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PUBLIC POLICIES AND  
POLITICAL REGIMES IN LATIN AMERICA

Oscar Oszlak  
CEDES  
Buenos Aires

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PUBLIC POLICIES AND POLITICAL REGIMES  
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Introduction

This paper analyzes the process of implementing public programs and policies in the light of some Latin American experiences. It attempts to identify the institutional obstacles lying in the way of successful policy implementation. The focus is placed upon the intrabureaucratic dynamics whereby successive positions of the state (or policies) are taken with regard to social issues included in the public agenda. It starts out with an examination of certain theoretical assumptions, widely accepted in the specialized literature, in order to contrast the prevailing models and conceptions on policy formulation and execution with the more variegated and complex situations found in the Latin American public sector.

The first section of the paper examines in succinct form two basic models or conceptions of the policy process, in which technical and political rationality play widely divergent roles. The discussion of these models paves the way for introducing an interpretation which stresses the bureaucratic dynamics and the various constraints to which policy makers are subject. The next two sections deal with the technological, cultural, and clientelistic determinants of bureaucratic behavior, trying to account for what may be called "permanent" constraints of public administration activity. The last sections are devoted to the relationship between the administrative process and the changing nature of political regimes. Distinct styles of state management, deriving from these interactions, are then identified. These various styles are conceptualized in terms of different structures of authority, means of control, patterns of functional organization, action orientations, and modes of resource appropriation and allocation. The prospects of institutional development are finally associated with both, the bureaucratic dynamics and the political regimes constraining the policy process.

Intellection versus interaction

The essence of state activity is the formulation and implementation of policy. If we accept the formulation-implementation dichotomy, we will find out that the former seldom raises any great concern. Problems seem to lie at the other end of the policy process--i.e., at the implementation stage. However, to what extent is this dichotomous conception an appropriate description of reality? Is there really such a distinction, reminiscent of the politics-administration dyad, another classic in the literature?

To some extent, this dichotomy is useful in making bureaucracy the scapegoat of policy failure. As formulated, public policies appear as a genuine expression of the "general interest" of society, either because its legitimacy derives from a democratic legislative process or because technically rational criteria and knowledge have been applied to the solution of the social issues involved. Instead, public opinion tends to consider that policy "implementation" takes place in a bureaucratic arena which, as everyone knows, is the domain of inefficiency, routine, and corruption. Therefore, policy failure becomes the outcome of an almost conspiratorial attitude of bureaucracy, which is manifested in its unwillingness to readily "implement" goals and programs formulated by well inspired legislators or technicians, who handle adequate instruments and know-how, but who lack sufficient power to impose their proposals. What lies beyond these popular images?

Let us start with a provisional definition. We can look upon policy implementation as a process made up of a complex network of relationships among individuals, bureaucratic units and clients, whose behavior over time is allegedly aimed at the accomplishment of certain governmental goals. The first question we can bring up is: how does this chain reaction of behavior lead to the conversion of abstract goals into concrete actions?

The answers have been two-fold. To some, these relationships can be subject to a planned, rational design; to others, the patterns are the result of the very interaction which is generated in the organizational processes. Some years ago, these two positions were subsumed under the labels "optimalism" and "incrementalism." More recently, Lindblom and Wildavsky have renamed these models as "intellectual cogitation" and "social interaction." I will call them simply "intellection" and "interaction." What do these models contend?

Intellection assumes that action can be subordinated to reason, and that behavior can be directed towards the achievement of certain goals by choosing the most rational means. Interaction, on the other hand, assumes that action is rather the product of transactions among parts, and that as each individual seeks his own interest, the collective end that relates them is accomplished. In their extreme versions, these models would be illustrated by planning, of the sort Downs (1967) calls the "superman syndrome," and by the "invisible hand" of the market. Both planning and the invisible hand are ideal conceptions about the linkage of social behavior toward goal achievement. Their essential differences are the assumptions on which they are based.

For the planner, goals are known, duly crystallized, and the cause-effect relationship between certain instruments of action and certain results is also known in advance. In this model, then, we know what we want and how to get it. Instead, the idea of the invisible hand does not involve an a priori definition of the general interest; it assumes that the market mechanism will allocate resources in an optimal way, so that the interests of all parts concerned--and, therefore, the general interest--will be satisfied. Hence, to know the means-ends relationships is not necessary either, because to seek individual self-interest will be the most appropriate way of preserving the global rationality of the resulting interactions.

Intellection--or planning, its concrete instrument--is based on a technically rational model whereby actors are assigned positions, resources, behaviors, and are guided through an intellectual exercise towards that end which presumably satisfies the collective interest. Disjointed incrementalism, a less extreme version of the interaction model, considers that a perfect hierarchy of means and ends is impossible, that information is imperfect, limited, and costly. Therefore, rational action does not mean to follow an optimal course in relation to a given and immutable goal. Uncertainty over the results of action and the costs and risks involved, reduce the importance of those goals formulated before the implementation stage (Wildavsky, 1979). In fact, the type of knowledge which is provided by action itself, may modify the premises of future decisions with respect to the goals sought--a circumstance that may lead to changes in the means and in the ends themselves. But these changes are necessarily limited; they are marginal adjustments (or "increments") vis-a-vis the previous situation, based on successive comparisons with past experience through the application of criteria of bounded rationality.

In my opinion, the naiveté of "intellectual cogitation" is only matched by the calculated conservatism of the incrementalist vision. Both models are too tightly related to particular contexts and historical experiences. They cannot claim universality. For instance, "disjointed incrementalism" assumes that the process of policy formulation and implementation, based on bargaining, mutual adjustment, and marginal change, takes place in a system where the traditional mechanism of political representation--i.e., parties, corporate organizations, labor unions--function in a relatively efficacious way--an assumption which does not hold under most political regimes in Latin America. If the institutional framework--i.e., the rules and mechanisms of representation, legitimation, and accountability--are different, the premise becomes a variable.

The same type of considerations apply to decision makers following the intellection model. For them, the problem is reduced to the application of strict criteria of technical rationality both, in policy formulation and in the design of instruments for its implementation. As Downs indicates, it is much easier to make theoretical assumptions about the behavior of other agents, than to negotiate with them, basing the plans on what one expects they will do. In theory, each public official may assume that all other social agents will perform their functions in the way he himself considers as most efficient. From this perspective, policy design is a much more gratifying activity than to plan policy with an eye put on the eventual responses of the other social agents involved. For the incrementalists, on the other hand, as the frontier of policy expands, public bureaucracies cannot demand the cooperation required to perform effectively. Increasingly, bureaucracies must depend on a mutual sense of the situation among governmental authorities, private groups, and individual citizens (Hecló, 1976). Negotiation, mutual adjustment, and incremental change are the bases of the decision making style. It is not a coincidence that this conception originated in the American academic circles.

Symmetrically, if one followed certain clichés, the intellection model --and its instrument, planning--would adequately describe the decision process of the collectivist states, as well as that of "underdeveloped" societies where the degree of "political development" is still incipient.

However, empirical situations are much more complex and need to be interpreted through more sophisticated analytical instruments.

### Policy Implementation and Bureaucratic Dynamics

A public bureaucracy is what it does. It is not the outcome of a rational process of structural differentiation and functional specialization, nor does its development follow a planned and coherent design. Its formation generally describes a rather sinuous, erratic, and contradictory pattern, in which remnants of various strategies and programs of political action can be observed. Efforts to materialize the projects, initiatives, and priorities of the regimes that alternately control the state, give way to multiple organizational forms and varying functional arrangements. To a large extent, these institutional outcomes depend on how the social conflicts disputed in this power arena are settled.

Every new regime attempts to alter not only the power relationships in the civil society in line with its political conception and the need of strengthening its social bases of support, but also the power structure within the state institution itself. To make a political project viable requires action upon--as well as through--a preexisting bureaucratic structure. To increase the degree of congruence between political project and public organization may lead to shifting jurisdictions, hierarchies, and competences, affecting established interests, and modifying power situations deeply rooted inside the state institutions. Therefore, it is foreseeable that resistances will be generated and behavior will be elicited tending to impair the decisions made or the actions taken, or at least, to attenuate some of their consequences.

Such tensions created inside the state bureaucracy by the shifting regime orientations, and the adjustments produced by changing policies--sometimes viewed as signs of "bureaupathology"--have not received much attention from academic circles. Casuist and ad hoc explanations abound. Yet, few efforts have been made to answer this crucial question: Which are the relevant dimensions and variables for explaining and predicting congruence or conflict in the processes of policy implementation? No doubt, a systematic treatment of this subject confronts a fundamental difficulty, namely the sheer number of intrabureaucratic and contextual factors intervening in such processes. However, progress in this field requires a conscious effort at integrating existing knowledge while keeping in mind the substantive, contextual, and historical specificity of the public and private actors involved in the policy process.

The implementation of most public programs and policies require the intervention of a complex governmental structure and several decision units in the private sector. The performance of this network will depend on whether the succession and articulation of individual behavior turns out to be congruent with a given normative framework. Each decision unit will be subject to the conflict inherent to the decisions taken at each level and to the uncertainty derived from lack of knowledge upon the impact of each one's decisions. Indeed a good deal of the organizational mechanisms will be destined to eliminate sources of conflict and uncertainty. Those organizations in charge of normative functions (i.e., legislation, planning, evaluation, control) will tend to design a system of

regulations, administrative structures, performance measures, and sanctions which induce the more disaggregated implementing units to perform in a way consistent with the program and goals sought. In turn, these units will attempt to maintain a certain space of autonomous decision power, so that the functional requirements associated with the achievement of their formal goals are made compatible with those requirements derived from the need to satisfy other goals and interests (i.e., clientelistic, institutional).

