

## **STATE: A MULTI-PARADIGMATIC APPROACH**

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### **Abstract**

Any explanation of the state is based on a worldview. The premise of this paper is that any worldview can be associated with one of the four broad paradigms: functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist, and radical structuralist. This paper takes the case of the state and discusses it from the four different viewpoints. It emphasizes that the four views expressed are equally scientific and informative; they look at the phenomenon from their certain paradigmatic viewpoint; and together they provide a more balanced understanding of the phenomenon under consideration.

# **STATE: A MULTI-PARADIGMATIC APPROACH**

## **I. Introduction**

Any adequate analysis of the state necessarily requires fundamental understanding of the worldviews underlying the views expressed with respect to the state. This paper is based on the premise that any worldview can be associated with one of the four basic paradigms: functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist, and radical structuralist. It argues that any view expressed with respect to the state is based on one of the four paradigms or worldviews. This paper takes the case of the state and discusses it from four different viewpoints, each of which corresponds to one of the four broad worldviews. The paper emphasizes that the four views expressed are equally scientific and informative; they look at the phenomenon from their certain paradigmatic viewpoint; and together they provide a more balanced understanding of the phenomenon under consideration.

These different perspectives should be regarded as polar ideal types. The work of certain authors helps to define the logically coherent form of a certain polar ideal type. But, the work of many authors who share more than one perspective is located between the poles of the spectrum defined by the polar ideal types. The purpose of this paper is not to put people into boxes. It is rather to recommend that a satisfactory perspective may draw upon several of the ideal types.

The ancient parable of six blind scholars and their experience with the elephant illustrates the benefits of paradigm diversity. There were six blind scholars who did not know what the elephant looked like and had never even heard its name. They decided to obtain a mental picture, i.e. knowledge, by touching the animal. The first blind scholar felt the elephant's trunk and argued that

the elephant was like a lively snake. The second blind scholar rubbed along one of the elephant's enormous legs and likened the animal to a rough column of massive proportions. The third blind scholar took hold of the elephant's tail and insisted that the elephant resembled a large, flexible brush. The fourth blind scholar felt the elephant's sharp tusk and declared it to be like a great spear. The fifth blind scholar examined the elephant's waving ear and was convinced that the animal was some sort of a fan. The sixth blind scholar, who occupied the space between the elephant's front and hind legs, could not touch any parts of the elephant and consequently asserted that there were no such beasts as elephant at all and accused his colleagues of making up fantastic stories about non-existing things. Each of the six blind scholars held firmly to their understanding of an elephant and they argued and fought about which story contained the correct understanding of the elephant. As a result, their entire community was torn apart, and suspicion and distrust became the order of the day.

This parable contains many valuable lessons. First, probably reality is too complex to be fully grasped by imperfect human beings. Second, although each person might correctly identify one aspect of reality, each may incorrectly attempt to reduce the entire phenomenon to their own partial and narrow experience. Third, the maintenance of communal peace and harmony might be worth much more than stubbornly clinging to one's understanding of the world. Fourth, it might be wise for each person to return to reality and exchange positions with others to better appreciate the whole of the reality.<sup>1</sup>

Social theory can usefully be conceived in terms of four key paradigms: functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist, and radical structuralist. The four paradigms are founded upon

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<sup>1</sup> This parable is taken from Steger (2002).

different assumptions about the nature of social science and the nature of society. Each generates theories, concepts, and analytical tools which are different from those of other paradigms.

The functionalist paradigm has provided the framework for current mainstream academic fields, and accounts for the largest proportion of theory and research in academia.

In order to understand a new paradigm, theorists should be fully aware of assumptions upon which their own paradigm is based. Moreover, to understand a new paradigm one has to explore it from within, since the concepts in one paradigm cannot easily be interpreted in terms of those of another. No attempt should be made to criticize or evaluate a paradigm from the outside. This is self-defeating since it is based on a separate paradigm. All four paradigms can be easily criticized and ruined in this way.

These four paradigms are of paramount importance to any scientist, because the process of learning about a favored paradigm is also the process of learning what that paradigm is not. The knowledge of paradigms makes scientists aware of the boundaries within which they approach their subject. Each of the four paradigms implies a different way of social theorizing.

Before discussing each paradigm, it is useful to look at the notion of “paradigm.” Burrell and Morgan (1979)<sup>2</sup> regard the:

... four paradigms as being defined by very basic meta-theoretical assumptions which underwrite the frame of reference, mode of theorizing and modus operandi of the social theorists who operate within them. It is a term which is intended to emphasize the commonality of perspective which binds the work of a group of theorists together in such a way that they can be usefully regarded as approaching social theory within the bounds of the same problematic.

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<sup>2</sup> This work borrows heavily from the ideas and insights of Burrell and Morgan (1979).

The paradigm does ... have an underlying unity in terms of its basic and often “taken for granted” assumptions, which separate a group of theorists in a very fundamental way from theorists located in other paradigms. The “unity” of the paradigm thus derives from reference to alternative views of reality which lie outside its boundaries and which may not necessarily even be recognized as existing. (pages 23–24)

Each theory can be related to one of the four broad worldviews. These adhere to different sets of fundamental assumptions about; the nature of science (i.e., the subjective-objective dimension), and the nature of society (i.e., the dimension of regulation-radical change), as in Exhibit 1.<sup>3</sup>

Assumptions related to the nature of science are assumptions with respect to ontology, epistemology, human nature, and methodology.

The assumptions about ontology are assumptions regarding the very essence of the phenomenon under investigation. That is, to what extent the phenomenon is objective and external to the individual or it is subjective and the product of individual’s mind.

The assumptions about epistemology are assumptions about the nature of knowledge - about how one might go about understanding the world, and communicate such knowledge to others. That is, what constitutes knowledge and to what extent it is something which can be acquired or it is something which has to be personally experienced.

