BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND DEMOCRACY: A Study in the Political Economy of Ideas in Latin America, 1968-1980

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BETWEEN CAPITALISM AND DEMOCRACY

A Study in the Political Economy of Ideas in Latin America, 1968–1980

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Abstract: This article tells the story of how an important group of social scientists in Latin America turned away from the problems of underdevelopment to the possibilities for democracy. It focuses on a network of leading Latin American intellectuals and their North American counterparts brought together by material stringencies as well as intellectual and political concerns arising from the sweeping wave of authoritarianism in the region. Brokered by private institutions and mediated by personal encounters, the decade-long endeavors of the network reveal the mechanisms through which social scientific paradigms are undone and refashioned.

This essay tells the history of the interplay of two foundational concepts in Latin American social sciences: dependency and bureaucratic authoritarianism. It is also a study of the political economy of ideas, and ideas about political economy, at a time in which models of national capitalism and regional development were coming into question around the world. It focuses on an intellectual network that signaled a fundamental shift in research away from the problems of underdevelopment to the possibilities for democracy, and explores how fields of social science bound by regional or national structures of funding, affiliation, and traditions of reproduction gave way to global networks buoyed by new actors and institutions that operate across national borders.

Our purpose is twofold. First, this article contributes to the field of transnational intellectual history. There have been, roughly speaking, two tacks: diffusionist and convergent. Diffusionists accent intellectual evolution from a shared point of origin. Consider the ways in which Keynesian economic ideas diffused from Cambridge to the rest of the North Atlantic and Japan. The process was one of comparative translation, selection, and reception to yield multiple Keynesian doctrines and adaptations across welfarist regimes. Another approach examines the reverse process: instead of diffusion and variegation, one finds coalescence from multiple points. One scholar, for instance, has emphasized the convergence around the idea of a single currency: the European Monetary Union was the triumph of an

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idea (an idea whose romance has lately waned) from multiple points of origin. Our approach resembles more the convergent model and borrows from recent insights into global intellectual history that argue for the connection of production, dissemination, and circulation of ideas: networks. We follow that suggestion and point to mechanisms drawn from literature on scientific and intellectual movements to focus on the formation of knowledge regimes, academic networks, and the role that intellectuals outside of traditional centers in the United States and Europe played in the formation of concepts that shaped global understandings of capitalism and democracy.[1]

The second purpose is to address how development and democracy were reconceptualized at a time of dwindling faith in both. As the "Development Decade" came to a close, it did so under a pall of uncertainty and failure. Ever since, the narrative has been told as the rise and fall of modernization theory, as a story of conviction and disenchantment with the theory and its policy implications and with an earlier consensus about how to deploy expertise in the tropics.[2] But a crisis does not necessarily imply a wholesale abandonment of old theories, and thus one cannot automatically predict its intellectual consequences. In fact, social science research splintered in several directions at once. Some scholars stuck to their commitment to modernization and development planning. Others veered in the opposite direction: the crisis confirmed the need to embrace a new model, with intellectual coordinates, that molded Latin America to global market forces. This was especially influential among social scientists circling around Generals Videla and Pinochet in Buenos Aires and Santiago.[3]

Our portrait of one intellectual network focuses on the role of "framing effects," which Scott Frickel and Neil Gross depict as the complex and contingent ways in which ideas frame the concerns of those who inhabit intellectual fields.[4] This case study underscores the contingencies in the timing and direction of social scientific exploration for one of several intellectual trajectories. By the late 1960s, Latin American social scientists were looking for alternative models. There had been important precedents of collaborative debate, most notably under the mantle of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA in English and CEPAL in Spanish and Portuguese). Indeed, the United Nations (UN) had supported several ancillary hubs and networks, like the Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales and the Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales; with time they got funding from government agencies in countries like Sweden and Canada. But the 1960s witnessed the beginning of a drive to create alternative hubs and networks supported by private American foundations and

1. See Hall (1989); McNamara (1999); Moyn and Sartori (2013), especially the introduction. On scientific and intellectual movements, see Frickel and Gross (2005). On knowledge regimes, see Campbell and Pederson (2014).

2. Huntington (1968). The subject is now a large field of study. See for instance Michael Latham (2011).

3. See Valdés (1995); Puryear (1994).

4. Frickel and Gross (2005, 221). We have adapted somewhat their fourth condition for success of scientific/intellectual movements in light of work on framing effects in social psychology.

more removed official sources of support. This essay looks at one such case and the contingencies that contributed to its formation around new sources of funding, new institutional brokers, and new intellectual faces. The result was an important series of interventions in the ways in which development and democracy were conceptualized in the hemisphere.[5]

A NEW LANDSCAPE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE

By the late 1960s, the fundaments of a structuralist style of social science and of regimes dedicated to structural change came under increasing doubt. Pitched battles broke out in factories and on landed estates throughout Latin America. External triggers of coups d'état and rising social tensions provoked a younger generation of Latin American scholars as well as some members of the old to question some basic verities and search for new models of thought. But some triggers were also internal and local, even simply taking the form of personal encounters. One important contingency came when the Harvard economist Albert O. Hirschman paid a visit to Chile in 1967. When he presented a paper on import substitution industrialization in Santiago, in attendance was an exiled young Brazilian sociologist, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who had recently written a long essay with a Chilean colleague, Enzo Faletto. Their work, entitled "Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina," was making the rounds in mimeograph form. Carlos Fortín, a student at the time, later recalled its "spectacular impact." The essay was "for many like me, a radical new opening of the intellectual and political horizon. There were the traditional Marxists like Theotônio [dos Santos] and Tomás Vasconi, but what really galvanized the alternative was the work of Cardoso and Faletto which was, although dialectical, evidently not Marxist." Cardoso passed a copy of the essay to Hirschman, who read it upon his return to the United States. "We have similar minds," Hirschman wrote to Cardoso soon thereafter.[6]

This was a fateful encounter because it would connect an important North American broker with a new generation of Latin American scholars. Cardoso had been affiliated with the University of São Paulo in Brazil until the 1964 military coup forced him into exile in Santiago, Chile. There, he joined the economists at ECLA but was never persuaded by the fixation with external dependency. For Cardoso, as well as for other sociologists and political scientists joining the discussion about development, Latin America's impasse was the result of specific constraints imposed on internal power structures by industrialization and social change in peripheral areas of global capitalism. This was a theme he would stress with Faletto in *Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina*, finally published by Siglo XXI in 1969, whose runaway sales helped buoy the left-wing publishing house to commercial success.[7] Cardoso was not unique in edging away from structural models and more radical brands of Latin American social science. Another skeptic was

5. See Frederick Cooper and Randall Packer, introduction to Cooper and Packer (1997, 1–44).
6. Cited in Franco (2007, 124); Adelman (2013, 409–410).
7. Cardoso and Faletto (1969); Cardoso (2006). See also Heller, Rueschemeyer, and Snyder (2009).