Certainly, the possible ways of turning policy into action are manifold. A larger or smaller number of decision units hierarchically related may be employed; alternative financial mechanisms can be designed; organizations operating in different jurisdictions or functional areas can be given responsibility for implementation; a wide array of control or coordination mechanisms can be chosen. Each of these options implies a different bureaucratic chain which will vary, in turn, according to the policy area considered. It should be stressed, however, that these possible linkages are not random outcomes nor the result of unilateral will. They rather depend on (1) established routines; (2) binding rules; (3) clientelistic pressures; (4) political preferences; (5) technological constraints; or even (6) "elective affinities" among the intervening units. Hence the variety of constraints and sources of determination influencing the activity of the state institutions. It follows that the probability of a given agency becoming a link along an implementation chain does not necessarily depend on technical-functional criteria.

As a rule, each bureaucratic unit possesses a certain "capital," composed of resources of authority, information, and economic goods (material and financial). These resources are crucial for reinforcing institutional legitimacy and securing survival. Both goals are intimately related: the more the legitimacy, the greater the chances of survival. The legitimacy of an organization, that is, its claim to continue to obtain the resources and supports allowing its existence, does not depend necessarily upon its capacity to achieve the goals formally assigned to it. Although this capacity is in most cases an unobjectionable source of legitimacy, it is not the only one. An organization may accomplish a series of instrumental goals for the benefit of the regime or certain sectoral interests, while contradicting its formal goals and yet remaining legitimate. In view of these contingent outcomes, is it possible to explain or predict the turn of events in a process of policy implementation?

In a most immediate sense, and given a certain level of resources, performance will be largely explained by the behavior of those in charge of managing the organizations--what Thompson calls "the variable human." No doubt, the degree of motivation, the existing leadership, the level of training, the orientation towards conflict, the search for power, or the formation of coalitions are, among others, the kind of factors espousing the quality of the available human resources and their probable action orientation. But in turn, these expressions of bureaucratic behavior are subject to four different types of constraints, the consideration of which is crucial for understanding success or failure in policy implementation. They will be referred to as technological, cultural, clientelistic, and political, and will be dealt with in the following sections.



## Bureaucratic Technology and Culture

Technological and cultural variables subsume most of the determinants of bureaucratic behavior. The joint consideration of these variables is rather frequent in the specialized literature, in view of the increasing concern with the transfer of administrative technologies whose criteria of rationality are incongruent with those prevalent in the recipient contexts.<sup>1</sup>

Technological variables affect the functioning of an organization in two different ways. First, there is a type of technology intimately associated with the nature of the organization's core activity. For example, more or less standardized processes for the production of electricity, the supply of transportation services, or the public registry of certain transactions. Hence there is a technology which may present variations according to scale or degree of innovation, but responds to a basic process of production of the good or service that is inherent to the activity, requires a given type of cooperation and constraints the way the organization is structured. I will call it core technology.

Second, any complex organization will attempt to eliminate the sources of uncertainty operating upon its technological core, since the legitimacy and survival of the organization strongly depends on the steady and efficient functioning of its core technology. In other words, under norms of rationality the organization will seek to seal off its core technologies from environmental influences, through the appropriate management of input (i.e., preventive maintenance, supplies, personnel) and output (i.e., disposition of products, marketing policy) activities. (Thompson, 1967) To carry out these managerial activities, the organization must observe certain rules and principles dealing with the integration of human resources and professional expertise within a given technological system. Such aspects as span of control, departmentalization, hierarchy, relationship between coordination and size, or patterns of administrative career, fall within these organizational support activities which systems analysts call "orgware" and I will refer to as managerial technology.

These two (i.e., core and managerial) technological components may explain why organizations performing similar activities are likely to present similar technical and managerial features. Hospitals, schools, steel plants or planning boards, operating in widely different environments, may possess for that reason a number of common traits. Certain professional norms and standards contribute to reinforce these similarities, by conforming a sort of technological subculture which tends to prevail beyond geographical or cultural barriers.

The relationship between technical core and managerial technology becomes apparent when considering the correspondence between the nature and dimension of the organization's substantive activity and the kind of operational requirements this activity imposes. Thompson (1967), for instance, distinguishes three varieties of technology (e.g., long-linked, mediating, and intensive) with which different forms of interdependence and mechanisms of coordination and control, are somehow correlated. Thus, organizations whose activities are based on a long-linked technology--as in an assembly line--will tend to establish a sequential type of

interdependence and to employ planning as the most suitable mechanism for coordination. Instead, a general hospital, an army or a rural development program, resort mainly to intensive types of technology, where the human side of the organization prevails upon the instrumental one, interdependence is based on reciprocity, and coordination is achieved largely through mutual adjustment.<sup>2</sup> Hence, from this viewpoint, the degree of compatibility between the core and managerial aspects of the organizational technology heavily constrains performance and contributes to make the structural and functional patterns of organizations with similar technology more homogeneous.

Also culture exerts an homogenizing influence upon bureaucratic behavior. The ways of perceiving and categorizing reality, the beliefs upon the efficacy of certain instruments for achieving goals, the prevailing criteria of legitimacy, the attitudes towards authority, or the orientations towards time, are elements that concur to make more homogeneous the interpersonal perceptions as to what should be done or expect in a given situation--thus reducing uncertainty in the interaction. Of course, a distinction between the cultural patterns predominant in a society and those internalized by public organizations should be made, since they may not be totally congruent. The subject deserves a kind of attention that we cannot afford in this work; but, as we shall see in a moment, the incongruences are often originated in the complex relationship between technology and culture.

Indeed, each culture has its own vision as to how public officials should behave, and the legitimacy of their roles is strongly pervaded by this cultural element (Cfr. Salinas, 1979). Nepotism, venality, absenteeism--i.e., practices that Parsons would have called particularistic--are part and parcel of certain cultures, or perhaps more widespread in some cultures than in others. In this respect, culture operates as an homogenizing factor but, at the same time, as a differentiating element vis-a-vis other cultures. A great number of administrative reform programs are precisely designed to operate upon these cultural traits, departing from a supposedly universalist conception which, at bottom, is anything but an ethnocentric interpretation, a transplant of foreign cultural patterns disguised under the shape of neutral organizational technologies.

Already in 1965 Stinchcombe observed that cultures in transitional societies do not incorporate very often the skills required for the operation of complicated technologies. More recently, this same author offered a provocative contrast between public organizations with different technological requirements, similarly subject to the Latin American cultural influence (Stinchcombe, 1965 and 1974). In these societies, therefore, the homogenizing influences of culture tend to become constraints upon the organizations, that is, factors retarding or interfering on organization action under rationality norms (Cfr. Thompson, 1967). In the industrialized societies, on the other hand, the homogenizing effect of culture is often unnoticed, given the high degree of congruence between technology and culture. In other words, the technological contents of culture are coherent with the cultural assumptions of technology.

These observations face the administrative reformer with some crucial questions. What is the degree of tolerable incongruence between technology and culture regarding organizational efficiency and effectiveness? To what extent can reform activities force, or else overlook, the prevailing cultural patterns? These questions have no direct or easy answers. Organizations operating under different technological and environmental constraints will exhibit varying degrees of tolerance. In many cultures, the symbolic value or ceremonial nature of certain organizations, their consequent functional sterility, or their utilization as mechanisms for absorbing the unemployed, are acceptable criteria of institutional legitimacy. Thus, in traditional contexts, technologically sophisticated units, such as a Planning Board or a Public Administration Institute, may sometimes survive as curious islands of modernization embedded in a bureaucratic machinery whose dominant culture is eminently adscriptive and particularistic.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, the nature of the clientele, its capacity of articulating demands and its proximity to, and influence upon, the organization, will entail different exigencies in terms of compatibility between technology and culture. In traditional societies, where individuals and organization do not participate in narrow interest networks that control their behavior, ideology, tradition or attachment to normative imperatives may be much more important than self-control and self-determination. The feedback of action provided by society is very low; consequently, the individual needs to be told what should be instead of what is (Salinas, 1979). The normal behavior pattern is likely to follow "bureaucratic-normative" criteria rather than "professional-clientelistic" criteria.<sup>4</sup> This indicates the important role played by bureaucratic clienteles as another source of constraint of public organizations, a theme to which we now turn.

#### Clientelistic and Political Constraints

As open systems, public organizations are influenced by environmental forces. In terms of actors, Dill (1958) distinguishes among four environmental groups potentially relevant for the definition and achievement of the organization's goals: (1) customers (both distributors and users); (2) suppliers of materials, labor, capital, equipment, and work space; (3) competitors for both markets and resources; and (4) regulatory groups, including governmental agencies, unions, and interfirm associations.

These groups probably constitute the "relevant environment" in the case of private firms, operating with relatively high degrees of autonomy within more or less competitive markets. Public organizations, however, differ from this pattern of functioning in some important respects. First, because the overall state apparatus may be considered as one large and single organization, with no competitors, rather heterogeneous clients and "regulatory groups" with varying capacity of control depending on the political context being considered. Second, because the social division of labor within this apparatus tends to parcel out functions, jurisdictions, and competences in such a way, that virtual monopolies are created over the production of goods, regulations, or services by different public agencies.<sup>5</sup> Third, because the normative frameworks of these organizational units tend to rely, at least formally, upon criteria and

directives somehow external to the organization, in line with the scheme of division of labor previously mentioned. Fourth, because clienteles tend to be "captive" ones, given the monopolistic nature of the products turned out by public organizations and the interest networks generated around their supply.