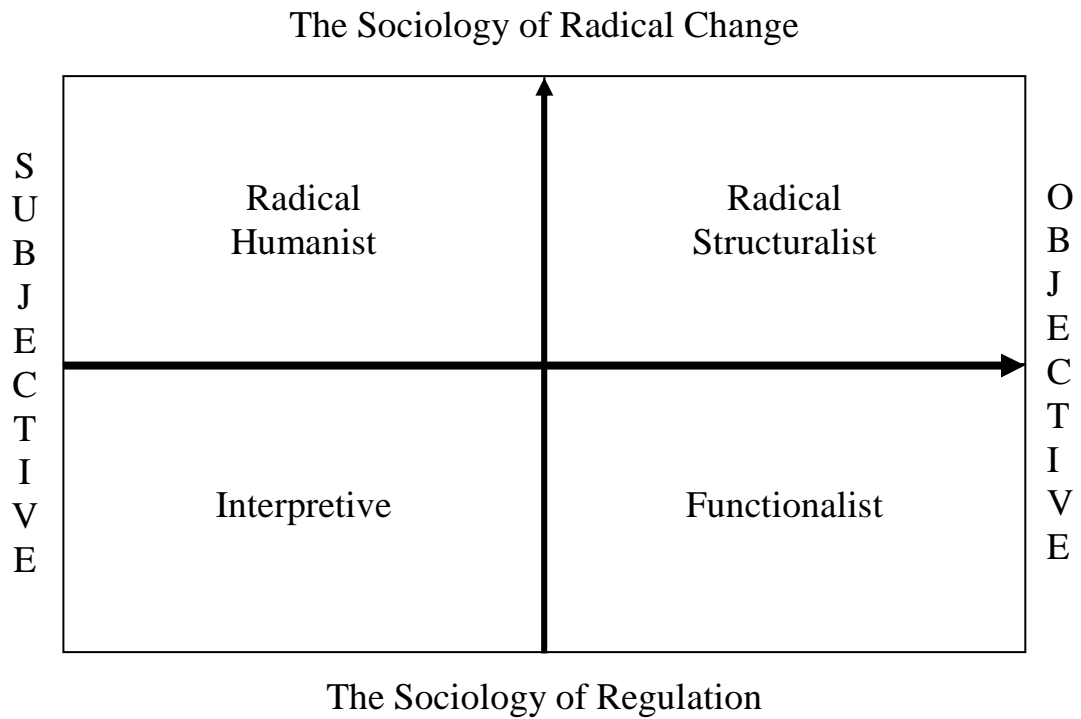
The assumptions about human nature are concerned with human nature and, in particular, the relationship between individuals and their environment, which is the object and subject of social sciences. That is, to what extent human beings and their experiences are the products of their environment or human beings are creators of their environment.

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<sup>3</sup> See Burrell and Morgan (1979) for the original work. Ardalan (2008) and Bettner, Robinson, and McGoun (1994) have used this approach.

### Exhibit 1: The Four Paradigms

Each paradigm adheres to a set of fundamental assumptions about the nature of science (i.e., the subjective-objective dimension), and the nature of society (i.e., the dimension of regulation-radical change).



The assumptions about methodology are related to the way in which one attempts to investigate and obtain knowledge about the social world. That is, to what extent the methodology treats the social world as being real hard and external to the individual or it is as being of a much softer, personal and more subjective quality. In the former, the focus is on the universal relationship among elements of the phenomenon, whereas in the latter, the focus is on the understanding of the way in which the individual creates, modifies, and interprets the situation which is experienced.

The assumptions related to the nature of society are concerned with the extent of regulation of the society or radical change in the society.

Sociology of regulation provides explanation of society based on the assumption of its unity and cohesiveness. It focuses on the need to understand and explain why society tends to hold together rather than fall apart.

Sociology of radical change provides explanation of society based on the assumption of its deep-seated structural conflict, modes of domination, and structural contradiction. It focuses on the deprivation of human beings, both material and psychic, and it looks towards alternatives rather than the acceptance of *status quo*.

The subjective-objective dimension and the regulation-radical change dimension together define four paradigms, each of which share common fundamental assumptions about the nature of social science and the nature of society. Each paradigm has a fundamentally unique perspective for the analysis of social phenomena.

The aim of this paper is not so much to create a new piece of puzzle as it is to fit the existing pieces of puzzle together in order to make sense of it. First, each of the sections (II to V) lays down



the foundation by discussing one of the four paradigms. Subsequently, each examines globalization and finance from the point of view of the respective paradigm. Section VI concludes the paper.

## **II. Functionalist Paradigm**

The functionalist paradigm assumes that society has a concrete existence and follows certain order. These assumptions lead to the existence of an objective and value-free social science which can produce true explanatory and predictive knowledge of the reality “out there.” It assumes scientific theories can be assessed objectively by reference to empirical evidence. Scientists do not see any roles for themselves, within the phenomenon which they analyze, through the rigor and technique of the scientific method. It attributes independence to the observer from the observed. That is, an ability to observe “what is” without affecting it. It assumes there are universal standards of science, which determine what constitutes an adequate explanation of what is observed. It assumes there are external rules and regulations governing the external world. The goal of scientists is to find the orders that prevail within that phenomenon.

The functionalist paradigm seeks to provide rational explanations of social affairs and generate regulative sociology. It assumes a continuing order, pattern, and coherence and tries to explain what is. It emphasizes the importance of understanding order, equilibrium and stability in society and the way in which these can be maintained. It is concerned with the regulation and control of social affairs. It believes in social engineering as a basis for social reform.

The rationality which underlies functionalist science is used to explain the rationality of society. Science provides the basis for structuring and ordering the social world, similar to the

structure and order in the natural world. The methods of natural science are used to generate explanations of the social world. The use of mechanical and biological analogies for modeling and understanding the social phenomena are particularly favored.

Functionalists are individualists. That is, the properties of the aggregate are determined by the properties of its units.

Their approach to social science is rooted in the tradition of positivism. It assumes that the social world is concrete, meaning it can be identified, studied and measured through approaches derived from the natural sciences.

Functionalists believe that the positivist methods which have triumphed in natural sciences should prevail in social sciences, as well. In addition, the functionalist paradigm has become dominant in academic sociology and mainstream academic fields. The social world is treated as a place of concrete reality, characterized by uniformities and regularities which can be understood and explained in terms of causes and effects. Given these assumptions, the individual is regarded as taking on a passive role; his or her behavior is being determined by the economic environment.

Functionalists are pragmatic in orientation and are concerned to understand society so that the knowledge thus generated can be used in society. It is problem orientated in approach as it is concerned to provide practical solutions to practical problems.

In Exhibit 1, the functionalist paradigm occupies the south-east quadrant. Schools of thought within this paradigm can be located on the objective-subjective continuum. From right to left they are: Objectivism, Social System Theory, Integrative Theory, Interactionism, and Social Action Theory.

Functionalist paradigm's views with respect to the state are presented next.<sup>4</sup>

Individuals and groups struggle to gain autonomy in the face of the control of others. They also expend efforts to gain control over others. Such activities are a fundamental tendency of political life. Struggles for autonomy are the results of conflicts and cleavages. These struggles are often successful and in turn they result in tendencies toward pluralism. Because conflicts and cleavages are ubiquitous they result in tendencies toward pluralism.

A regime that has hegemony can prevent the development of a pluralistic social and political order by preventing the public manifestation of conflicts and cleavages that result in the suppression of autonomy. However, to the extent that the barriers to organized oppositions are lowered, the political and social life reflects the corresponding degree of thrust toward autonomy and pluralism. In polyarchies – where these barriers are lowest, by definition – subsystems enjoy comparative autonomy and subsequently organizational pluralism become distinguishing feature of the social and political order. A high degree of pluralism is a necessary condition, an essential characteristic, and a consequence of a democratic regime.