Guillermo O'Donnell, an Argentine political scientist whose studies became pivotal in shifting the focus of social scientific research from economic and external approaches to political and internal ones. Basing it on research conducted after the 1966 coup, in 1971 he completed his first book, *Modernización y autoritarismo* (1972), and immediately began to consider more recent and comparative data to write *1966–1973, El estado burocrático autoritario,* a work he finished in 1975.[8]

Cardoso and O'Donnell were instrumental "framers" of a new intellectual matrix by the late 1960s. Both were critically engaged with modernization theory and did not simply rule it out; but there was something about the character of deeper changes from rural to urban societies that the obsession with external constraints and vulnerability missed. Both of them have noted, for instance, their regard for Barrington Moore's opus, *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy,* which highlighted how the balance of rural forces shaped the path toward modern capitalist societies. Both were reading Hirschman's work closely. Cardoso had met Hirschman in Chile in 1967; O'Donnell met him while he was a graduate student at Yale. In sum, neither found the structural condition of peripheral capitalism an exhaustive explanation for the political economy of development. But they bridled at the universalizing claims of North American–style modernization theory.[9] They were not alone. After reading Cardoso and Faletto, and O'Donnell, Douglas Chalmers of Columbia University was inspired to write to Joseph Grunwald, the chair of the Joint Committee for Latin American Studies (JCLAS) at the Social Sciences Research Council (SSRC): "Development served as a paradigm but it is (and ought to be) giving way to more varied problems and approaches."[10]

O'Donnell's concepts need some introduction because they provided a frame for the network we analyze in the next section. In 1968, two years after the military coup in Argentina, O'Donnell went to Yale University to pursue a PhD in politics. There, he began examining contemporary South American politics and the state as a semiautonomous force whose role was not necessarily reducible to the instruments of any single social class. Under the influence of comparative political scientists like David Apter and Juan Linz, O'Donnell shifted the attention from growth and accumulation to questions of the regimes that curate them. The result would be one of the most influential masterworks in Latin American social science and global comparative political science, the concept of the bureaucratic authoritarian (B-A) state. In probing the factors behind the rise of dictatorships, O'Donnell argued that generals were summoned to resolve a crisis of economic growth: as industrial "deepening" ran into trouble, juntas imposed stability and introduced bureaucratic rationalities that civilian authorities could not. They led technocratic, "modern" regimes to break the logjam of late late-industrializing countries. Juntas

8. Published in English in 1988 as *Bureaucratic Authoritarianism: Argentina, 1966–1973 in Comparative Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

9. See O'Donnell (2007, 285–286, 302–303), and "Theoretical and Historical Background," in his *Bureaucratic Authoritarianism* (1988, 11–13).

10. Douglas Chalmers to Joseph Grunwald, June 27,1973, F. 2998, B. 255, S. ACC II, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Archive Center. Cardoso also influenced O'Donnell, who drew heavily on *Dependency and Development in Latin America.*

were not simply fascist or neofascist responses to the threat of revolution, whose only democratic resolution would come through socialist revolution, as Theotônio dos Santos argued in influential Marxist-structuralist work.[11]

Contextual triggers also reshaped the intellectual landscape. First in Brazil in 1964 and then in Argentina in 1966, a wave of coups d'état heightened anxiety and brought about the need to explain not just problems of development but of democracy as well. What is more, the change in political regimes had a seismic effect on the organizational base of intellectual life. Universities became the object of censorship and repression. The 1966 coup in Argentina brought the hammer down hard on academic life. In Brazil as well, after the Institutional Act No. 5 of 1968, there was a marked curb on freedom of expression, and many intellectuals fled into exile. Chile, meanwhile, saw its universities swing from heady reform and expansion in 1967–1968 to become sites of brutal repression in September 1973. This was one reason, at least in the late 1960s and early 1970s, that Santiago (along with Mexico City, despite the student massacre in the fall of 1968) was an epicenter of critical social science. The Pinochet coup, however, cut that short.[12]

Repression drove some scholars abroad. Others retreated to private domestic institutions. Some of those institutions were ephemeral, with acronyms coming and going. Others became durable landmarks in an increasingly complex and variegated higher education system. Cardoso joined colleagues to found the Centro Brasileiro de Planejamento Econômico (CEBRAP) in São Paulo, and O'Donnell at first joined a research center within the Instituto Torcuato Di Tella, the Centro de Investigaciones en Administración Pública; later, after members of the Instituto Di Tella board started to fret that some of its researchers were too leftist, he co-established the Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad (CEDES) in Buenos Aires. Likewise, in 1975, Chilean social scientists led by Alejandro Foxley would do the same after the fall of President Salvador Allende, pulling the Corporación de Estudios para Latinoamérica (CIEPLAN) out of the Catholic University, fleeing a pro-Pinochet rector.