These distinct features of the state agencies call for a somewhat different treatment of environmental constraints. Two contextual dimensions appear as particularly relevant to the case of public organizations "linked" by processes of policy implementation: the specific character of the bureaucratic clienteles and the nature of the political regime. The former are important in view of the demands, supports, and legitimacy they provide to the various agencies according to their performance. In turn, different political regimes may also entail different normative frameworks and management styles, with high probabilities that certain policy areas--and consequently certain agencies--will be favored at the expense of others. Let us take a closer look to the way these parameters constrain the internal dynamics of the state agencies.

Any organization struggles to gain positions within the policy space, and in this process it defines a "territory" or "functional domain." The sharp "territorial" sensibility affects bureaucratic behavior and the level of conflict among agencies. As a result of the inter-bureaucratic struggle for domain building, the physiognomy of the public sector becomes permanently transformed by the ensuing borderline expansions and contractions. Clients play a fundamental role in the definition of this struggle as a source of agency power and legitimacy. The efficacy of the clientele, in this respect, depends upon several circumstances: their social origin, their sheer number, their significance in terms of the prevailing patterns of accumulation and political domination, their capacity of interest articulation and, closely linked to the latter, their proximity and control of the bureaucratic agencies and their possibilities of perceiving and gaining access to the products those agencies offer.

An organization may simultaneously occupy different policy spaces. These various locations would help placing the organization within a functional--or public policy--map, but not necessarily within a hierarchy or organizational map. The hierarchy defines levels of authority and responsibility, introducing a "vertical" dimension in the policy space. Under normal circumstances, the higher the hierarchical level, the larger the functional "territoriality"; but at the same time, the more diffuse the kind of interest linking the organization with its clientele. In the policy space, a ministry of agriculture occupies a larger territory than a rural extension agency. But the former's clientele is constituted by second or third level corporate organizations whose interests are surely much more aggregate and diffuse than those claimed by rural producers before the extension agency of our example.

This observation has important consequences for our subject. It is often asserted that the state lacks a defined position in this or that policy area. In studies carried out in two state technological institutes of Argentina, the "lack of public policy" (i.e., agricultural or industrial) appeared as a recurrent theme (Oszlak et al., 1971 and Oszlak,

1976). The possibility of policy formulation in the area of research and extension was thus automatically subordinated to the previous formulation of a global policy for the overall sector, within which the more specific policy would presumably become meaningful. In this conception, each policy area would resemble a system of "chinese boxes," with policies keeping internal consistency among themselves and gaining in specificity as the operational levels are approached. Symmetrically, both the public agencies responsible of a functional area and their respective clientele would also form a system of "chinese boxes" through diverse structural combinations somehow shaped as a pyramid.

Although this conception is not totally mistaken, as it finds support in the formal organization of both the state and the corporate organizations, reality contradicts its assumptions. In the study of the National Institute of Industrial Technology (INTI) we discovered that the most successful industrial research centers were those in which the clientele was more actively involved in the promotion and management of the centers, and in which the global policy framework for the sector favored (or at least was not openly contradictory with) the projects and action programs of the centers (Oszlak, 1976). But the promotion of technology in a given branch of industry was not necessarily part of a global conception of technological policy nor it assumed consistency with some definition of the "general interest" of society. Contrarily, in other situations we found that the lack of articulation between the output of an organization and the effective demand of its expected clientele led to situations in which the initiative of the members of the organization, the influence of professional fashions, or the requirements of financial or technical assistance international organizations, played a much more determinant role in the definition of the institutional normative framework (Oszlak, 1972 and Oszlak et al., 1971).

These illustrations suggest some further thoughts. Along with the distribution of the policy space (e.g., the social division of labor within the state) and the hierarchical structure that creates another form of bureaucratic articulation and interdependence, an invisible stratification can be imagined which has a direct bearing on the role played by the clientele of state agencies and the type of regime in power. Thus, for example, a study carried out in Guatemala (Martínez Nogueira, 1978) established a typology of governmental agencies, based on the relationship between the nature of the demands raised by the clientele and the level of knowledge and the capacity of processing information shown by the agencies. The degree of specificity and articulation of demands emerged as a critical variable for differentiating three types of state organizations. First, those attending to demands related with areas or activities considered as dynamic within the development model, given their capacity to generate surpluses, their links with foreign markets, and the productivity resulting from the technologies employed.<sup>6</sup> Second, those units facing scarcely organized clients, or related with more traditional sectors or branches, weakly linked with external markets.<sup>7</sup> Third, those agencies with similarly disjointed clients, facing equally diffused demands as those of the second type, but whose requirements of skills and technologies were scarce.<sup>8</sup> At a different level of abstraction, this invisible stratification of the public sector somehow replicates the very social structure of the country and the prevailing power relationships. It also suggests the existence

of a close correspondence between social demand bureaucratic productivity.<sup>9</sup>

### Regime Constraints

The consideration of technological, cultural, and clientelistic variables seems to exhaust the range of determinants of administrative behavior. The technical requirements of bureaucratic functioning, the established traditions and routines or the nature, significance, or degree of access of the clientele, largely explain the effectiveness and efficiency of the public sector in policy implementation.

However, I indicated at the outset that the intrabureaucratic dynamics is also altered by changes occurred at the political level, particularly by those derived from the alternation of political regimes of different persuasions. What is the specific weight of this explanatory dimension and how does it influence the policy process?

Without falling into teleological or conspirative reasoning, it can be safely assumed that any incoming political regime, in attempting to implement its governmental program, will try to control the policy options and the resources needed for their achievement. For this purpose, as we already observed, it will direct its efforts towards increasing the degree of congruence between political project and institutional apparatus. In this sense, two types of actions can be distinguished:

(1) Those aimed at modifying the priorities and contents of substantive policies, thereby affecting (positively or negatively) the various sectors of society and, consequently, the state agencies and the bureaucratic clientele related with such policies.

(2) Those designed to produce significant changes in the support activities of the public sector, usually expressed in reform attempts of the managerial technologies or the cultural patterns prevailing inside bureaucracy. Put another way, the regime will try to act upon the technological, cultural, and clientelistic dimensions previously examined.

Needless to say, different regimes will meet with varying success in this endeavor, depending on the amount of available resources and supports, and on the radicalness of their decisions vis-a-vis the preexisting situation. Hence the need to identify the specific management style that each regime will try to impose upon its institutional apparatus. However, before going into further detail on this point, let us look upon the above mentioned actions more carefully.

Regarding contents, Lowi (1972) has distinguished among four types of policies (i.e., distributive, redistributive, regulatory, and constituent) whose adoption or relative emphasis varies directly with the characteristics of the political regime. For instance, it is an established fact that, by their very nature, populist regimes will give priority to programs of rural development, low cost housing, public health, and mass education. In general, this type of redistributive policies tend to strengthen the position of the state agencies in charge of their execution, as well as that of the social sectors benefiting from such policies.

Under these regimes, the popular sectors normally enjoy greater capacity of organization and interest articulation. The failures of the state bureaucracy regarding social welfare programs may be partially compensated by voluntary organizations, labor unions, and para-state agencies, that is, by institutions which under these political circumstances play a significant role as mechanisms of social articulation. The situation is inverted under most antipopular authoritarianisms, in which regulatory policies and attempts at "regenerating" certain established patterns of social relations bring into prominence state units in charge or repression and control of social activities.

These examples are simply intended to point out the close relationship among the nature of the regime, the policy areas that will receive support and the social groups that will be benefited or harmed--a subject intimately linked to the "invisible stratification" of the public sector already discussed. Beyond differences in the substantive policy areas (i.e., defense, education, energy), however, it is likely that the orientations and propensities of the regimes in terms of reforming the "support" units and activities of the public bureaucracy will also differ. Changes in authority structures, redefinition of domain boundaries or reallocation of resources are typical measures designed to reinforce or transform deeply rooted practices. The programs of administrative rationalization, decentralization, or budgetary reform; the changes in the ministerial organization chart; or the measures for personnel dismissal (prescindibilidad), should be observed as conscious attempts of the regime at controlling its bureaucracy.

Modernizing authoritarian regimes exhibit a strong tendency towards incorporating, disseminating, and applying highly sophisticated administrative techniques and procedures. The opposite is the case of traditional authoritarianisms (or patrimonialist regimes), in which the dominant culture is mainly adscriptive and particularistic. In sum, political regime and administrative machinery may present varying degrees of compatibility in their cultural and technological orientations and practices; but in most cases the former will try to impose upon the latter changes in line with its values and preferences. Hence, in revolutionary situations--as it has been the case of Nicaragua, where a patrimonialist regime was succeeded by a manifestly socializing one--the transformation of the public sector has involved actions at both the political level (i.e., orientations and beneficiaries of state policy) and the cultural and technological levels.

In order to counteract the initiatives of the regime, the implementing units may resort to several mechanisms and practices more or less institutionalized. In the older agencies, there is a sort of ministerial or departmental ideology as to how certain matters should be dealt with (Peters, 1978). In the more specialized ones, the management of technical information often constitutes a powerful resource. The support of relevant clients, the establishment of informal relationships or the existence of norms reducing the scope of the regime attributes (i.e., immovability of personnel, right to strike), operate as additional resources at the agencies' disposal.