It is useful to distinguish between the meanings of different terminologies which are used in this context. The term “conflictive pluralism” is used to refer to the number and pattern of relatively lasting cleavages which must be considered in order to characterize conflicts among a given group of persons. Conflictive pluralism should be distinguished from strict bipolarity, which is a relatively rare cleavage pattern compared to the public, political conflicts within those countries of the world

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<sup>4</sup> For this literature see Duncan and Lukes (1963), Friedman (1962, 2002), Hayek (1960), Hobbes (1651, 1968), Lehmbruch (1982), Lindblom (1977), Nordlinger (1981), Pateman (1970), and Streeck and Schmitter (1985). This section is based on Dahl (1978).

that have relatively low barriers to the public expression of conflict. The term “organizational pluralism” is used to refer to the number and autonomy of organizations that must be considered in order to characterize conflicts among a given group of persons. When organizations are greater in number and have greater autonomy, other things being equal, organizational pluralism is greater. Systems that allow their important units or subsystems to enjoy a significant degree of autonomy are called pluralistic, or at least pluralistic in this respect.

**Causes of Organizational Pluralism:** The degree of organizational pluralism that exists within the political system of a country can be mainly explained by: (1) the amount of latent conflictive pluralism; (2) the nature of the socioeconomic order; (3) the nature of the political regime; (4) the concrete structure of the political institutions. These four factors are interdependent and their relationships are complex.

Conflictive pluralism: In most countries there are different lines of cleavage, and the totality of these cleavage lines has produced a pattern of conflictive pluralism, not bipolarity. Bipolarity along a cleavage line based on social class can exist only in highly homogeneous countries – e.g., New Zealand or Finland – where other differences – such as language, religion, race, or ethnicity – are not sufficiently present to confound the effects of differences in social class. Countries that are highly homogeneous are able to fairly easily deal with conflicts arising from class cleavages. Therefore, in such countries, the pattern that emerges is not extreme polarization and its consequent acute antagonisms, but a moderate bipolarity within a fairly consensual political environment.

A deeper and more extensive explanation is needed to satisfactorily account for the powerful thrust toward conflictive pluralism which is currently exhibited in almost all countries in the world,

and certainly in countries in the later stages of economic development. Such an explanation would be founded on the idea that the creation of strong identifications and attachments extends much outside the narrow base of concrete human experiences in small, specific, and idiosyncratic cluster of human beings with whom everyone is most intimately associated during the important occasions of their lives.

The amount of latent conflict awaiting expression after the barriers to oppositions are lowered is not the same in every country. The evidence from studies of specific countries and from cross-country data shows that there exist significant variations in the amount of conflictive pluralism among countries with similar regimes, particularly among polyarchies, and within the same country over long periods of time.

The socio-economic order: It is reasonable to ask the following question. Would a high degree of organizational pluralism vanish in an economic order where the principal means of production were socially, rather than privately, owned – i.e., in a socialist economic order? A widely-held view answers such questions affirmatively. However, such a view is unambiguously false. This is because it rests upon a theoretical confusion that regards ownership equivalent to control. Both the advocates of capitalism and their socialist critics share such a view.

This view, which makes an egregious error, is based on simple-minded concepts, and arrives at tragic results. This is because the evidence has conclusively demonstrated that ownership is not a sufficient condition for control. This perspective implies that capitalism in both theory and practice inaugurated a system of decentralized control over economic organizations that were highly autonomous from the central government and one another. Socialism entails social ownership of

economic enterprises. Unless socialism must be centralized, then a socialist economy can be highly decentralized and therefore be pluralistic. That is, a socialist government might grant a high degree of autonomy to enterprises in order to achieve internal controls far more democratic than have ever existed either under capitalism or in centralized socialist systems, such as the Soviet Union. No socialist government – and no government, in general – would eliminate all external controls, whether by markets, the government of the state, or both. Therefore, a decentralized socialist order might generate as much, and even more, organizational pluralism as has existed in any non-socialist order. The crucial alternatives, for both the political and the economic order, are related to control, not ownership.

Regime: A highly hegemonic regime can prevent the manifestation of cleavages in the political life of a country in which there is a remarkable degree of diversity among its people with respect to various characteristics: language, religion, ideology, region, ethnic group, national identification, race, etc. Such a regime can consist of a small set of unified rulers, and can mobilize all political resources for its own use. It can maintain a strict hierarchical bureaucracy, and it can deny its citizens access to any political resources. Under a highly hegemonic regime, no public conflict would be observed, and the underlying tendency towards conflictive pluralism would remain latent.

If the barriers to oppositions are gradually reduced, then autonomous organizations would be formed, some of which would seek to advance the claims of the politically latent groups and subcultures. The more the barriers to the formation of organization and participation are reduced, the greater would be the number of autonomous organization. Over time, a limit would be reached, and a

more stable pattern would emerge.

The nature of the regime is closely related to the extent of organizational pluralism. Indeed, in the modern world, one of the most characteristic differences among regimes is the extent to which the oppositions are permitted to organize, express themselves, and participate in political life against the conduct of the government of the state. It is in this relation that the term “polyarchy” is used to refer to a regime in which the right to participate in political life is broadly extended, and the institutional guarantees to oppositions are strong, and the barriers to oppositions are low. And the term “hegemonic” is used to refer to a regime in which the institutional guarantees are weak or absent, and the barriers to oppositions are high. Organizational pluralism acts as both cause and effect of the liberalization and democratization of hegemonic regimes.

In particular, polyarchy is characterized by high level of institutional guarantees and broad inclusiveness which are associated with organizational pluralism. The important conditions for the growth of organizations, particularly political organizations, are: the guarantees of the right to form and join organizations; freedom of expression; the right to vote; the right of political leaders to compete publicly for support, especially in elections; and the existence of alternative sources of information. These conditions not only increase the incentives for forming political organizations, but also reduce the costs of doing so. If a country has a regime that is polyarchal then it will exhibit more conflictive and organizational pluralism than if its regime is hegemonic.