As repression led to the proliferation of independent research centers, scholars began to link up in ways that universities, steeped in national traditions of intellectual reproduction, had not. Severed from access to state funds, research centers had to create advisory or governing boards to make them credible in order to secure financing from external sources. An important part of our story includes the ways in which the search for credibility and legitimacy created cross-national alliances and not simply an endogenous pursuit of status or cultural capital à la Pierre Bourdieu. To enhance their profile and lend more global visibility, these boards included international members. CIEPLAN had Cardoso, Hirschman, and O'Donnell on its Consejo Consultivo (there were others, too, like Albert Fishlow, Enrique Iglesias, and Victor Tokman). O'Donnell and Hirschman teamed up to evaluate CEBRAP in 1971 for the Ford Foundation. They did so for another Ford-funded project on agricultural technology in Colombia a few years later, and in

11. O'Donnell (2007).
12. Garretón (1980).

1979 returned again to Bogotá for Ford, this time to evaluate the independent research center Fedesarrollo.[13]

In effect, repression drove critical thinking in the social sciences further from universities just as the structuralist consensus was coming undone. This was an important shift because it coincided with, and to some extent prompted, a realignment of financial support for new social science away from formal transnational organizations like the UN and national governments. Researchers turned to a receptive audience in the form of foreign foundations. Above all, it was the Ford Foundation in New York, with satellites in Mexico City, Santiago, and Rio, that played a catalytic role. A few individuals were behind-the-scenes handmaidens easing the anxieties of foundation magnates when faced with the prospect of being affiliated with left-wing social scientists, which might compromise their standing in Chile and Brazil. In 1966, Ford intensified its involvement in the Third World, moving beyond the focus on applied and technocratic research and placing David Bell (a former USAID figure) in charge of the International Division; with him came Kalman Silvert, the foundation's top Latin American specialist and an important interlocutor among Latin American social scientists. There were also some dauntless staff members in the satellites, like Peter Bell in Rio de Janeiro. While Silvert discreetly maneuvered the head office to accept an expanded role for basic social science research, Cardoso, recently purged from the University of São Paulo, reached out to Peter Bell, which set the stage for international funding support for this heterodox research center.[14]

The Ford-CEBRAP convergence was not a natural one; for some CEBRAP founders, American foundations were tainted as imperial tools, especially in the wake of the revelations of Project Camelot (a scheme by the US Army to support social science research in Chile). Meanwhile, some in the New York headquarters worried about becoming aligned with rabble-rousing intellectuals. One member of the US embassy appeared at Bell's door in Rio with a CIA file on Cardoso, warning him that further affiliation with this "communist" would cost him his career. In the end, cooler heads prevailed in New York. To shore up support, Cardoso and Bell maneuvered to have a credibility-enhancing "review" of the organization led by a Latin American social scientist who could assuage the more radical Brazilian scholars, and a respected North American to appease New York. O'Donnell was elected to represent the first, and Hirschman the second. Creating this team was a contingent decision with yet more fateful consequences. Not only did the review open the spigot for further funding; CEBRAP became a model for social scientists evicted from universities elsewhere in Latin America to form institutions with international backing. After Bell was moved to Santiago in 1971, he operated in similar fashion and labored to secure a grant for the newly independent CIEPLAN, with an understanding that its advisory council would include the likes of Hirschman and Cardoso. The same coalition was important when O'Donnell approached Silvert at Ford, which led to a start-up grant for CEDES;

13. For more on the role of global institutions in creating a regional social science, especially with regard to ECLA, see Fajardo (2015).

14. Cardoso (2006a, 112–113).

the timing was fortuitous when the boom came crashing down on university life in 1976. This did not immunize the social scientists from danger. Indeed, because they were independent, CEDES members were targets of threats from both the right and left; because CEDES was Ford-backed, the left lumped the social scientists into the imperialist camp.[15]

There were two important implications of this realignment of intellectual forces. First, though this was not the Ford Foundation's intention, the effect was to sire a triangular affective and intellectual relationship between Cardoso (a sociologist), O'Donnell (a political scientist), and Hirschman (an economist), a partnership that would remap the social sciences, which was especially significant because none of them cared much about disciplinary boundaries or the methodological purities that were taking hold in North American social science. At least for a moment, there was an integrated notion of a social science. Second, the simultaneous cropping up of interlinked research centers funded by foreign foundations—overlaid by the formation of the network to be discussed below—was the regionalization of social science. Through collaborative efforts of new private institutions, "we Latin Americanized ourselves," O'Donnell later recalled.[16]

STARTING A NETWORK

These new connections did not necessarily have the glue to hold them in place. To turn the new moral language and interlocking incentive structure into a common purpose required a more formalized network and some brokers that functioned across the institutional lines beyond the common Ford Foundation funds. There was still an element missing. This would come with the entry of the Social Sciences Research Council (SSRC) and its Joint Committee for Latin American Studies (JCLAS) onto the scene. This section turns to a network of scholars and the making of a new social science agenda aimed at transcending the focus on the structural obstacles to development and reconsidering the possibilities for social change in the service of democracy.

For those emerging from a structuralist heritage, like O'Donnell and Cardoso, and sympathetic critics like Hirschman, some pieces were in place for a new convergence; what put them together were political shocks and personal happenstance. The first of those events occurred in 1972 when Hirschman moved to the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) at Princeton University and would become a permanent faculty member there in 1974, joining Clifford Geertz to create a School of Social Science. This position afforded an opportunity to throw open

15. The following interviews were carried out by Jeremy Adelman: Frank Sutton, interview, July 21, 2011; Peter Bell, interview, July 26, 2011; Fernando Henrique Cardoso, interview, July 6, 2012. See also O'Donnell (2007). Not long after the 1973 coup, Bell wrote a memorandum arguing—perhaps influenced by O'Donnell—that the overthrow was not just a hiccup. The memo wound up in the hands of Paul Rosenstein-Rodan, by now a fierce critic of structuralist social scientists of the kind Bell was drawn to. Rosenstein-Rodan was a Pinochet advisor. He turned the memo over to his Chilean associates. Shortly thereafter, a delegation traveled to New York to visit the Ford Foundation president, Mac Bundy, to have Bell recalled from Santiago. Bundy stood behind his man.