In turn, the organizations and functionaries most directly related with the regime usually have recourse to various tactics and mechanisms for increasing their control over the agencies. The creation of integrating and supervising units--as in the areas of planning, science and technology, public enterprises--; the establishment of parallel hierarchies--either the military corporation, as in Argentina, or the ruling political party, as in Mexico--; the creation of counter-staffs--such as a General Secretariat of the Presidency, personal advisors, trustworthy men (hombres de confianza)--; the passing of legislation allowing the government to get rid of public officials (prescindibilidad), are some of the instruments available to the regime in power for overcoming bureaucratic obstacles and inertia.

Having in mind this complex interaction, it is necessary to specify the regime-bureaucracy relationship as it takes place in different contexts and historical situations. I have argued that there is a causal relationship between political regime and bureaucratic organization. That is, the various forms of bureaucratic interdependence (or intra-bureaucratic dynamics) are differentially affected by the nature of the political regime. The transformations underwent by the public sector as a new regime takes power, can partly be explained by the kind of interactions that occur once the incumbent powerholders try to make the state machinery compatible with their political designs. However, the specification of this relationship requires a previous conceptualization of both the bureaucratic dynamics and the types of political regimes.

To operationalize the first dimension, I shall distinguish different forms of bureaucratic interdependence. There are three basic ways in which any complex organization interacts, and these depend on the type of resource exchanged: (1) those interactions derived from the need to obtain and allocate material and financial resources necessary for the functioning of each unit; (2) those directed to the production and reception of information and technical know-how associated with the specialized activity of each unit; and (3) those aimed at imposing and observing directives originated from competent authority in order to make sure that certain goals shared by the units involved will be accomplished. In other words, either through a budgetary link, a functional relationship or a hierarchy, the public sector tries to achieve the degree of coordination needed to convert public policies into discrete bureaucratic actions, congruent with the policy goals. We can thus distinguish three types of interdependence: material or budgetary, functional, and hierarchical. These different types account for most of the intrabureaucratic transactions, where power, information, and material resources are exchanged.

Turning now to political regimes, two questions should be clarified: (1) What are the criteria for categorizing political regimes as a variable? and (2) To what extent can we attribute this variable a causal relationship with respect to the intrabureaucratic dynamics?

To answer the first question, political science provides a full stock of labels to designate different regimes, but consensus has not been achieved. Sometimes, different categories are used to refer to similar cases (i.e., fascism, corporatism, bureaucratic-authoritarianism).



In addition, there are problems in constructing typologies that reasonably cover the universe of political regimes. Finally, no category is capable of apprehending the essentially dynamic and changing character of any regime; this has often led to qualifications which attempt to account for the regime's phases or "moments": i.e., implantation, transformation, transitions, "exit."

The second question also poses important problems, because we have to make reasonable assumptions about the proportion of the variance in intrabureaucratic interdependencies which is explained by the nature of the regime. The main difficulty here lies in the fact that many of the characteristics that these relationships present are--as we already discussed--culturally or technologically determined, that is to say, interdependence is not altered only by exogenous variables but also by traditions and technical requirements of the relationship itself. In this sense, the intrabureaucratic dynamics would have a logic of its own, independent of the fluctuations and odds of politics. Therefore, it is difficult to establish the "specific weight" of these "permanent" elements of bureaucracy, and to isolate them from those whose variation may be explained by alternative forms of political regimes.

With these caveats in mind, one can consider three types of political regimes that have been dominant in Latin America at different historical junctures: bureaucratic authoritarian, liberal democratic, and patrimonialist.<sup>10</sup> By cross-tabulating these regime types with the three types of interdependence previously examined, we obtain three distinct styles of state management (see Table I). I should emphasize that these are dominant features; as I attribute to a regime a given style of state management, I am underlying certain characteristics that distinguish it from other regimes, although this may express more what the regime is aiming at than what it is actually achieving. The merit of this approach is precisely that as the characteristics and intentions of the regime are contrasted with the bureaucratic sub-culture its technico-functional requisites, its resistances to the logic of operation that the regime attempts to impose, the factors that explain success or failure in public policy implementation become more evident.

#### Bureaucratic Authoritarian Regimes

To understand the constraints that military regimes impose upon the functioning of the public sector, we should consider the circumstances in which they attain power. Usually, these regimes emerge at times of strong political activation of the popular sectors, perceived by other sectors of society as a threat to the survival of the existing social organization. Such an activation often coincides with the intensification of guerrilla activity and terrorism, as well as with various manifestations of economic crisis. Military authoritarianisms are, therefore, systems of political and economic exclusion insofar as they seek--through coercion and corporate control--to politically demobilize the popular sectors and to reduce or postpone their aspirations of economic participation. In this way, military regimes attempt to eradicate the instability and uncertainty which precede their implantation, and to deepen and smooth away the patterns of capital accumulation (O'Donnell, 1975).<sup>11</sup>

Table I

## BUREAUCRATIC INTERDEPENDENCE AND REGIME TYPES

			Type of regime			
			Bureaucratic-authoritarian	Liberal-Democratic	Patrimonialist	
Type of interdependence	Hierarchical	Structure of authority	Pyramidal structure	Poliarchic structure	Radial structure	
		Means of control	Control via parallel hierarchies	Control via political parties, public opinion & corporate org.	Personalist control	
	Functional	Functional organization	Rationalization, deconcentration and subsidiary role of State	Autonomization and decentralization. Functional overlap	Formal bureaucracy and ad-hoc units ("Court")	
		Functional orientation	Efficientist orientation	Clientelistic orientation	Prebendal orientation	
	Material or budgetary	Resource appropriation	Universality of the budget	Financial autarchy	Monopoly of resources	
		Resource allocation	Authoritarian allocation	Competitive allocation	Discretionary allocation	
	Main policy orientation			Regulatory and constituent	Redistributive	Distributive and symbolic

Such a mission justifies an unusual concentration of the mechanisms of state decision. From the viewpoint of hierarchical interdependencies, there is a strong trend towards the restoration of the principle of authority at all levels of government, so that the decision-making process is adjusted to a pyramidal structure where the hierarchies formally established are actually observed. Under this type of regime, the gap between formal and actual authority is probably narrower than in any other. In part, this is explained by the fact that the heights of the state are controlled by the military corporation, which attempts to transfer to the bureaucratic apparatus its own model of institutional organization.

Given the authoritarian character of the regime, most policies become subordinated to institutional actas and medidas de excepción, designed to increase and make "flexible" the powers of the state to produce a "regeneration" or "reconstruction" of the civil society. This makes legitimate, in the light of its "mission," the application of norms which overlook statutes, procedures, and even constitutional guarantees. The raison d'état may be invoked to subject almost any area of social activity to the requirements that the restoration of order may indicate. And this capacity is backed by the monopoly--and above all, by the effective possibility of employment--of means of coercion which, under the circumstances, acquire an extraordinary weight within the set of state instruments. With this support, the style of decision making becomes authoritarian and inflexible, often associated with the application of unusually drastic policies.

As the state advances and tends to fill in any political space, the society retreats, becomes demobilized, but at the same time offers a reduced volume of information to feedback the decision process. Even policies that deeply affect the lives and interests of many people may be applied with the assurance that scarce resistance or organized action will be faced. But this very fact does not allow the regime to foresee the limits of its own actions, the point beyond which the scope and consequences of its policies may turn out to be adverse to its own interests. The "dialogue" with society (i.e., demands, denunciations, manifestations of support, strikes) becomes interrupted. The horizon of action expands but the risk of error or imprudence increases. The "loneliness of power" confirms a classic proposition of David Apter: the inverse relationship between state coercion and social information (Apter, 1971).

To reduce uncertainty, the regime resorts to a dual mechanism. In relation to society, it tries to assure the effective implementation of public policies by strengthening its coercive and control apparatus. In relation to its own bureaucracy, the regime establishes severe procedures and ideological filters for the recruitment to positions of responsibility, while it eliminates or intervenes the public officials' labor unions and uses extensively the prescindibilidad mechanism to get rid of all personnel not considered politically trustworthy. In addition, in order to increase control over the state apparatus, it establishes parallel military hierarchies all along the bureaucratic structure. Ministries, provincial governments, state enterprises, are thus distributed among the various forces (Army, Navy, and Air forces) and delegates of the respective commands are designated to supervise the daily decisions of each organization. A complex and delicate system of authority is thereby created,

where decisions are processed through parallel hierarchical channels. In this way conflicts that may arise--and do arise--often require the intervention of the high commands of the forces involved. This system reminds the institutionalized control that the official party exerts in other political systems with high concentration of power (e.g., Mexico or the Soviet Union).

With regard to functional interdependencies, a key aspect is the type of articulation that takes place among the public organizations themselves and with respect to the private sector. As the state advances over, and dominates, society, it becomes closed to the influence of the various social sectors and organizations. Free from electoral pressures, the time horizon of its action is broadened and its autonomy in fixing the policy agenda is highly increased. Policy formulation is no longer the result of a process of negotiation and compromise with different social sectors and political forces, but rather depends on the initiative or proposals of technocrats and funcionarios de confianza (political appointees). A great number of public organizations are intervened and their boards eliminated. Consequently, the representation of the private corporate organizations in those boards disappears. Of course, public policies continue to benefit certain economic sectors. But this is not the result of "sectorial pressures" but of implicit or explicit agreements with certain entrepreneurial groups. In other words, the state becomes somewhat removed from the influence of corporate organizations, but not necessarily from the appeal of class interests (Cf. Cardoso, 1978).