Concrete political institutions: Although the concrete political institutions of a country are partly determined by the nature of the regime and the extent of conflictive pluralism, they can independently affect the number and autonomy of organizations in the country. These effects are

most pronounced in polyarchies, among which there are vast variations in their political institutions. Three most significant variations are as follows. First, multiparty systems increase the number and the autonomy of political parties. Second, in some polyarchies, such as Switzerland and the United States, constitutional norms and political practices extensively partition governmental authority through both federalism and separation of powers. These lead to an increase in the number and autonomy of political organizations. In some other polyarchies, such as New Zealand and Britain, there is a unitary governance system, and the parliamentary government. These lead to a considerably greater concentration of governmental authority and correspondingly less organizational pluralism among political organizations. Finally, the number and the autonomy of organizations can increase by institutions such as “consociational democracy,” as practiced in the Netherlands, and “corporate pluralism” or “democratic corporatism,” as practiced in Norway and Sweden. Because each of these three sources of variation can widely vary independently of the others, and because the concrete institutions of a particular country also change due to other sources of variation – even among countries with similar regimes, such as polyarchies – differences in concrete political institutions result in vast variations in the specific form of organizational pluralism that take shape in different countries.

### **III. Interpretive Paradigm**

The interpretive paradigm assumes that social reality is the result of the subjective interpretations of individuals. It sees the social world as a process which is created by individuals. Social reality, insofar as it exists outside the consciousness of any individual, is regarded as being a



network of assumptions and intersubjectively shared meanings. This assumption leads to the belief that there are shared multiple realities which are sustained and changed. Researchers recognize their role within the phenomenon under investigation. Their frame of reference is one of participant, as opposed to observer. The goal of the interpretive researchers is to find the orders that prevail within the phenomenon under consideration; however, they are not objective.

The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is, at the level of subjective experience. It seeks explanations within the realm of individual consciousness and subjectivity. Its analysis of the social world produces sociology of regulation. Its views are underwritten by the assumptions that the social world is cohesive, ordered, and integrated.

Interpretive sociologists seek to understand the source of social reality. They often delve into the depth of human consciousness and subjectivity in their quest for the meanings in social life. They reject the use of mathematics and biological analogies in learning about the society and their approach places emphasis on understanding the social world from the vantage point of the individuals who are actually engaged in social activities.

The interpretive paradigm views the functionalist position as unsatisfactory for two reasons. First, human values affect the process of scientific enquiry. That is, scientific method is not value-free, since the frame of reference of the scientific observer determines the way in which scientific knowledge is obtained. Second, in cultural sciences the subject matter is spiritual in nature. That is, human beings cannot be studied by the methods of the natural sciences, which aim to establish general laws. In the cultural sphere human beings are perceived as free. An understanding of their

lives and actions can be obtained by the intuition of the total wholes, which is bound to break down by atomistic analysis of functionalist paradigm.

Cultural phenomena are seen as the external manifestations of inner experience. The cultural sciences, therefore, need to apply analytical methods based on “understanding;” through which the scientist can seek to understand human beings, their minds, and their feelings, and the way these are expressed in their outward actions. The notion of “understanding” is a defining characteristic of all theories located within this paradigm.

The interpretive paradigm believes that science is based on “taken for granted” assumptions; and, like any other social practice, must be understood within a specific context. Therefore, it cannot generate objective and value-free knowledge. Scientific knowledge is socially constructed and socially sustained; its significance and meaning can only be understood within its immediate social context.

The interpretive paradigm regards mainstream academic theorists as belonging to a small and self-sustaining community, which believes that social reality exists in a concrete world. They theorize about concepts which have little significance to people outside the community, which practices social theory, and the limited community which social theorists may attempt to serve.

Mainstream academic theorists tend to treat their subject of study as a hard, concrete and tangible empirical phenomenon which exists “out there” in the “real world.” Interpretive researchers are opposed to such structural absolutism. They emphasize that the social world is no more than the subjective construction of individual human beings who create and sustain a social world of intersubjectively shared meaning, which is in a continuous process of reaffirmation or change.

Therefore, there are no universally valid rules of science. Interpretive research enables scientists to examine human behavior together with ethical, cultural, political, and social issues.

In Exhibit 1, the interpretive paradigm occupies the south-west quadrant. Schools of thought within this paradigm can be located on the objective-subjective continuum. From left to right they are: Solipsism, Phenomenology, Phenomenological Sociology, and Hermeneutics.

Interpretive paradigm's views with respect to the state are presented next.<sup>5</sup>

The phrase “bringing the state back in” is related to the arguments about the autonomy and the capacities of states as actors trying to realize policy goals. The “state autonomy” conceives the state as an organization that claims control over territories and people; and formulates goals and pursues them even though they do not reflect the demands or interests of social groups, classes, or society. Such independent formulation of goals makes the state an important actor. The “state capacities” refers to the ability of the state to implement official goals, especially in the face of the opposition of powerful social groups, or in the face of adverse socio-economic circumstances.

States follow different reasons and methods in formulating and pursuing their own goals. The position of states within transnational structures and international flows of communication can lead state officials to follow transformative strategies even when weighty social forces are indifferent or resistant to such strategies. Similarly, the need of states to maintain control and order can prompt states to initiate reforms and even simple repression. Among state officials, those are more likely to act that have formed organizationally coherent collectivities – especially collectivities of career officials who are relatively free from ties to dominant socio-economic interests – and can formulate

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<sup>5</sup> For this literature see Geertz (1981), Hartz (1955), Katzenstein (1977), Krasner (1984), Poggi (1978), Skocpol (1979), Stepan (1978), Tilly (1975), and Weiss (1998). This section is based on Skocpol (1985).

and pursue new state strategies in times of crisis. Similarly, collectivities of state officials can interpret established public policies in specific ways and act relatively continuously over long periods of time.

The following factors can explain the states' autonomous actions: the international role of states, the challenging role of states in maintaining domestic order, and the organizational resources at the disposal of the collectivities of state officials. The combination of these factors can explain extreme instances of autonomous state actions: in some historical circumstances, strategic elites use military force to take over the national state, and then apply bureaucratic levers to enforce reformist or revolutionary changes from above.

State elites in Latin America installed "exclusionary" or "inclusionary" corporatist regimes. A crucial factor in the explanation of such actions is the formation of a strategically-located cadre of officials who were privileged with the following two qualities: (1) great organizational strength inside and through prevailing state organizations; and (2) a unified ideology about the desirability and possibility of using state intervention to ensure political order and national economic development. The main factor behind Brazil's "exclusionary" corporatist coup in 1964 and Peru's "inclusionary" corporatist coup in 1968 was the prior socialization of new military professionals. These were the cohort of career military officers whose training schools taught them techniques and ideas of national economic planning and counter-insurgency, in addition to traditional military skills. Subsequently, this cohort of military professionals installed corporatist regimes in the face of perceived crises of both political order and national economic development. These military professionals used the state power to counter threats to national order coming from non-dominant

classes and groups. They also used the state power to implement socio-economic reforms and national industrialization, which they saw as necessary for improved international standing.