16. O'Donnell (2007, 280).

the fellows program at the IAS to Latin Americans, who had suddenly found themselves with precarious finances or politically endangered. The second involved the ties between the Ford Foundation and the SSRC. Building on Kalman Silvert's brokerage at Ford and the intrepid work behind the scenes of Bryce Wood at the SSRC (Wood staffed the JCLAS), Ford agreed to allocate $1.5 million (a hefty sum in those days) to support social science field research in the region. And, for the first time, it allowed the SSRC to funnel resources to non-US scholars. These important shifts in financing meant that not only was Ford supporting research centers in situ, but that through the SSRC there were incentives to create pioneering research networks. Finally, there was a shift in leadership. Bryce Wood had brought Hirschman to the JCLAS in 1971, and on September 1, 1973, Hirschman replaced Joseph Grunwald as chair of the committee. A month later, Bryce Wood retired and made way for the no less enterprising sociologist, Louis Goodman.[17]

Ten days later, the Chilean military began to shower bombs on the presidential palace in Santiago. At a World Bank conference at the University of Sussex, Alejandro Foxley and Aníbal Pinto turned on their televisions and watched in horror as soldiers burned books in the street back home. Hirschman immediately wrote to O'Donnell in Buenos Aires to help locate friends in Chile. He then called a meeting of the Joint Committee at the SSRC offices in New York in November. What was to be done?[18]

Given the change in funding and the urgency of the situation, several principles were agreed on. The first, faced with a deluge of requests from Uruguay and Chile in particular, was that funds should be dispersed to support scholars directly, especially those in peril—a tough decision given that Ford was withdrawing from the Foreign Areas Fellowship Program, an SSRC mainstay for doctoral field research. Cardoso, Hirschman, and the Chilean economist Osvaldo Sunkel were especially passionate about this. There was, accordingly, a spike in research fellowships to seventy-three in 1974–1975 (the number would then decline to forty by 1980 and eventually vanish).[19]

There was also an agreement that the committee should support collaborative, thematically driven projects conducted in Latin America itself, an idea Grunwald had floated a few months earlier; the change in circumstances seemed to make it more pressing. The committee should not simply sponsor individual research conducted by gazing from the outside in; nor should it function as a "mini-foundation" passively supporting social science. It should shape the emerging agenda.

This, it is worth noting, distinguished the JCLAS from other US-based area studies institutions, which some considered parochial, for JCLAS integrated Latin American scholars into its decision-making and agenda-forging process. At least

17. ACLS/SSRC Planning Conference on Extending Eligibility for Research Grants to Individual Non-North American Scholar, June 15–17, 1972, F. 3128, B. 268, S. ACC II, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Archive Center; Louis Goodman, interview, October 3, 2008.

18. Alejandro Foxley, interview, June 4, 2011; Hirschman to O'Donnell, September 26, 1973, box 9, folder 17, Albert O. Hirschman Papers, Mudd Library, Princeton University (hereafter AOHP).

19. Paul Drake and Elizabeth Hilbink, "The Joint Committee on Latin American Studies: A Model of International Research Collaboration," undated manuscript in author's possession, 10 n. 44; Louis Goodman, interview, October 30, 2008.

for a time, it allowed Latin American scholarship to inform North American social science on the region, and it reinforced the regionalization of the dialogues across national borders.[20]

The Chilean coup forced the issue of what was going wrong with Latin American governance onto the table. O'Donnell saw an opportunity. Though he was not yet on the JCLAS (he would join shortly thereafter), he sketched out the contours of a collaborative project on "public policy" in Latin America. What is unclear—the archives do not confirm either way, and neither Hirschman nor O'Donnell could recall when they were interviewed—is whether this was planned. But with two such strategically minded figures it would be hard to treat as mere chance the decision to commission O'Donnell to give the project its intellectual bearings. Either way, Hirschman circulated it to the rest of the committee. There had also been a submission from Manuel Antonio Garretón and Enzo Faletto at FLACSO to examine "The Problem of the State in Latin America." James Malloy of the University of Pittsburgh submitted his own variation of policy studies. To pull something together, Hirschman then enlisted a young political scientist at Columbia, Douglas Chalmers, who regarded O'Donnell's work on authoritarianism as a model for thinking more broadly. Chalmers penned a memorandum to the committee recommending a complex proposal to study "the State," one that would bridge the gap between American and Latin American styles of social science. "It is just possible that the time is right for promoting an approach around the conception of the state which will utilize the best in the two traditions." Cardoso quickly chimed in response: "To grasp realities in a fluid process with a 'Western minded' theoretical armory is a real feat. And of course we have no other tradition than the Western from which to build a science." The "tragic recent events in Chile" only highlighted "the necessity to create new and more precise tools." Here lay a frame for collaboration.[21]

While it would take some time to sort out precisely what this involved, the sea change was already evident. Whereas social scientists had been concerned above all with the external causes of underdevelopment and their internal consequences and constraints, the new framing evolved to consider a wider array of variables and less deterministic (a word which itself would generate some debate) formulations, one in which power relations were rendered more elastic and malleable. To some extent, this was a surprising turn, especially given the hard edge of the new martial turn in politics; after all, repression, and not negotiation, prevailed. What was there to study if the state was increasingly synonymous with exclusion and brutality? It is important to note that it was not just a matter of introducing the state into consideration, or "bringing the state back in," as a group of North American political scientists (also affiliated with the SSRC) would later press. The state had been present in the structuralist approach. Precisely because external

20. John Coatsworth, "International Collaboration in the Social Sciences: The ACLS/SSRC Joint Committee on Latin American Studies," paper presented in Montevideo, August 15–17, 1989; Drake and Hilbink, "The Joint Committee on Latin American Studies."

21. Douglas Chalmers to Julio Cotler and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, March 8, 1974, F. 550, B. 102, ACC I, and F. 3515, B. 290, S. ACC II, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Archives Center.

dependency clipped the autonomy of the domestic bourgeoisie, it was through the agency of the state that Latin American nations would channel investment, promote industrial growth, build infrastructure, and promote employment. In Cardoso's words, developmentalism had "imagined the state as the privileged locus of autonomy." What the state was not, however, was the central concern as a subject. Thus, O'Donnell now argued, the question of the state and the political regime could begin with the analysis of "public policy" as a mechanism to see the "state in action."[22] In this fashion, power and politics became the axis for social scientific analysis.

There was also a moral concern. Few of these social scientists imagined themselves standing on the sidelines, dispassionately diagnosing the region's authoritarian turn. What ensued reveals facets of the politics of Latin American intellectuals. The research in question was never motivated by purely "objective" considerations. A shared commitment to understand the historic juncture helped integrate the collaboration. But it was not a sufficient condition to sustain it. The commitment also opened up fissures among those who did not quite identify with the moral purpose or style of the project.