This orientation is coherent with the goals of political demobilization that all military authoritarianisms attempt to achieve. As the guarantor of a new order, the military corporation prefers a "technical" relationship between state and society, instead of a political relationship through parties and broadly based alliances. Through advisory committees controlled by public officials, certain individuals and groups are coopted. Even though these individuals and groups may be members of economic or political organizations which adhere to the regime's philosophy or programs, they cannot be considered spokesmen of those groups or organizations. The "bureaucratic rings"--in Cardoso's expression--between private entrepreneurs and public organizations, replace the classic lobby or organized pressure group, thus becoming the main articulation mechanism between public bureaucracy and private interests.

The "techno-bureaucratic" character of these regimes is also manifested in the efficientist orientation that marks heavily the style of state management. A manifestation of this is the strong emphasis placed upon programs for reorganizing the public sector. In recent experiences--such as those of Argentina, Chile or Brazil--there is also a "contractionist" philosophy of the state apparatus, inspired in what is called subsidiariedad del estado (the subsidiary role of the state). Debureaucratization, reduction of the public budget, massive transfer of state enterprises to the private sector, deconcentration and regionalization of services through transfer to local units, become central goals of governmental activity. However, the effective application of this principle finds a serious obstacle in the existence of a stratum of dynamic state entrepreneurs reluctant to relinquish the prospects of permanence and expansion of their institutions. In fact, despite some transfers of

minor importance, the bulk of the big public enterprises not only remains in the hands of the state but even experiences an extraordinary growth. Normative and management control by the central government is exerted only in relation to certain broad policy guidelines, such as tariffs or salaries, but the enterprises virtually enjoy total operational autonomy. This often gives way to conflicts with the central government, since controlling the expansion of the state entrepreneurial sector is a key factor for the success of the regime's efficientist and subsidiary policies.

Notwithstanding their limited fortune in this particular field of state activity, these regimes are at least able to increase the degree of specificity of the normative frameworks of public organizations. Contrary to liberal-democratic regimes, in which relatively abstract or generic definitions of goals and policies offer wide coverage for subsequent specifications dependent on intrabureaucratic bargaining, the authoritarian regimes tend to split much more nearly the domains of "politics" and "administration." These become two distinct spheres of decision and action. Policies are "made" in the meetings of the high commands, in the ministerial cabinets, in the Junta's or Presidential advisory committees. Bureaucratic units become more properly executing organizations. They enjoy less normative autonomy regarding the possibility of "goal displacement," but as they are less exposed to bureaucratic clienteles and party influences, they enjoy instead greater operational autonomy.

Under these exceptional conditions, with a highly efficient apparatus of coercion and social control, the regime can formulate and implement policies which often entail a deep surgery, a drastic transformation of the social and economic conditions that prevailed before its coming to power--i.e., suspension of party politics, elimination of corporate organizations, sudden changes in the relative prices of the economy and in income distribution, reordering of space, population, and social activities. In terms of Lowi's typology, regulatory and constituent policies become top priorities (Lowi, 1972). The "disciplining" of society and the direct support of capital accumulation in private hands, have a great significance under these regimes--a fact reflected in the creation of organizations, the use of instruments, and the allocation of resources to a degree that exceeds even the past levels of government intervention. The weight of the military and domestic security budget, the activities of symbolic manipulation, the ideological control, and the utilization of mass communication media, the financing of public works through foreign indebtedness, the guarantee of loans and deposits in the banking and financial system, help to maintain the high participation of the public sector in the economy and the presence of the state in social activity. These changes in policy content tend to transform the physiognomy of the public sector and the style of management.

As regards material or budgetary interdependence, the dominant criteria imposed by these regimes are the principle of budgetary universality and an authoritarian style of resource allocation. One of the central characteristics of the bureaucratic apparatus existing before military regimes attain power is the extreme balkanization and autonomization of the bureaucratic institutions. The effective possibilities of altering the patterns of extraction and allocation of resources resulting from that dispersion are really slim. A complex legislation and institutionalized procedures strongly hinder any attempt at achieving centralization

of resources and greater control upon their allocation. However, the massive concentration of power that these regimes achieve allows them to modify those patterns.<sup>12</sup>

In short, at the hierarchical level, bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes tend to impose upon the public sector a pyramidal structure of authority, while control is mainly exerted by members of the military corporation through parallel hierarchies. From a functional point of view, efficiency seems to be the guiding principle of state activity. The division of labor inside bureaucracy tends to be governed by the rationalization of administrative techniques and institutions, the transfer of responsibility over the provision of services to subnational jurisdictions (deconcentration), and the definition of the role of the state as subsidiary to private activity. As regards budgetary interdependence, the unity and universality of the budget become key criteria for resource appropriation, while the allocation of resources is normatively patterned after the established hierarchical channels. Finally, regulatory and constituent policies tend to prevail in the government's agenda, in line with the disciplinary and "regenerating" mission of the regime.

#### Liberal-Democratic Regimes

Liberal democracies can be conceived of as an almost perfect antithesis of bureaucratic authoritarianism. The constraints they impose upon the internal functioning of the state bureaucracy are at odds with the ones examined so far. Although they are a *rara avis* of the Latin American fauna, a species that sometimes seems to be bound to extinction and sometimes is reborn exhibiting variegated feathers, it would be unnecessary to characterize these regimes: from school days we have learned their essential features.

However, we are referring to autochthonous species of liberal democracies, particularly to those whose existence within the political scene of the countries in which they tried to get acclimatized has been ephemeral (e.g., the Argentine radical governments between 1964 and 1966, the Uruguayan neo-Battlism of the 60s, the Frei and Belaúnde Terry regimes in the same decade, and even their more populist variants such as the recent Peronist experience). Instead of a pyramidal authority structure, power relationships in these regimes tend to spread into manifold instances and decision units, thus conforming--in Dahl's terminology--a "poliarchyc" system of authority. In terms of hierarchical interdependence, the lower concentration of power allows greater isolation and functional autonomy of the bureaucratic institutions, thus widening the gap between formal and effective authority. Of course, the degree of autonomy of each decision unit varies from case to case, but the existence of a general pattern of higher or lower autonomy depends upon certain traditions and specificities that go back to the historical experience of each country.<sup>13</sup> In any case, the dominant feature is that the power structure is based on a complex interplay among private interests and corporate organizations, bureaucratic agencies, local governments, political parties, labor unions, the Parliament, and the central government.

Given the high degree of organization of the civil society, public policies tend to obtain an almost instantaneous feedback. The open, fragmented, and competitive nature of the political game permits the access of groups and changing orientations to the scene, but this access takes more often the form of veto power than of positions of articulation and consensus. Thus induces the balkanization of public authority through the creation of bureaucratic arenas where the various interests can find adequate representation, thus avoiding the risks and costs of a situation of interdependence.

Under such circumstances, the "presence" of the civil society within the state becomes weightier. With institutional normalcy, public organizations may include representatives of different sectors within their boards and advisory bodies, contrasting with what occurs under "exceptional" regimes (regímenes de excepción), where in many public organizations the figure of the interventor and his unipersonal will weighs heavily on the decisions adopted.

The omnipresence of politics often gives way to clearly irregular situations. The most common one is political patronage, a current practice under almost any type of regime, which acquires a considerable diffusion in the liberal democracies of Latin America. From the point of view of hierarchical interdependencies, this phenomenon leads at times to the subutilization of the services rendered by certain units, given the deep political cleavages between the heads of those units and their immediate superiors. As political appointees find themselves incapable of building an entourage of subordinates sharing similar party or ideological commitments, they often decide to neutralize the activity of units under their jurisdiction which have acquired an undisguised political colouring. This may lead to the removal of prerogatives, the marginalization of public officials or simply the underemployment of personnel. Thus political divisionism closes the channels of interaction and distorts the system of authority.

Under these political conditions, the incapacity of the normative units of the central government to control the activity of the state decentralized sector becomes more acute. For instance, in the relationships maintained between the powerful state enterprises or autonomous bodies with the ministries in charge of the corresponding area, the lines of authority formally drawn in the organization charts contrast with the asymmetrical power relationships existing between both kinds of organizations. Such was the case of the Ministry of Industry and Trade in Uruguay, or the State Enterprises Corporation in Argentina, two institutions which failed to coordinate the activities of the larger public enterprises even though they were granted constitutional or legal powers for intervening in the formulation of policies regarding the enterprises under their jurisdiction. The experience of the Secretariats and Councils for Science and Technology in Argentina was similarly fruitless in attempting the orientation of governmental action in this field.