A set of historical cases – Japan’s Meiji restoration, Turkey’s Ataturk revolution, Egypt’s Nasser revolution, and Peru’s 1968 coup – show that a group of dynamic and autonomous bureaucrats, which included military officials, were able to seize and reorganize the state power. Then, they used the state power to bring down the dominant class, a landed upper class or aristocracy, and to redirect national economic development. The group was formed through prior career interests and socialization; and they constituted coherent official elite whose ideological orientation was statist and nationalist. This elite group also used state power to contain any possible upheavals from below or any foreign threats to the national autonomy. There was an important role played by a structural variable: the relationship of the state elite to dominant economic classes. In general, a bureaucratic state apparatus, or a section of it, can be relatively autonomous when those who hold high civil and/or military positions: (1) do not belong to the dominant landed, commercial, or industrial classes; and (2) do not form close personal and economic ties with those classes after they take high official positions. The state elite’s relationship to dominant economic classes affects the intensity of socio-economic changes which the state may undertake in a crisis situation – when the prevailing social, political, and economic order is threatened by either external forces or upheaval from below. Reforms may be initiated by the state’s bureaucratic elites who have ties with the existing dominant classes, as was the case in Prussia in 1806-1814, Russia in the 1860s, and Brazil after 1964. However, substantive structural changes, including the dispossession of a dominant class, may be undertaken by the state’s bureaucratic state elites who are free from ties or alliances with

dominant classes. This can be called “revolution from above.” This supports the notion of the relative autonomy of the state, which can be used in the analysis of the possible socio-political consequences of various societal and historical configurations of state and class power.

The foregoing cases deal in somewhat similar terms with extraordinary instances of state autonomy – instances of non-constitutionally-ruling officials using the state to direct politics and restructure society. Some other cases deal with instances of state autonomy when making public policy in liberal democratic and constitutional polities, such as Britain, Sweden, and the United States. The analyses of these cases points to the same basic analytical factors – the states’ international positions, their domestic order-keeping concern, and the official collectivities’ organizational possibilities in formulating and pursuing their own policies.

The cases of Britain and Sweden show how in these two nations the unemployment insurance and the policies of old-age assistance were developed. They reflect the contributions of autonomous state to social policy making. But, the autonomous state actions are not necessarily acts of coercion or domination. Instead, they involve civil administrators who are engaged in diagnosing societal problems and designing policy alternatives to rectify them. Governments not only apply power, but also solve puzzle. Policy-making is indeed collective puzzle-solving on behalf of society. As such, it entails both knowing and deciding. For instance, the process of setting pension, unemployment, and superannuation policies has not been limited to deciding what “wants” to accommodate, but has been extended to include how to know who might want something, what is wanted, what should be wanted, and how to collectively implement even the most sweet-tempered general agreement. This process is political, not because all policy entails power and conflict, but because some people have

stepped forward to act on behalf of others.

It should be noted that “state autonomy” does not mean that it is a fixed structural feature of any governmental system. It can change over time. This is partly because crises hasten the formulation of official strategies and policies by elites or administrators who otherwise might not mobilize their potentials for autonomous action. It is also partly because the structure for autonomous state actions changes over time. For instance, the organizations of coercion and administration transform both internally and in their relations to societal groups and to representative sections of government. Thus, cross-national research – which indicates whether a governmental system is “stronger” or “weaker” in taking autonomous state action – should be complemented by historical studies – which are concerned with structural variations and conjunctural changes within given polities.

The general underpinnings of state capacities are territorial integrity, financial means, and staffing. The sovereign integrity and the stable administrative-military control of a national territory are necessary conditions for the ability of any state to implement its policies. Then, loyal and skilled officials; and sufficient financial resources are the other two necessary conditions for any state’s effectiveness in attaining its various goals.

State capacities to pursue specific kinds of policies constitute the most fruitful area for the study of state capacity. This is despite the fact that a state’s territorial integrity, financial means, and staffing should be the initial areas of studies in any investigation of the state’s capacities to realize goals. This is because it cannot be assumed a priori that the pattern of a state’s strengths and weaknesses will be the same with respect to all policies. One state may not be able to change the

structure of its medical system but be able to develop an efficient transportation network; and another state can relatively easily manage the location of its citizens but cannot arrange for their illnesses to be cured.

The study of any comprehensive state-initiated strategy for change – such as a “revolution from above” or a major reform – would be more useful if it assesses the overall capacity of the state to reach new goals across various issue areas. In addition, it would be useful to see whether despite variations among issue areas within each of the countries analyzed, that there are modal differences in the power of each of the states in comparison to other states, e.g., the advanced market-economy countries. Such overall assessments would be best if it is based on the investigations of specific sectors. This is because one of the most important characteristics of the power of a state is perhaps its unevenness across policy areas. For instance, the most important outcome of a state’s revolution from above or major reform may be the transformations of disparate socio-political sectors.

In the study of the capacities of a state to reach specific goals, the concept of “policy instrument” is used to refer to the means that the state has at its disposal. In such studies, cross-national comparisons are useful in determining the nature and range of institutional mechanisms that state officials can use when confronted with a given set of issues. In the case of comparison between the urban policies of northwest European nations and those of the United States, the result is that the U.S. national state lacked certain instruments for dealing with urban crises that were available to northwest European states. These were instruments such as central-planning agencies, state-controlled pools of investment capital, and directly-administered national welfare programs.



#### **IV. Radical Humanist Paradigm**

The radical humanist paradigm provides critiques of the status quo and is concerned to articulate, from a subjective standpoint, the sociology of radical change, modes of domination, emancipation, deprivation, and potentiality. Based on its subjectivist approach, it places great emphasis on human consciousness. It tends to view society as anti-human. It views the process of reality creation as feeding back on itself; such that individuals and society are prevented from reaching their highest possible potential. That is, the consciousness of human beings is dominated by the ideological superstructures of the social system, which results in their alienation or false consciousness. This, in turn, prevents true human fulfillment. The social theorist regards the orders that prevail in the society as instruments of ideological domination.

The major concern for theorists is with the way this occurs and finding ways in which human beings can release themselves from constraints which existing social arrangements place upon realization of their full potential. They seek to change the social world through a change in consciousness.

Radical humanists believe that everything must be grasped as a whole, because the whole dominates the parts in an all-embracing sense. Moreover, truth is historically specific, relative to a given set of circumstances, so that one should not search for generalizations for the laws of motion of societies.

The radical humanists believe the functionalist paradigm accepts purposive rationality, logic of science, positive functions of technology, and neutrality of language, and uses them in the construction of “value-free” social theories. The radical humanist theorists intend to demolish this

structure, emphasizing the political and repressive nature of it. They aim to show the role that science, ideology, technology, language, and other aspects of the superstructure play in sustaining and developing the system of power and domination, within the totality of the social formation. Their function is to influence the consciousness of human beings for eventual emancipation and formation of alternative social formations.