DEFINING AN AGENDA

Making the state the frame was not enough; it was not a research agenda capable of integrating a network. Chalmers's and O'Donnell's manifestos only outlined general conceptual matters and were clearer for what they rejected than what they touted. While traditional analysis of policy making had been limited to the efficacy, efficiency, and impact of public policies in specific sectors or problems, neither offered an alternative conceptual framework. Second, they spurned the pronounced North American emphasis on the corporatist character of the military regimes and their deep, Iberian, almost essentialized roots that removed the state from the stresses and strains of capitalist pressures. But they had not yet brought "the two traditions" together. The committee agreed to meet in early 1974 in Buenos Aires; since O'Donnell would serve as host, Hirschman asked him to team up with the political scientist Philippe Schmitter to come up with a plan. In O'Donnell and Schmitter's manifesto the "state was the beginning and the end of an inquiry into public policy."[23]

There was also the challenge of how to conceptualize the state and chart a research agenda organized around policy making that would encompass the variety of regional experiences. The "Work Plan" recommended an explicitly collaborative and comparative approach to increase the "analytical yield" of policy research for an understanding of the state that would spare it from being treated simply as the functional device of class interests (especially of propertied classes).

22. Cardoso (1974a); Guillermo O'Donnell to Michael Potashnik, October 3, 1973, F. 3516, B. 290, S. ACC II, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Center Archive.

23. "Work Plan for the Study of Public Policy in Latin America by Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter," August 1974, F. 552, B. 102, S. ACC I, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Archive Center; Guillermo O'Donnell to Michael Potashnik.

Gesturing the shift under way, it pointed to two key issues: the nature of decision making within the state and the state's back-and-forth dialectic with civil society, a concept now introduced to the equation.

The combination put the state's autonomy from economic and social structures front and center. If, on the one hand, O'Donnell and Schmitter explained, the state had become more expansive, "autonomous and omnipresent," it had also become more institutionally and bureaucratically disaggregated, more "porous" to different interests and influences. The very effort to reconcile these contradictory trends constituted a "Latin American problematique" for the group. It was not entirely severed, however, from the conventional preoccupation with development. They were clear: the "general parameters imposed by capitalism and the more specific ones resulting from the delay, dependence, and imbalance of Latin economies" and "the 'deepening' or modernization of their societies and economies" yielded specific social and civic formations that had to be reckoned with. The method was as broad as the subject. There was an assumption that lines of investigation would arise organically from the case studies and the style of collaboration—which accented a network populated by frequent meetings. The search for common tools, "protomodels," or paradigms would require extensive and continuous written communications and "frequent personal contacts—even actual physical interchange of personnel— to maximize systematic learning and serendipitous discovery between parallel research teams," O'Donnell and Schmitter argued.[24]

Here we run up against the challenge anticipated by Chalmers: how to bridge analytical traditions. The social sciences in Latin America tended to be more theoretically concerned and less empirically grounded than in North America, where the study of public policy was effectively monopolized by cost-benefit analysis and not yet as open to the study of social inputs. Some of the group's heavy hitters, like Cardoso, dismissed what they considered naive positivism and the fruitless search for false precision of Americans. Others, like O'Donnell and Schmitter, tried to bridge, but they too were running up against the biases of the analytical tradition from whence they had emerged, which was more conceptual and embedded in the state's role in shaping capitalist development generally. "Existing modes of public policy analysis now being diffused and applied in Latin America [by North Americans or North American–trained social scientists] are not linked to the broader theoretical problems of the characteristics and social impacts of the state," they insisted.

While sympathetic, the committee found the proposal too vague and methodologically deficient. One participant complained that the Buenos Aires meeting "got bogged down in highly rhetorical discussions of theories of the state, and that the linkages between these theories and available or future empirical research was not well developed."[25] As we shall see, this problem was never quite resolved. The volume that came out of the project would be a gallery of heterogeneous styles within the Latin American social sciences.

24. "Work Plan for the Study of Public Policy in Latin America by Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter."

25. Collier to Hirschman, October 7, 1974, box 9, folder 17, AOHP.

Moreover, how was the committee supposed to disburse funds, for whom, and for what purpose? These were important questions, given the need for the SSRC to account to sponsors. Finally, the reliance on successive and repeated stages of dispersal and regrouping, empirical research and theoretical reflection, demanded huge coordination efforts and increasing financial costs with—as some in the SSRC worried—the prospect of low returns. Hirschman and Goodman grew fatigued and worried.

Leadership and brokerage mattered. But they did not come from expected quarters. Hirschman was the one figure whose eclecticism and seniority elevated him above the analytical divides. But he had neither the leadership skills nor the inclination (he was working on other projects) to move the network forward. He did, however, have an eye for young talent. Hirschman integrated an assistant professor from the University of Indiana, David Collier, to assume a prominent coordinating role. Collier, who was completing a book on urban politics in authoritarian Peru, moved down the road from a fellowship at Princeton University to the Institute of Advanced Studies, which gave him a base and time for the work of intellectual arbitration. The Institute, in turn, became home for many members of the group who would spend time there as visitors; Cardoso would spend several years there in total, as would the Brazilian economist José Serra. O'Donnell spent one year. With Collier's efforts, teamed up with Julio Cotler (then based at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) and with the Institute as ballast, in October 1975, two years after the initial proposal, a "Working Group on the State and Public Policy" was launched. It elected to focus on the nature of authoritarianism in the heavily industrialized countries of Latin America, inclusive enough but focused on investment and wage policies under different historical political regimes—oligarchic (pre-1930), populist (1930–1960s), and authoritarian (1960s on)—to reveal the ties between changes in the economic structure and political systems. In this fashion, the traditional causal lines between structural interests and state institutions could be reversed. Why not allow "political factors, policy choice, and the possibility of an 'autonomous' role of the state or actors within the state a far more central place as basic explanatory variables?" This would translate into exploring how "the exhaustion of import substitution is due to the type of industrialization that has been encouraged by Latin American governments rather than to an inevitable, internal logic of the industrialization process in a context of delayed, dependent development." While following the tracks of Cardoso and O'Donnell, linking phases of capitalism with types of policies, Collier and Cotler were turning developmentalism on its head, charting a research agenda for a generation of Latin American economists and policy makers. It was the policies and politics that had created a specific development path, as opposed to a development path begging policies and politics. The work plan was also an important step in papering over some of the splintered intellectual styles and dispersed case studies.[26]

26. Working Group on the State and Public Policy in Latin America, October 27, 1975, F. 3516, B. 290, S. ACC II, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Archive Center, pp. 5–6. The network relied on a combination of extended stays at the IAS and frequent meetings to deal with "unexpected discoveries and . . .