Several explanations of this phenomenon could be advanced. Even though hierarchical control is intended to promote uniform and foreseeable action on the part of subordinates, in these contexts there is a stronger attachment to individual initiative, informal relationships,

and "strata isolation" (Crozier, 1964; Peters, 1978). Superior-subordinate relations become rigid, thus reducing the opportunities of communication through strata. Compliance with norms becomes ritualized as the system of sanctions ceases to operate. Constraints such as the immovability of public officials, the complexity of procedures, or the interference of political influence in administrative affairs, reduce the possibility of applying the norms regulating the rights and duties of state personnel. In fact, the preservation of certain democratic institutions (constitutional guarantees, the court system, administrative appeals, right of petition) and the low inclination to, or likelihood of, employing coercion, makes noncompliance almost unpunishable.<sup>14</sup>

The profusion of norms and the complexity of procedures tend to produce other consequences. Taken together, norms and procedures allow the reduction of the scope of responsibility of each role to a minimum in order to avoid the risks of decision to a maximum. The norm is invoked in order to share these risks and maintain the formalities. Its instrument is the expediente (file) which exalts the sacred nature of the norm and picks up in its slow bureaucratic pilgrimage, the "tribute" (i.e., reports, opinions) of those placed in the assembly line of decision. A system becomes thus conformed where the control mechanisms are neutralized and the responsibility for decision dissipates. Paradoxically, the pulverization of this responsibility at the intermediate hierarchical levels produces a high degree of congestion and centralization at the higher levels, as decisions tend to be "kicked upstairs." Minutiae gather in the ministerial cabinets causing a loss of perspective and generalized confusion regarding criteria of relevance. The boards of administration of the decentralized agencies, the chairmen, general directors, or managers of the public enterprises, and even the secretaries of state must concern themselves with routine matters (leaves, scholarships, purchase or disposition of goods of minor importance) which, under different circumstances, would require the attention of lower level personnel. Given the volume of matters that require decision, the top administrators must often limit themselves to ratifying the judgments of their subordinates through formal resolutions, without being able to duly appreciate the elements which inform the decision and thus, without applying their own premises. This "inversion" of the decision process, where the overall goals and priorities are not implemented by descending a hierarchical pyramid but through complex bargaining which tends to close the universe of options at the highest levels, features a marginalist style of state management, based on mutual adjustments and discrete compromises. It also crudely points out the limited chances that centralized planning, evaluation, and control have in this type of context.

These observations are obviously pertinent from the point of view of functional interdependence. Under conditions of bureaucratic fracturing derived from decentralization and autonomization of functions, coordination of activities among units becomes either unnecessary or impossible. Each unit tends to operate within closed compartments even though its activity is technically linked to the activity of other units. This feudalization of the state apparatus finds a plausible explanation in the symbiotic relationship established between bureaucratic agencies and organized sectors of society (Brown and Erie, 1979). To a larger extent, these agencies gain legitimacy and resources by mobilizing influential



clients, even though the relationship becomes a virtual capture of the agencies by their clientele.<sup>15</sup>

Two intimately related phenomena turn out from these operating conditions. On the one hand, an agency captured by its clientele will inevitably tend to alter its formal normative framework to accommodate the interests of that clientele. This phenomenon, variably known as "goal displacement" (Merton, 1940) or "bifurcation of purposes" (Selznick, 1948) constitutes, in the last analysis, a mechanism for reducing uncertainty, as it allows the agency to obtain the necessary support to ensure its legitimacy and survival. On the other hand, the functioning of such a loosely integrated system, so reluctant to subordinate its activities to the directives of "articulating" organizations, creates serious problems of uncertainty and makes room for several forms of redundancy needed to maintain an acceptable degree of credibility of the system (Landau, 1969).<sup>16</sup> The type of redundancy which has deserved the greatest attention from the literature is the one known as duplication or overlapping of organizations and functions.

This "duplication," which could be defined as the simultaneous functioning of two or more institutions within similar domains of activity and competence, has been subject, however, to opposite opinions. While the analysts tend to almost unanimously underly the pathological character that this phenomenon acquires in Latin American bureaucracies, several American scholars have reexamined the use of these mechanisms and considered them (within certain limits and modalities) as congruent with the functioning of a pluralist democracy (Heclo, 1976; Peters, 1978; Ashford, 1978). Certainly, if this extreme form of redundancy is simply viewed as a "technical" problem, to bring back functional equilibrium to the system and avoid the wasting of resources would just require the application of certain simple recommendations. On the contrary, duplications and overlappings should be interpreted in the light of the requirements and constraints of a political game which alters the dynamics of the formal intrabureaucratic relationships, but is a constitutive part, and makes to the essence, of the regime it contributes to characterize.

It could be reasonably observed that overlappings and duplications of functions are to be found in almost any kind of political regime. Therefore, it needs to be stressed that it is under liberal democracies where they find a more favorable environment for their reproduction. The trend towards decentralization and autonomy, which is in the roots of this form of bureaucratic redundancy, becomes much more intense the more open the political system. The periods of great expansion of personnel and units of the public bureaucracy generally coincide with periods of full operation of democratic institutions and representation mechanisms firmly implanted in the bureaucratic arena--a situation that differs from what occurs under the BA regimes. Interestingly enough, while in the BA's attempts are made to counteract institutional dispersion through rationalization measures and reestablishment of hierarchical relationships, in the liberal democracies the very logic of the democratic game tends to promote forms of bureaucratic redundancy.

These operating conditions are also corresponded with the contents of the policies whose implementation is attempted. With a broader social base, electoral compromises, and political parties as the main mechanism of representation, the nondominant social sectors have greater access to political decision making and higher possibilities of expressing their claims and interests. Hence, income redistribution and social welfare policies gain a prominent place in the agenda. Furthermore, the existence of diversified and powerful bureaucratic clienteles makes for a lower degree of specificity of the agencies' normative frameworks and of the broad policy guidelines, so as to make room for the variety of interests that struggle to prevail in this arena.

Greater bureaucratic autonomy tends to produce consequences at the level of budgetary interdependence. As a large segment of the state agencies is empowered to seek and secure the approval of their budgetary claims, the capacity of the central government to decide the planned allocation of resources decreases.<sup>17</sup> While the coordinating and control mechanisms fail, this pattern tends to self-perpetuation, as it adds new pressures to the autarchic trends. To submit to rules of competitive allocation in a situation where the Ministry of Finance--or its equivalent--controls only a fraction of the total state resources, is to get oneself condemned to budgetary rachitism. Under these conditions, the agencies often resort to mechanisms such as the creation of special funds with earmarked resources,<sup>18</sup> transfers among budgetary items; pasos en comisión (a sort of "temporary" transfer of employees borrowed by another agency), which allow the "free" employment of personnel; or access to extrabudgetary resources such as foreign indebtedness or the issuing of bonds. In sum, mechanisms that facilitate the achievement of the agencies' goals,<sup>19</sup> but which have nothing to do with the relations of budgetary interdependence prescribed in manuals and organization charts.

To sum up, liberal democratic regimes in Latin America are featured by poliarchic authority structures, as power is diffused throughout the bureaucratic hierarchy. Control is exercised mainly by political parties, public opinion, and corporate organizations articulating sectorial interests. The diffusion of power creates strong pressures towards decentralization of the public sector and increasing autonomy of its agencies, a factor which usually leads to redundancy and functional overlapping. The dominant action orientation is clientelistic, subordinating technical to political rationality. This tends to be compatible with the mainly redistributive character of public policy. Financial autarchy, earmarked funding, and a sharply competitive pattern of resource allocation are the main features of the state management style at the budgetary level of bureaucratic interdependence.

#### Patrimonialist Regimes

Let us finally examine how the intrabureaucratic linkages are influenced by patrimonialist regimes. The use of this analytic category may appear surprising to more than one reader. To simply mention it immediately evokes the treatment that Max Weber has made of this form of domination in his celebrated typology of Herrschaft (Weber, 1964). Its features are associated with forms of exercising political power in pre-capitalist societies, particularly in medieval Europe. In recent years, however, the concept of patrimonialism has been recalled by several

studies on politics in the new African nations. Although I ignore whether it has been employed in Latin America to analyze present-day situations, I believe it adequately describes the way domination is exerted in several states of the region.

Leaving outside the past historical examples of patrimonial regimes, based on tradition, hereditary succession, and charismatic authority, there are contemporary cases in which personalist government turns states into the private government of those possessing the necessary power for the exercise of political domination. His authority does not depend necessarily upon personal qualifications nor a sense of mission --which would be the case under charismatic domination. It also differs from the legal-rational authority of bureaucratic domination in that public administration does not need to be based on the predominance of constitutional and legal norms or on the existence of a body of public agents whose career depends on training, merit, or efficiency (Roth, 1968).<sup>20</sup>

Patrimonialism means domination by one man, who needs functionaries for exerting his authority. But in turn, all governmental posts are originated within the administration of the domestic community of the monarch or dictator (Bendix, 1970). Although in modern times he takes up the title of president (or its equivalent) and gets surrounded by the formal institutions of a democracy, he exerts in fact a quasi-monopoly over all decisions pertaining to appointment, replacement, transfer, or removal of public officials at any level, hierarchy, or function of government. This decision power also extends to other spheres of state activity.<sup>21</sup>

In these regimes, therefore, the authority structure is shaped in a radial format. The president occupies the center of the political scene, from which he exercises an omnimodous power founded on personal relationships and reciprocal obligations. Through these ties an informal and relatively cohesive structure is formed, which is controlled by a personal clique of hombres de confianza (trustworthy men) responsible for the functioning of certain key administrative and military units. This structure allows the regime to efficaciously destroy any contesting movement and to control the weakly organized opposition, thus securing its continuity in power.