The radical humanists note that functionalist sociologists create and sustain a view of social reality which maintains the *status quo* and which forms one aspect of the network of ideological domination of the society.

The focus of the radical humanists upon the “superstructural” aspects of society reflects their attempt to move away from the economism of orthodox Marxism and emphasize the Hegelian dialectics. It is through the dialectic that the objective and subjective aspects of social life interact. The superstructure of society is believed to be the medium through which the consciousness of human beings is controlled and molded to fit the requirements of the social formation as a whole. The concepts of structural conflict, contradiction, and crisis do not play a major role in this paradigm, because these are more objectivist view of social reality, that is, the ones which fall in the radical structuralist paradigm. In the radical humanist paradigm, the concepts of consciousness, alienation, and critique form their concerns.

In Exhibit 1, the radical humanist paradigm occupies the north-west quadrant. Schools of thought within this paradigm can be located on the objective-subjective continuum. From left to right they are: French Existentialism, Anarchistic Individualism, and Critical Theory.

Radical humanist paradigm's views with respect to the state are presented next.<sup>6</sup>

Politics is absolutely crucial to social life. A systematized science of political action is required. Politics is an autonomous activity within the context of the historical development of material forces. Politics is the central human activity. Through politics, the single consciousness is brought into contact with the social and natural world. The state is the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities which the ruling class employs not only to justify and maintain its dominance, but also to win the consent of those over whom it rules. The bourgeois state has to be overthrown in order to build socialism.

Class-divided societies have material origins, and class struggle and consciousness have the central place in social change. Bourgeois "hegemony" in civil society is at the core of the functioning of the capitalist system. Bourgeois "hegemony" refers to the ideological predominance of bourgeois values and norms over the subordinate classes. More specifically, bourgeois "hegemony" is the bourgeois order, and has the bourgeois way of life and thought dominant in its core. Bourgeois "hegemony" diffuses one concept of reality throughout society, in all its institutional and private manifestations; and bourgeois spirit informs all taste, morality, customs, religious and political principles, and social relations, particularly in their intellectual and moral connotations.

In the science of politics, the concept of bourgeois hegemony should be elevated to a predominant place when analyzing the civil society. This places much emphasis on the role of the superstructure in perpetuating classes and preventing the development of working class consciousness. The state undertakes part of the function of promoting a single (bourgeois) concept of

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<sup>6</sup> For this literature see Barrow (1993), Domhoff (1970), Frankel (1979), Gramsci (1971), Habermas (1975), Jessop (1977), Offe (1975), Offe and Ronge (1984), and Wolfe (1974). This section is based on Carnoy (1984).

reality, and, therefore, the state plays an extensive role in perpetuating the existing class-divided society. The mass of workers, in developing their class consciousness, face three obstacles: (1) the lack of understanding of their position in the economic process prevents workers from comprehending their class role; (2) the “private” institutions of society, such as religion, prevents the working class from self-realization; and (3) the state’s reproduction of the relations of production. That is, the state is much more than the coercive apparatus of the bourgeoisie. The state helps in the hegemony of the bourgeoisie in the superstructure.

The concept of “civil society” belongs to the superstructure. The superstructure can be regarded as having two “levels.” One of them can be called “civil society,” which is, the ensemble of organisms commonly referred to as “private.” The other one can be called “political society” or “the state.” These two levels are involved in: (1) the function of “hegemony” that is exercised by the dominant group throughout society; and (2) the function of “direct domination” or command that is exercised through the state and juridical government.

The concept of “civil society” is the key in understanding capitalist development. The superstructure, includes civil society, and represents the active and positive factor in historical development. It is the totality of ideological and cultural relations, the spiritual and intellectual life, and the political expression of those relations. The superstructure is the focus of analysis, not the structure.

The crucial concept of hegemony derives its importance from the historical experience of Italy in the 1920s. In Turin, the working class had a significant degree of class consciousness and revolutionary activity, but the Turin movement of 1919-1920 had relatively little support in the rest

of Italy. It was the bourgeois reaction, i.e., Mussolini's fascist movement, which attracted much of the peasant and working class. The political freedom which prevailed after World War I, allowed the parties of the working classes to explicitly express their pledge to the defense and liberation of the subordinate classes. But, the working class parties generally did much less well politically than their conservative rivals, whose purpose was to preserve and promote the advances of capitalism. It is through the concept of hegemony that is possible to explain this phenomenon. That is, hegemony means the ideological predominance of the dominant classes in civil society over the subordinate classes.

The concept of hegemony uncovers the nature of bourgeois rule – and indeed of any previous social order. It emphasizes that the dominant social system's real strength is not derived from the violence of the ruling class, or the coercive power of its state apparatus. Instead, it is derived from the acceptance by the ruled of a “conception of the world” which belongs to the rulers. The philosophy of the ruling class is simplified and emerges as “common sense.” This is the philosophy of the masses, who accept the morality, the customs, and the institutionalized behavior of the society they live in. Then, the problem for the working class parties is to find out how the ruling class has proceeded to obtain the consent of the subordinate classes; and then, to find ways in which the working class should proceed to overthrow the old social order and replace it with a new one, which brings universal freedom.

Two relationships should be emphasized: (1) the primacy of the ideological superstructures over the economic structure; and (2) the primacy of civil society (consensus) over political society (force). The superstructure – rather than economic structure – represents the active and positive

factor in historical development. The working class parties should focus on ideological and cultural relations, spiritual and intellectual life, and the political expression of those relations.

The subordinate classes' consent to the capitalist production cannot be explained by either the force of the state, or the logic of capitalist production. Instead, this consent can be explained by the power of consciousness and ideology. It is important to note that, in the very consciousness that consents to the relations of capitalist society there exist the foundations of a strategy for gaining the active consent of the masses through their self-organization through the civil society and all the hegemonic apparatuses – i.e., factory, school, and family.

The concept of hegemony has two principal components. The first component consists of a process in civil society whereby a fraction of the dominant class uses its moral and intellectual leadership to exercise control over other allied fractions of the dominant class. The leading fraction uses its power and ability to articulate the interest of the allied fractions. The dominant fraction does not impose its ideology upon the allied fractions. Instead, it uses a pedagogic and politically transformative process whereby the dominant fraction articulates a set of principles based on common elements of the worldviews and interests of allied fractions. Hegemony is not a cohesive force and is rife with contradictions and subject to struggle.

The second component consists of the relationship between the dominant and dominated classes. Hegemony is obtained when the dominant class succeeds in using its political, moral, and intellectual leadership to establish its view of the world as all-inclusive and universal, which also shapes the interests and needs of subordinate groups. This consent relationship is not static. It moves

on a constantly-shifting terrain in order to cope with the changing nature of historical circumstances; and the demands and reflexive actions of human beings.