The road to a research program, while paved with the best of intentions, was sinuous. With resources, institutional backing, leadership, and a method of collaborating, it seemed that the Working Group was finally poised to start. Moreover, the subject was gaining clarity: the state as an autonomous agent in social change in Latin America, motivated by the authoritarian turn. But it still lacked specificity. After a consultation tour of the region, Cotler wrote a personal letter to Hirschman explaining that many of the participants were still at a loss: "They don't see a *clear, concrete* relationship between the theoretical proposals and the studies they are expected to realize."[27] Before contracting funds, they wanted the expectations to be clear. The informal meetings helped preserve comity within the group in an age in which many were feeling drawn into the maw of unfolding events; the deteriorating situation in Buenos Aires, for instance, in the lead-up to the March 1976 coup, was cutting close to home. One Montonero leader approached O'Donnell, accusing him of consorting with imperialists by taking Ford funds, and (ironically) demanded a substantial cut to finance his underground operations. O'Donnell laughed—nervously. Withdrawing, the Montonero warned darkly that CEDES would face the consequences.[28] What was undeniable, however, was that the Working Group was trying to resolve too much—different analytical styles, different case studies whose internal trajectories were diverging as Brazil began its long "decompression" while Argentina and Chile were in a Thermidor. Faced with the divergence of the two most important case studies, not surprisingly Cardoso grew more optimistic while O'Donnell became more grim. A shared "problematique" was necessary but not sufficient. Hirschman wrote to his daughter to moan that "a storm has broken out" in his group, and he wondered whether he had any loyalty left.[29]

He must have had, because Hirschman, Cardoso, Goodman, and Stepan caucused after the Latin American Studies Association meeting in Atlanta in March 1976 to discuss the progress of the Working Group. The meeting resulted in changes for the group's agenda and timetable, and led to a zeroing in on the underlying nature of the authoritarian state and a retreat from the broader historical cases and the emphasis on investment and labor policies. Was the concept of bureaucratic authoritarianism, by then a highly influential device adapted to explain democratic fragility around the world (Greece, Indonesia, Turkey—the cases were cascading), as powerful as many of its borrowers proclaimed? Paradoxically, then, it was from within the core of social scientists that originally fashioned insights into the nature of dictatorships in late late-industrial societies

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unanticipated problems in the set of arguments we are trying to elaborate." "We are aware," Collier and Cotler noted, "that the travel plans of members of the group will provide a number of occasions on which two or more members of the group will be able to meet together, and we hope that these occasions will be used to elaborate our own shared interests." A few North Americans were added to the mix, Robert Kaufman, Franklin Tugwell (who would drop out), Alfred Stepan (who joined earlier but would eventually peel off), and James Kurth. To cap things off, the group planned for a final conference at the end of 1976 in which final drafts of the papers would be presented and discussed.

27. Cotler to Hirschman, February 27, 1975, F. 552, B. 102, S. ACC I, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Archive Center; emphasis in original.

28. O'Donnell (2007, 279).

29. Hirschman to Katia Salomon, September 26, 1975, Katia Salomon personal papers.

that a fundamental reassessment of the concept took place. As a result, the network had veered from a comparative analysis of public policies to an opportunity for conceptual reassessment.[30]

What happens when cases and concepts do not align? One option, to look for more cases to confirm the utility of the concept, was not appealing, even to its founder. In fact, O'Donnell himself was reevaluating his stance in light of much broader debates opening up, especially among Marxists. In this intellectual biography of a network we can see the mutations and changes of one of its central figures. O'Donnell spent the academic year 1975–1976 in Princeton. There, he and Hirschman labored over the fundamental issue that had been dogging the project from the start, the residual effects of structuralism; specifically, how much could economic development *explain* political fortunes? The key words between them were "contradiction" and "determinism"—the crux of vernacular dialectical analysis. It is worth pausing here to recall that Marxists and neo-Marxists around the world were wrestling with the problem of how to characterize states (welfare, communist, developmental) and economies, for the assumption had been that the latter determined the shape of the former. After 1973, the concern was whether the turmoil in the world economy was the *cause* of the "crisis" of the welfare state. O'Donnell had coined an analogous formula, that the structural crisis of late late-industrializers causes a crisis of civilian developmental regimes. Authors like Nicos Poulantzas, Louis Althusser and Étienne Balibar, and Perry Anderson were pushing at the limits of Marxist and structuralist analysis, while a new crop of *marxisant* social scientists, influenced by the translation and dissemination of Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks,* were trying to free politics from economics altogether. Could Marxism and its structuralist lineage sustain the entwined external blows and internal intellectual critiques?[31]

We can get a close-up view of how affective and intellectual influences shifted in conceptual positions. Behind the becalmed scene at the Institute, Hirschman urged O'Donnell to loosen the structural features of his analysis. It conflated transitional growing pains of industrialization with a full-blown crisis. It succumbed to the logic that the generals and their social scientific advisors invoked to justify their harsh measures: only they could rescue capitalism. The dialogue between friends came to a head. One of the rituals at the Institute was for fellows to present their work to the other members. When O'Donnell's turn came around in the fall of 1975, he presented a revision of his original theory of authoritarianism, only to run into withering criticism from Hirschman and Geertz. When O'Donnell sent a much-revised draft, Hirschman "recalled that both Geertz and I were critical of your seminar presentation because of a certain economic determinism. Your paper

30. A Narrative Description of the Activities of the Joint Committee on Latin American Studies for 1975–75, June 1976, F. 3087, B. 362, S. ACC II, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Archive Center, p. 9.

