developmental states do not fall obviously into either the Marxist or Weberian traditions of state theory [*Leftwich, 1993b*]. Clearly, they are not the agents of dominant classes, nor the product of class balance or stand-off, as in Marxist theory. With respect to Weberian-based theory, these states are not typically patrimonial, nor do they express the politico-bureaucratic characteristics and division of labour of the legal-rational polity [*Beetham, 1974: 72-9*]. On the contrary, developmental states have been essentially mobilising states in which political and bureaucratic components have been virtually fused.

Third, developmental states vary with respect to all the major factors I have outlined above. Given the particular complexities and internal tensions of the coalitional bases of the states of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, for example, they have had less developmental autonomy than those of Botswana, Singapore or Korea (at least until recently). Indeed if one were to classify these states in terms of their developmental effectiveness alone, three categories would emerge. In the first would be Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Botswana; in the second would be Malaysia and Indonesia; and in the third would be China and Thailand, though China may well be moving up into the second category. But further comparative research is needed to explain what

minimum combination of the above factors, and the intensity of their presence, establishes the boundary between non-developmental and developmental states, and which other states already fit or might yet graduate into these categories.

Fourth, like all states, developmental states are not static. Changes in their socio-economic structures, in their politics and international environments have produced shifts in their elite coalitions and the ideas, interests and institutions which bear on them, both domestic and foreign. In some, a combination of economic success, structural differentiation, external pressure and political liberalisation may induce a substantial modification of the developmental state, as in Korea [Moon, 1988]. In others, added developmental urgency may induce economic liberalisation only, while strengthening the autonomy and coherence of the development state and especially its economic bureaucracy, as in China [White, 1991; Howell, 1993b]. Elsewhere, as in Indonesia, declining state revenues, increased international pressures and an expanding role for both local and foreign capital may undermine the 'hegemony of the politico-bureaucrats' and their direction of the national economy [Robison, 1987: 50–51], at the same time strengthening the political influence of private economic interests in civil society [Robison, 1992].

Finally, and crucially, at all points of analytical entry, the forms and features of developmental states illustrate the primacy of politics. Their provenance is everywhere traceable to the socio-economic structures, histories and especially political struggles which constituted the formative processes of these states. Their relative autonomy, too, is clearly a function of their political origins and the coalition which supports them, while the authority and insulation of their economic high commands has flowed from the political power and support of the central political executives. And their ability to deal both with civil society and with particular local and foreign interests highlights the centrality of politics and state capacity in shaping mutually advantageous economic relationships.

Few societies in the modern world will make speedy transitions from poverty without states which approximate this model of a developmental state (ideally, but not necessarily, the democratic kind). Without such states, transitions may be slow but the human cost immense. In short, contrary to the current orthodoxy, development requires not less state but better state action [Sandbrook, 1990: 682], and this is most likely from developmental states. Thus calls for good governance [World Bank, 1992b], or democratic governance, which focus on administrative, judicial or electoral good practice, entirely miss the point that such virtues can only be instituted and sustained by politics [Leftwich, 1993a;

1994]. Such narrow administrative models of development simply evacuate politics from developmental processes. It is time to bring politics firmly back in to the analysis and promotion of development.

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#### NOTE

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