As in the case of the bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes, although for different reasons, the patrimonialist contexts exhibit a low degree of organization and activation of the civil society, particularly of the popular sectors. Domination is imposed over a society in which pre-capitalist features still subsist. The existence of an extended informal sector, the reduced size of the urban working class, the survival of traditional relations of production in the countryside which impair the organization of the peasants and, above all, the demobilizing and coercive action exerted by the government, help neutralize these sectors as a source of opposition. On the other hand, as a result of the reduced weight and poor corporate organization of the local entrepreneurs, their relation with the regime is based on particularistic loyalties and cooptation of some members into positions of power.<sup>22</sup> Under these circumstances, the capacity of response of society to the programs and policies of the regime turns out to be very low, so that the government must resort

to coercion and personalist control in order to make up for the low feedback of information from society.

This control takes many different forms, the most obvious being the almost irrestrictive capacity of the dictator to designate public officials into positions that may or may not be contemplated in the formally established hierarchy. In the Balaguerista regime, this caused serious conflicts of authority. It was usual, for instance, the appointment of secretaries of state without portfolio (sin cartera), the omission of instances formally entrusted with authority for making designations, or the total disregard of legal powers given to other functionaries. In addition, certain informal--although institutionalized--relationships were frequently established between the Presidency and various units or bureaucrats, overlooking the hierarchical structure.

Other forms of presidential intervention in these contexts tend to produce functional consequences for the regime. Although they affect the system of formal authority, they usually increase the degree of coherence of the state's leading cadres or help settle delicate disputes related to the management of the public sector. Typically expedient is the reciprocal substitution of functionaries--a sort of political "castling"--whereby the heads of certain public organizations can be either promoted, sanctioned, or neutralized. In this way, an actual or imminent crisis may be solved, loyalties may be rewarded, trust may be acknowledged, or circumstantial support from the opposition may be obtained. Through this substitution mechanism, the permanence of a closed group of top level officials can be assured. Few are definitely eliminated and sometimes, even in the presence of outright corruption or ineptitude, punishment may be reduced to a simple transfer. Hence, personal loyalties are reinforced, political compromises are observed, or the uncertainty that would result from a marked heterogeneity of the governmental clique is avoided.

As the system of authority gets thwarted, the level of uncertainty in intrabureaucratic relationships grows, potential leaderships are shattered and the bargaining capacity of the different units decreases, since at the same time the system of personal loyalties and prebendal obligations is strengthened. In this way, interpersonal solidarity diminishes and any attempt at creating organizational or sectorial pressures can be easily controlled. Ultimately, this deliberate generation of uncertainty responds to the elementary principle divide et impera, which in the situations under examination takes the form of a discretionary handling of the system of authority. The intention of these and other mechanisms seeking similar objectives is to debilitate pressures, to avoid the formation of internal blocs and to counteract any attempt at creating established rights and privileges or increasing the bargaining capacity of bureaucrats or organizational units.

Under this perspective, certain failures in bureaucratic functioning which are often observed by scholars and experts as a sign of "technical backwardness" acquire new meaning. For instance, the lack of an administrative career, the existence of heterogeneous salary systems, the lack of a labor union organization of public employees, the inexistence of a system of retirement and pensions. In fact, these alleged deficiencies

should not be interpreted as a result of ignorance about the techniques or schemes of organization applicable in each case, but rather as a rational omission consistent with the strategic goal sought. It is not hard to understand that the proper functioning of a civil service system implies a minute specification of the conditions and procedures whereby public employees will be hired, selected, trained, and retired. But the certainty that such a system creates and the capacity of collective action that its violation could originate, contradict the existing system based on patronage, nepotism, networks of personal loyalties, and gracious ad-hominem favors. A similar reasoning may be applied to the other "failures." How can an homogeneous salary system be made compatible with the need to favor certain units by turning them into poles of attraction of the most talented people available or the need to differentiate salary compensations according to criteria where personal skills or performance become secondary considerations? How can be admitted the emergence of labor union organizations whose main objective is precisely to make collective demands for better salaries, conditions of stability and certainty in employment, thus denying inveterate procedures and social practices? Finally, is it not politically more rewarding to graciously concede a pension than to convert it into an automatic right?

This style of state management contrasts sharply with those analyzed when referring to the other types of regimes. Decisions tend to be erratic, almost whimsical, frequently divorced from any formal normative framework, contrary to the forthright, unappealable, technically informed character they adopt under the bureaucratic authoritarian regimes, or the negotiated and marginalist nature that features them in the liberal democracies.

From the functional point of view, bureaucracies under patrimonialist regimes present a clear institutional stratification. On the one hand, a group of traditional organizations, with obsolete routines and procedures, low salaries, precarious working conditions, and a clearly marginal mission within the overall activities of the state. On the other, a series of modern institutions, intimately related to the Presidency, which sometimes perform functions decidedly central to the dominant political project, and sometimes just a ritual role. Overlapping with this structure there is a true "Court" of "men of trust," formed by secretaries of state without portfolio, the Secretary of the Presidency, some ad hoc or para-state units, some middle-level officials who act as pseudopodes at key institutions and a small staff of professionals in charge of administering certain large programs (i.e., public works, industrial promotion).

This type of organization gives the President great "flexibility" both in terms of management and of control. Normally, the "Court" and the more modern and weighty units are responsible for activities that would formally correspond to the traditional bureaucracy. But in these cases, "duplication" does not only serve the purpose of securing performance. Sometimes, the deliberate overlap allows the President to limit the jurisdiction or powers of certain agencies. In case of conflict, he can play an arbitral role instead of intervening as a party to the dispute, thus avoiding unnecessary wearing of his figure. In addition, resort to trustworthy agencies, even if this implies overlapping, has other undeniable advantages. It is well possible that a certain unit having legal competence over a given area (1) may lack the skills, leadership of

presidential endorsement to face an innovating or ambitious project; (2) may be controlled by members of the opposition, which could block or impair the execution of a given project; or (3) may not enjoy the backing of international organizations or economic sectors wielding strong political power. Simultaneously, there may be agencies enjoying the necessary technical and political credibility, concentrating the highest level professional personnel and consequently, obtaining the financial resources and the political endorsement required to invade new areas of activity, irrespective of the organization charts and the functional or hierarchical interdependencies established. This situation involves, in embryonic form, potential cases of "bureaucratic imperialism," that is, a progressive invasion or absorption of certain functional areas by agencies whose activities take place mainly in other domains.

The simultaneous existence of "imperialist" and marginal agencies marks the distance between the degree of formalization of the state normative framework and the actual contents of its policies. Distributive and symbolic policy orientations tend to prevail. State activity concentrates on lavish construction, ornamental expenses, concession of privileges for exploiting different kinds of natural resources and public services, and some demagogic measures which are short of implying a true redistribution of income or wealth.

Naturally, emphasis on this type of policies requires an unrestrained control of the appropriation and use of resources. To put this into practice, a series of mechanisms rather incompatible with the orthodoxy of budgetary administration are needed; for instance, the constitution of "special funds" discretionally allocated by the Presidency, or the control of expenses via the deliberate underestimation of the budgeted income and the allocation of resources on the basis of ad hoc criteria (i.e., fixed allotments of current expenses, discrete decisions for public investments).

With the exception of certain autonomous agencies, the public sector thus experiences a generalized uncertainty regarding the amount of resources that will be obtained at the end of the year to attend expenses and investment outlays. The budgetary process at the unit level becomes a ritual procedure, the result of which has little to do with the fixed allotments for current expenses or the whimsical allocations for investments approved by the Presidency.

In sum, the various means employed for limiting the claims of the state agencies to the use and disposition of resources allow the President to channel them towards those areas, functions or activities regarded as crucial in terms of the regime's goals.

To recapitulate, the structure of authority under patrimonialist regimes is shaped in a radial form, no matter what the organization chart may indicate. The formal hierarchy is superseded by the unrestrained decision power of the dictator, who assumes full control of the bureaucracy. At the functional level, the activities of the state are sharply stratified according to their relative importance to the regime's goals and priorities. An informal, court-like system, composed of personal confidants, ad hoc units, para-state organizations and certain key agencies, perform most of the relevant state activities, while the largest segment of the

public sector is left out with rather routine and symbolic functions. Prebendalism and distributive policies reinforce the system of loyalties and reciprocal obligation. Resource appropriation and allocation are subject to the discretionary whims of the ruler: as the main political actor, he decides who gets what, when, and how.

#### Final Remarks

If politics is the principal arena in which the options regulating and giving content to social activity are defined, public administration can by no means be foreign to politics. But, how much is effectively involved? In fact, politics and administration are intertwined in complex combinations, where the action of the various agents intervening in policy implementation faces different objective limits regarding their possibilities of autonomous behavior. In this paper I have suggested that, partly, these limits are determined by the distinct nature of the interdependencies existing among the state agents and units involved in the process of policy formulation and implementation. And partly, they vary according to the constraints imposed by different types of political regimes upon the different levels of bureaucratic interdependence. As we have seen, these two parameters modify not only the style of state management but also the contents and impacts of policy. To find out what is the complex interplay of forces intervening in each concrete situation is a prerequisite both to judge the viability and pertinence of the policies and to interpret their meaning and social consequences.

This dual and different object of knowledge suggests a final reflection. The perspective adopted in this paper has been, mainly, that of the intellectual concerned with understanding rather than prescribing. As a scientific interest, it belongs to a field of knowledge and to an analytical level in which the study of bureaucratic behavior is blended with the examination of those elements of the socio-political environment deemed relevant for interpreting the reciprocal influence between these two spheres. However, I believe that this type of knowledge is also relevant for action. For Lasswell (1971), a selective and realistic knowledge of this type of interdependencies is essential for increasing the viability and relevance of public policies. But this entails abandoning certain prejudices which see in the divorce between the technical rationality of what is prescribed and the political rationality of its instrumentation, a sign of administrative pathology.