Hegemony in society can be regarded as the complex of institutions, ideologies, practices, and agents – e.g. intellectuals – that comprise the dominant culture of values. This “apparatus” of hegemony becomes unified only in relation to a class. Hegemony unifies itself as an apparatus and becomes constituted by the class that mediates multiple subsystems: the school apparatus – lower and higher education – the cultural apparatus – the museums and the libraries – the organization of information, the framework of life, urbanism, and the remnants of the previous mode of production – i.e., the church and its intellectuals. The apparatus of hegemony is directly related to the class struggle. The institutions that form the hegemonic apparatus have meaning only in the context of the class struggle because the dominant class expands its power and control in the civil society through these same institutions. The institutions are not for “purely” administrative and technological purposes, but they are infused with political content, like the production system. Political content is incorporated by the dominant classes in order to expand their capacity to reproduce their control over the direction of societal development. It is in the superstructure that the extent and nature of this capacity take shape.

The state as superstructure plays a primary role in understanding capitalist society. The apparatus of hegemony is incorporated both in the state and civil society. Therefore, the state is simultaneously a primary instrument for the expansion of dominant-class power, and a coercive force – political society – that makes subordinate groups weak and disorganized. The general notion of state corresponds to hegemony protected by coercion.

The dominant class exercises hegemony through society; furthermore, the dominant class exercises direct domination through the state and its juridical government. The dominant class gains consent to its rule through hegemony in the entire society; and exercises domination through the use of the state's coercive apparatuses.

Hegemony is expressed both in the civil society and the state. But, private hegemonic apparatuses have considerable autonomy from the state. There is often tension between the two, especially when the fraction of the dominant class that has political power is not the hegemonic class. The hegemony in the civil society differs from that in the state. The function of hegemony in the civil society is performed by ideological apparatuses which are much more covert, and therefore are much more effective in mystifying the class rule. In contrast, the state's hegemonic apparatuses are much more overt in their reproductive role, because they carry coercion's institutions, such as the juridical system and the school. The working class parties should plan their strategies for change based on the concept of hegemony. That is, they should focus primarily on developing counter-hegemony in both the civil society and the state. In the creation and development of counter-hegemony, the hegemonic state apparatuses are confronted, or forced into crisis. Similarly, electoral victories by the Left generate both counter-hegemony in both the state apparatuses and the civil society.

## **V. Radical Structuralist Paradigm**

The radical structuralist paradigm assumes that reality is objective and concrete, as it is rooted in the materialist view of natural and social world. The social world, similar to the natural



world, has an independent existence, that is, it exists outside the minds of human beings. Sociologists aim at discovering and understanding the patterns and regularities which characterize the social world. Scientists do not see any roles for themselves in the phenomenon under investigation. They use scientific methods to find the order that prevails in the phenomenon. This paradigm views society as a potentially dominating force. Sociologists working within this paradigm have an objectivist standpoint and are committed to radical change, emancipation, and potentiality. In their analysis they emphasize structural conflict, modes of domination, contradiction, and deprivation. They analyze the basic interrelationships within the total social formation and emphasize the fact that radical change is inherent in the structure of society and the radical change takes place through political and economic crises. This radical change necessarily disrupts the *status quo* and replaces it by a radically different social formation. It is through this radical change that the emancipation of human beings from the social structure is materialized.

For radical structuralists, an understanding of classes in society is essential for understanding the nature of knowledge. They argue that all knowledge is class specific. That is, it is determined by the place one occupies in the productive process. Knowledge is more than a reflection of the material world in thought. It is determined by one's relation to that reality. Since different classes occupy different positions in the process of material transformation, there are different kinds of knowledge. Hence class knowledge is produced by and for classes, and exists in a struggle for domination. Knowledge is thus ideological. That is, it formulates views of reality and solves problems from class points of view.

Radical structuralists reject the idea that it is possible to verify knowledge in an absolute sense through comparison with socially neutral theories or data. But, emphasize that there is the possibility of producing a “correct” knowledge from a class standpoint. They argue that the dominated class is uniquely positioned to obtain an objectively “correct” knowledge of social reality and its contradictions. It is the class with the most direct and widest access to the process of material transformation that ultimately produces and reproduces that reality.

Radical structuralists’ analysis indicates that the social scientist, as a producer of class-based knowledge, is a part of the class struggle.

Radical structuralists believe truth is the whole, and emphasize the need to understand the social order as a totality rather than as a collection of small truths about various parts and aspects of society. The financial empiricists are seen as relying almost exclusively upon a number of seemingly disparate, data-packed, problem-centered studies. Such studies, therefore, are irrelevant exercises in mathematical methods.

This paradigm is based on four central notions. First, there is the notion of totality. All theories address the total social formation. This notion emphasizes that the parts reflect the totality, not the totality the parts.

Second, there is the notion of structure. The focus is upon the configurations of social relationships, called structures, which are treated as persistent and enduring concrete facilities.

The third notion is that of contradiction. Structures, or social formations, contain contradictory and antagonistic relationships within them which act as seeds of their own decay.

The fourth notion is that of crisis. Contradictions within a given totality reach a point at which they can no longer be contained. The resulting political, economic crises indicate the point of transformation from one totality to another, in which one set of structures is replaced by another of a fundamentally different kind.

In Exhibit 1, the radical structuralist paradigm occupies the north-east quadrant. Schools of thought within this paradigm can be located on the objective-subjective continuum. From right to left they are: Russian Social Theory, Conflict Theory, and Contemporary Mediterranean Marxism.

Radical structuralist paradigm's views with respect to the state are presented next.<sup>7</sup>

In a class-divided society, the state is a product of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. The state is not a power forced upon society from the outside. Rather, the society has produced the state at a certain stage of its development. The state is a result of the class-divided society that is entangled in an insoluble internal contradiction. More specifically, with the emergence of a class-divided society, the society became split into irreconcilable antagonisms, and the society did not have the power to dispel them. These class antagonisms reflect classes with conflicting economic interests. Class antagonisms might consume classes and society in fruitless struggles. In order to prevent this, it became necessary to have a power that would alleviate the class conflict and keep it in "order." This power, which seemingly stands above society, arose out of society, but placed itself above society, and increasingly alienated itself from society, is the state.

The state has a historical role and has a meaning. The state is both a product and a manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. The state arises because class antagonism

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<sup>7</sup> For this literature see Aronowitz and Bratsis (2002), Gold, Lo, and Wright (1975), Hirsch (1978), Holloway and Picciotto (1978), Jessop (1982, 1990), Miliband (1965, 1969), and Poulantzas (1972). This section is based on Lenin

cannot be objectively reconciled. And, conversely, the existence of the state illustrates the existence of class antagonisms that are irreconcilable.