31. An influential intervention was the philosopher Lucio Colletti's "Marxism and the Dialectic" (1975). It was Anderson who pulled Colletti out of relative obscurity with an extended interview the year before in the *New Left Review.* It is worth noting that he was breaking away from the Italian Communist Party and drawing closer to Bettino Craxi's socialism at the same time that many Latin Americans on the left were also distancing themselves from earlier political alignments and intellectual commitments.

now shows that the cure for unconvincing economic determinism cannot be less, but more and better economic determinism!" He enclosed a paper that revisited and critiqued a master concept of his own, "linkages," in which he called for a "Micro-Marxist" approach better calibrated to the role of contingencies and small differences with big effects. The following spring, the group convened in Princeton and it was settled: the target was O'Donnell's own concept, what could be salvaged, how to think anew about authoritarianism.[32]

What emerged from this saga was a landmark collection that would move the foundations of Latin American political-economic analysis. Edited by David Collier, *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America* contained essays from Cardoso, Collier, Cotler, Hirschman, Robert Kaufman, James Kurth, Serra, and a modified version of O'Donnell's Princeton essay. It was telling that the title to that chapter became "Tensions in the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State and the Question of Democracy." Not only was the "B-A" model now a mantle for a set of internal frictions, contradictions, and "tensions" (as opposed to a category of regime devoted to resolving capitalist contradictions), but a new horizon was opening up as a result of the tensions: how to imagine a democratic regime emerging from them. At the same time, it was full of insights and possibilities for comparative political analysis of shifting coalitions and alliances across countries. The volume itself, as Collier noted in a thoughtful postscript, reflected on the role of concepts in driving social sciences research, problems of aggregating evidence from different scales (within and across countries), and the need to unpack the very subject of analysis, "the state," which although grammatically singular should be seen as a space for multiple forces and possibilities. One can see a catalogue of methodological issues that would motivate Collier for years and buoy him to stake out systems of comparative analysis. In the meantime, everyone was relieved that a book met the light of day. It was special for marking an important shift in the social sciences and did not shy away from exposing the internal doubts, yearnings, and counterpoints of a field of scholarship in the midst of a deep transition. O'Donnell likened Collier "to the good *muchachos* of a Western movie that I used to watch as a kid. They go through thousands of dangers and as the end of the film approached it would seem there was no hope, but in the crucial moment they find a way to survive, conquer all evils, marry the *chica* and live happily ever after. Really, I congratulate you."[33]

The evolution of the SSRC project contained within it some personal transformations. We have traced O'Donnell's. Another was that of Fernando Henrique Cardoso. They were by no means joined at the hip, but theirs was an intellectual af-

32. O'Donnell submitted a version of his self-critique, which had been circulating in mimeographed form in Buenos Aires, to the *Revista Mexicana de Sociología*. It would appear in early 1977 and anticipated the more full-blown collective work. Hirschman to O'Donnell, October 27, 1975, box 8, folder 19, AOHP. The final version of the Hirschman paper was "A Generalized Linkage Approach to Development with Special Reference to Staples" (1977; republished in Hirschman 1981, 59–97). O'Donnell (1977; it would appear the following year in *Latin American Research Review*).

33. Collier (1979); Louis Goodman to Collier, October 21, 1975, F. 552, B. 102, S. ACC I, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Center Archive.; O'Donnell to Collier, November 3, 1975, F. 3515, B. 290, S. ACC II, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Center Archives.

finity that was an important driver of the network's evolution. Cardoso, however, always admitted the fundamental difference between the despotic regimes of Argentina and Brazil; behind the veil of martial democracy lay the actual working of politics. Thus, Cardoso felt, intellectuals had a task that went beyond denunciation. The essence of politics, he argued, was conflict, and that was to be found within the regime itself. This was confirmed in the elections of 1974, in which Cardoso and a CEBRAP team collaborated with the opposition, Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (MDB). Cardoso called these elections "a point of no return." Though the situation in Chile was going in the opposite direction, the suffrage in Brazil showed "that behind the veneer of regime-controlled bipartisan life, there existed a serious dynamism that escapes all imposed labels."[34] It was up to intellectuals committed to democracy to seize the opportunity and press for opening.

The SSRC group and the elections of 1974 marked a watershed in Cardoso's own understanding of the authoritarian state, and it would affect that of the group. Besides different ideological positions within the military, the authoritarian state had developed a mechanism for brokering private interests and administering conflicts within the bureaucratic apparatus. The collision of ideologies and interests within the state opened up the possibility of bringing the end of authoritarian regimes; this, in turn, presented opportunities for intellectuals, like the formulation of the MDB's political platform. It also paved the way for an important, if now forgotten, intervention in the way social scientists should think about authoritarianism by locating the question of democracy at its heart and by ceasing to obsess about the congenital weakness of civilian rule or the natural predisposition of Latin Americans to dictatorship. This was an important theme of Cardoso's *Autoritarismo e democratização,* which provoked a howl of criticism from the structuralist left.[35]

Thus began Cardoso's career in politics, not as the serendipitous encounter that his autobiography portrays. Far from becoming "the accidental president of Brazil," his evolving conception of the state reveals a mindful attempt to capitalize on conflict and form alliances.[36] Cardoso's trajectory thus echoed an important aspect of the SSRC project, to transpose frictions and tensions of politics into the group's core concepts.

This detailed account of shifting personalities and positions reveals some features of intellectual networks. We have charted several stages, sparked by the twin crises of capitalism and democratic rule in Latin America. Yet these external conditions were not in themselves the forge for changes in the social sciences, though they did lend urgency to the matter and altered the institutional landscape that favored cross-national collaboration. Nor do they explain how a generation made the intellectual transition from the structuralist roots from which they emerged to a more conjectural, less deterministic style that, among other things, opened the possibility to imagine and pursue futures that did not collapse into fatalistic

34. Cardoso, (1974b, 3;1972).

35. Cardoso (1975). For a critique, see Solis (1976). It was an important referent for O'Donnell. See his "Tensions in the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State" (1979, 309 n. 19).