By their very nature, the conflictive behavior patterns we have analyzed in this paper tend to alter the formal relations of interdependence without observing any formal rational scheme. Once their efficacy is tested, they become institutionalized and gain existence side by side with prescribed behavior. It is this coexistence that introduces an element of permanent contradiction and induces a counterpoint of "formal prescription-adaptive behavior" in which certain patterns of interaction, truly guiding expectations, attitudes and behavior, get settled. To know and explain these behavioral patterns, and to incorporate them as a datum of reality without assuming pathology, may lead to processes of policy formulation and implementation perhaps less ambitious, although probably more sensible to the complexity of the intrabureaucratic dynamics and the constraints of the political environment. The prospects of institutional development for effective policy implementation largely depend on this increasing awareness.

<sup>1</sup>There is a vast literature on this theme. In the field of public administration, and with reference to Latin America, see Kliksberg (1979), Crowther and Flores (1980), De Márquez and Godau (1980).

<sup>2</sup>It is no coincidence, then, that the success or failure of certain development programs depend considerably upon the type of core technology which is dominant in the activities of the programs. In this respect, it has been observed that predominantly technical or financial projects (often called "hard") tend to achieve better results than the "social" (or "soft") ones. In the mixed cases, results vary but tend to fall into an intermediate range (World Bank, 1980).

<sup>3</sup>As Martínez Nogueira (1978) indicates for the Guatemalan case, there are organizations set up around certain technologies useful for making decisions compatible and increasing rationality in resource allocation. Their raison d'être usually resides in the mere manipulation of that technology, with no output having any external value. This "consummatory" use explains why these organizations must constantly adopt new strategies for securing survival. In some cases, they perform a symbolic role as vicarious manifestation of rationality in decision making, supported by the channeling of foreign public funds or technical cooperation. In other cases, they must generate an "output" having a well established demand. Thus, goal displacement to attend to contingent problems or the association with social actors whose support may preserve institutional survival are frequently found.

<sup>4</sup>On this distinction, see Mayntz (1979).

<sup>5</sup>Of course, the possibilities of overlaps and conflicts around the delimitation of functional domains should not be ignored.

<sup>6</sup>State agencies related with these sectors revealed great flexibility to adapt their internal structures, modes of operation and resources to the requirements of each historical juncture. Their staff was composed of young, dynamic members, frequently shifting between the private and the public sectors. The critical value and the strategic character of their interventions assured the support of their clientele. These institutions included, among others, those engaged in the formulation and implementation of economic policies, the regulation of economic behavior and financial activities. They also included certain units which satisfied demands from the public sector itself, such as planning agencies or regional and local developmental agencies.

<sup>7</sup>Their functions benefited the community at large (i.e., educational or sanitary programs, infrastructure with no external economies for dynamic activities). These organizations somehow reflected the technologically backward, static and unproductive character of the economic and social sectors they were serving. Although the knowledge required to carry over their functions was high, their capacity to process information was extremely low. The demands from society did not promote organizational innovations and the available and installed technology exerted a strong inertia. Among others, institutions in this category included those in



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the areas of education, social welfare, foreign relations, and certain public utilities, such as telephone and gas.

<sup>8</sup>All organizations of this sort were heavily staffed at the operational level, showing very weak--or lacking completely--internal differentiations in terms of policy formulation, planning, and programming of activities. Many institutions had to contract externally the elaboration of projects or the execution of public works. But they exhibited a reduced capacity of analysis and fiscalization of the technical resources of the contracting firms. They permanently faced a high turnover of their qualified technical personnel, who were attracted by the higher prestige and dynamism of other public or private organizations. Very often, these units were utilized as an instrument of political clientelism. This category included units of the Presidency, Agriculture, Gobernación, communications, public works, ports, and some agencies working in the rural sector.

<sup>9</sup>Casulist explanations often preclude this broad proposition. To illustrate it, let us consider the area of road maintenance, a favorite example of the World Bank. In general, the highway development projects operated by the Bank have not met with great success. As in the cases examined before, the demand for this type of service is scarce and inarticulate. Most of the benefits are enjoyed by motor vehicle operators and, indirectly, by the population living within the area of influence of the road. The demands, therefore, do not reach easily those in charge of maintenance. Community pressure is low, particularly because awareness of road deterioration is gradual and almost imperceptible. There are instead much more incentives to direct the scarce resources available to highway construction, where the benefits are more immediate, tangible, and therefore, elicit the adherence of governments and clientele (Cf. World Bank, 1980).

<sup>10</sup>For a characterization of the bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes, see O'Donnell (1975). The features of the patrimonial mode of domination has been brilliantly exposed by Max Weber (1964), although its analysis should be supplemented by readings referred to traditional authoritarianisms in the Latin American experience. As to the liberal-democratic regimes, their traits are adequately described by Apter (1965) in what he calls reconciliation regimes. Of course, the purpose of this analysis is to illustrate a way of approaching the examination of public policies which is deemed potentially enlightening. It does not purport to provide any "definite" explanations, or make any generalizations, about the relationships studied. In addition, the references to these regimes should not be interpreted lato sensu but insofar as they are applicable to the concrete historical experiences indicated in each case. The background for developing the different types of regimes is taken from the Dominican Republic under Balaguer (patrimonialist regime), the neo-Batllist Uruguay of the sixties (liberal democratic regime), and present-day Argentina (bureaucratic authoritarian regime). The examples will clarify some of the characteristics of these political regimes. The selection of these cases is due to the fact that research on these experiences has been done in the past or is currently under way. In any case, the types of

regimes to be analyzed cover a wide range of the cases empirically observable in the region.

<sup>11</sup>This characterization obviously describes the experience of the Southern Cone countries of Latin America. There are cases, however, which do not fit this description but share some of the features of the bureaucratic authoritarian regimes (i.e., Mexico or Peru under Velasco Alvarado). As a matter of fact, these "mixed" cases exhibit traits of the various regime types analyzed in this paper, and should be examined in their own right. For a discussion of the Mexican case, see O'Donnell (1975). The Peruvian case has been analyzed at length in Cleaves and Scurrah (1980).

<sup>12</sup>The Argentine case illustrates this point very well. While under democratic regimes the central government used to control no more than 25 percent of the state budget, the military government has managed to eliminate most special funds and earmarked resources. The most conspicuous cases have been the National Institutes of Agrarian and Industrial Technology, the National Housing Fund, and the Pension Funds.

<sup>13</sup>In a different context, Mayntz (1979) points out that such autonomy is generally lower in a centralized system such as the French one than in the United States or West Germany.

<sup>14</sup>Sometimes, efforts at overcoming the formalism of the norm led to the "hierarchization" of its instrument of application. In Uruguay, for instance, even simple coordinating and management control techniques--such as program budgeting--were taken up by the National Constitution and elevated to the category of fundamental norms. This proved useless, as the instrument itself became ritualized as well.

<sup>15</sup>It is the situation that S. N. Eisenstadt calls "debureaucratization." For an analysis of the concept of "cliente capture", see Sabatier (1975).

<sup>16</sup>Cyert and March (1964) already observed this phenomenon when referring to organizational slack and pointing out their functional value despite the excessive use of resources.

<sup>17</sup>In Uruguay, these privileges were enjoyed by the Judiciary, the Electoral Court, the Tribunal de Cuentas, the Councils for Education, the public enterprises, some decentralized agencies, and so forth. This phenomenon has been widely observed in other countries, as reported by Caiden and Wildavsky (1974).

<sup>18</sup>Important state agencies such as INTA and INTI, both from Argentina, were established under a liberal democracy and were granted earmarked taxes to finance their budgets. These privileges were suppressed by the present regime.

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<sup>19</sup>In making this affirmation, I want to avoid any assumption of administrative pathology, although these mechanisms may be considered pathological in most manuals and diagnoses. Undoubtedly, many agencies and programs are successful because--and not despite--they resort to this type of "gadgets."

<sup>20</sup>A less precise term, frequently used to designate this type of regimes, is "traditional authoritarianism." Its dominant features have been identified in experiences such as the Dominican Trujillismo and Balaguerismo, Somoza's Nicaragua, Batista's Cuba, Haiti under Duvalier, and present-day Paraguay under Stroessner.

<sup>21</sup>"When affirming that Balaguer concentrates the power to decide over the organization and functioning of the Dominican state apparatus, one does not consider the juridical or institutional formal arrangement of the state nor does he follow what that government says is attempting at. The affirmation is based on a critical observation of the actual decision process that takes place inside the state. This process reveals how personnel is recruited and who decides their destination; how resources are obtained, how are they to be allocated and who decides it; how do new initiatives regarding projects and activities emerge and how are they approved. In each of these processes a highly discretionary pattern of presidential intervention can be observed, although simultaneously there is a detailed set of norms and formal intentions that indicates what the prescribed behavior should be." (Oszlak, 1975)

<sup>22</sup>The predominant pattern of economic growth is often based on individual accumulation of the dictator and his family, closely associated with foreign capital. This may lead--as in the case of the Trujillo regime--to a truncated development of a native bourgeoisie and to wide inequalities in income distribution. By controlling the state apparatus, Trujillo--as well as Somoza--organized a vast network of monopolies which they incorporated to their personal and family property.

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