36. Cardoso (2006b).

arguments about the missing but necessary preconditions for growth or civilian rule. As Hirschman noted, echoing the moral tone that helped bond a group of diverse social scientists together, "the more thoroughly and multifariously we can account for the establishment of authoritarian regimes in Latin America, the sooner we can be done with them."[37]

Understanding how this group of scholars got to that point requires an internal history of confusion, collaboration, and conflict. While variables fell into place—organizational resources, institutional support, intellectual leadership and moral commitment—there was also exchange, pressure, and tension between the co-members of the network; in effect, a delicate balance was struck between the enabling conditions that drew scholars together and the common uncertainty of how to frame a social science for Latin America that moved beyond shopworn paradigms in search of alternatives for the challenges faced by their societies.

LEGACIES OF THE NETWORK

The SSRC network had an afterlife that shaped social science research into the 1980s. Some members' careers took important turns. There was also the Collier volume, which became an instant touchstone for those concerned with thinking about how regimes determined development trajectories and not just the presumption that it was development that determined the regime.

What is more, the network was a prototype for an even wider constellation. This one had some of the same features but pivoted from the analysis of authoritarian regimes to the study of democratic ones. Indeed, the SSRC network was the incubator of a new project on how to find pathways from dictatorship. In February 1978, the Working Group submitted a progress report to the JCLAS and admitted to the difficulties of balancing "coherence and diversity," but noted that the edited volume was successful. On behalf of the group, Collier submitted a request for "Phase II" funding to keep the group going to prepare a second volume of essays. SSRC cuts and a need to support others meant that this first network's umbilical attachment to the council was severed, however. But there was a recognition that the conjuncture called for some kind of venture; as Collier put it, "A principal challenge to students of political change is to understand not only the conditions that lead to the collapse of democratic regimes, but also the conditions that lead to the collapse of authoritarian regimes."[38]

Even as the SSRC network was wrapping up its efforts, it was opening new vistas. The institutional forum moved to the Latin American Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC, the brainchild of the indomitable Abraham Lowenthal. From the inception of the advisory board, its chair was none other than Hirschman. It soon included O'Donnell, Cardoso (who would withdraw as his political career took off), and Schmitter. But the new

37. Hirschman, "The Turn to Authoritarianism in Latin America and the Search for Its Economic Determinants," in Collier, *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*, p. 98.

38. Progress Report of the Working Group on the State and Public Policy 1978, F. 3516, B. 290, S. ACC I, SSRC Records, Rockefeller Archive Center.

focus was an index of what had changed. En route to a board meeting in 1978 in Washington, O'Donnell and Cardoso agreed that it was time to turn their attention to the transitions from despotic regimes. It was clear from the earlier analyses that contradictions among authoritarians were now rife, even in Argentina. By the time their plane landed, O'Donnell and Cardoso had the draft of an idea. Why not study the possibilities and conditions of transitions within authoritarian regimes? It was, O'Donnell reflected even as civilians were disappearing on the streets of Buenos Aires and Santiago, a forward- rather than a backward-looking model of social science research. Though Lowenthal called the effort "thoughtful wishing," the new group had the benefits of the first group's ground-clearing work, and made the endogenous instability within any regime (even iron-fisted ones) and the multiple trajectories, coalitions, and balance of forces the crux for understanding the complex process of authoritarian breakdowns and the conditions for democracy—what would become "democratic transitions." The result would be an outpouring of groundbreaking scholarship in the 1980s that focused on the complex working of bargains and negotiations. The agenda even lent itself to the analysis of strategic behavior and rational choice modeling of the sort that had been unimaginable in Latin America a decade earlier.[39]

By outlining the social conditions of social science production, this study contributes to the literature on the history and sociology of knowledge. The shift from universities to private institutes; from national, public financing to international, private support; and from local circles to global networks, however, only begins to explain why certain groups or movements succeeded in bringing about intellectual change. Though these social scientists transformed the coordinates, questions, and aims of social scientific research, the global network was short-lived and its members parted in different directions. They did not institutionalize a new approach or "school" that would ensure the coherence and continuation of a research program. Some might call this a failure. Our interest is less normative; we have been more concerned with portraying a transformation of intellectual styles through transnational collaboration in a trying moment and explaining the advent of a new role for intellectuals in Latin America, one that would tie them to the fortunes of democratic regimes they studied.

Moral commitments, emotional affinities, and political beliefs had subjective functions in this process that need to be reckoned with. This might be hard to fathom from our vantage point of greater professionalization of the social sciences. For the transitional generation, concepts and findings were never intended to sever themselves from the societies and purposes from which they emerged. Thus, the initial work plan grew in a ground that was already familiar with ways of connecting social scientific research with intervention. The exchanges and readjustments within the network represented a transformation in intellectual agendas in Latin America without abandoning concerns for engaging in social change. It is worth recalling that many of the figures in this story would appear as key intellectuals of the emergent democracies in the 1980s and 1990s.

We are confronted with a twofold transition. One is the emergence of a new

39. Philippe Schmitter, interview, May 7, 2012; O'Donnell (2007).

generation of politically engaged social scientists with transnational connections and support but who deployed them for national, democratic, purposes. The other is a fundamental change in intellectual coordinates. Gone were the obsession with big structures and the language of impossibility that had come to dominate earlier structuralist thinking. In the place of constraints and obstacles to development, attention shifted to coalitions and fluid forms of rule open to the role of formal political institutions like parties as well as practices like social movements and public opinion. Now, the political game was even freer from the "economic determinants" that had dominated the social science mood of the 1960s. Negotiating, pacting, incorporating, and excluding all became action verbs in the new social sciences. Gone, one must also note, was the obligatory bow to peripheral capitalism or global forces. This would become the subject of some critique, especially once the debt crisis erupted in 1982 and Latin America's ties to international finance would prove a monumental burden on emergent civilian governments. The mood of "thoughtful wishing" may have induced the transition scholars to look beyond constraints and obstacles. But what cannot be denied is that the structuralism that was so prevalent when the dictatorships took hold had, for better or worse, ceded pride of place to a highly conjuncturalist style of analysis.

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