The bourgeois and particularly the petty-bourgeois ideologists are compelled by indisputable historical facts to accept that the state only exists where class antagonisms and class struggle exist. However, they mistakenly believe that the state is an organ for the reconciliation of classes. They do not recognize that the state could neither have arisen nor have maintained itself if it were possible to reconcile classes. The state does not reconcile classes. Indeed, the state is an organ of class rule, and it is an organ for the oppression of one class by another. The state creates and maintains “order,” which legalizes and perpetuates this oppression by moderating class conflicts. However, the petty-bourgeois politicians mistakenly believe that “order” means the reconciliation of classes and not the oppression of one class by another. They mistakenly believe that alleviating the class conflict means reconciling classes and not depriving the oppressed classes of their means and methods of struggle for overthrowing the oppressors. They mistakenly believe that the state “reconciles” classes, rather than believing that the state is an organ of the rule of a specific class which cannot be reconciled with the class opposite to it.

Since the state is an organ of class rule, since class antagonisms are irreconcilable, since the state is the product of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms, and since the state is a power standing above society and increasingly alienating itself from it, then it clearly follows that the liberation of the oppressed class requires not only a violent revolution, but also the destruction of the apparatus of state power which has been created and maintained by the ruling class.

In contrast to the old gentile (tribal or clan) order, the state territorially divides its subjects. This seemingly “natural” division emerged through a prolonged struggle against the old generational organization of tribes. Furthermore, the state establishes a public power that no longer directly coincides with the population that used to organize itself as an armed force. This public power became necessary because after the division of society into classes the self-acting armed-organization of the population became impossible. This public power, which exists in every state, consists not only of armed men, but also of material adjuncts, prisons, and various institutions of coercion, which were not even known in any gentile (clan) society.

This “power,” which is called the state, arises from society, but places itself above society, and increasingly alienates itself from society. This power has at its command special bodies of armed men having prisons, etc. Emphasis should be placed on “special bodies of armed men” because the public power which is a characteristic of every state “does not directly coincide” with the armed population, i.e., with its “self-acting armed organization.” The army and the police are the major instruments of state power. From the viewpoint of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideologists, who have not experienced a revolution, the state cannot be otherwise. They cannot envision what is a “self-acting armed organization of the population.” They mistakenly believe that the reason it became necessary to place special bodies of armed men – i.e., standing army and police – above society, and alienate themselves from society, is that social life grew more complex that led to the division of labor. This seemingly “scientific” reasoning obscures the important and basic fact that society has been split into irreconcilable antagonistic classes.

If society were not split into irreconcilable antagonistic classes, it would be possible for society to have the “self-acting armed organization of the population,” which would be different from the primitive organization of a stick-wielding herd of monkeys, or of primitive men, or of men united in clans, due to its complexity, its high technical level, and so on. Since society has been split into irreconcilable antagonistic classes, its “self-acting” arming would result in an armed struggle between them. In a class-divided society, the need for a state arises, and a special power is created, which has special bodies of armed men. In every great revolution, the state apparatus is destroyed. Every great revolution is based on class struggle. Every great revolution clearly shows, on the one hand, how the ruling class strives to maintain its own special bodies of armed men; and on the other hand, how the oppressed class strives to create a new organization of armed men in order to serve the exploited instead of the exploiters. Every great revolution shows the tension between “special” bodies of armed men and the “self-acting armed organization of the population.”

The state is an instrument used by the ruling class for the exploitation of the oppressed class. The special public power that stands above society requires taxes and state loans for its own maintenance. The state officials, who have public power and the right to levy taxes, as organs of society, stand above society. The state officials are not satisfied with the free, voluntary respect that was given to the organs of the gentile (clan) constitution, even if they could gain it. Special laws are enacted that declare the sanctity and immunity of the officials. The police officer at the lowest rank has more authority than the representative of the clan. However, even the highest military officer would envy the elder of a clan who was accorded the unrestrained respect of the community.

As organs of state power, the officials enjoy a privileged position and place themselves above society. This is the case because the state emerged based on the need to control class antagonisms. More importantly, the state emerged at the time of the conflict of these antagonistic classes. As a result, the state is the state of the most powerful and economically dominant class. The economically dominant class through the use of the instrument of the state becomes also the politically dominant class that holds down and exploits the oppressed class. The ancient and feudal states were organs used by the corresponding ruling class for the exploitation of the slaves and serfs. Similarly, the modern representative state is used as an instrument by capital for the exploitation of wage-labor. By way of exception, there are short periods in which the warring classes balance each other's power such that the state acquires a certain degree of independence of both classes. Such historical exceptions occurred during the absolute monarchies of the 17th and 18th centuries, the Bonapartism of the First and Second Empires in France, the Bismarck regime in Germany, and the Kerensky government in republican Russia.

In a democratic republic, wealth indirectly exercises its power by the corruption of the officials (as in the U.S.); and by the alliance of the government and the Stock Exchange (as in France and the U.S.). Imperialism and the domination of banks have artfully “developed” these methods of supporting and maintaining the power of wealth in democratic republics of all kinds.

The power of “wealth” is more guaranteed in a democratic republic because it does not depend on any flaws either in the political machinery or in the political shell of capitalism. A democratic republic is the best possible fit as the political shell of capitalism. After capital gained possession of this best political shell (through the corruption of the officials and the alliance of the

government and the Stock Exchange), it established its power so securely and so firmly such that no change of persons, institutions, or parties in the bourgeois-democratic republic could change it. Universal suffrage is an instrument of bourgeois rule. Universal suffrage is used to gauge the maturity of the working class. This is the role of universal suffrage in the bourgeois-democratic republic. But, the petty-bourgeois democrats expect more from universal suffrage. They mistakenly believe in, and spread their mistaken beliefs among the people, the notion that universal suffrage in the bourgeois-democratic republic is genuinely capable of revealing and realizing what the majority of the working people wants.

The state will “wither away.” The state will not exist for ever. There have been societies that did not have the state, and that did not have any idea about the state and the state power. At a certain stage of economic development, society was necessarily split into classes, and as a result of this split the creation of the state became a necessity. Currently, society is rapidly approaching a stage in the development of production at which the existence of class-divided society not only will cease to be a necessity, but also will hinder production. When the proletariat seizes the state power, it makes the means of production part of state property. Accordingly, it abolishes itself as the proletariat, it abolishes all class distinctions, it abolishes class antagonisms, and it abolishes the bourgeois state. After the proletariat seizes the state power, the state becomes the real representative of the whole of society, and at the same time the state renders itself unnecessary. This is because: (1) there is no longer any social class to be held in subjection, as class rule is abolished; and (2) there is no longer any need to hold in subjection the collisions and excesses that arise from the individual struggle for existence amid the present market system’s anarchy effect on production, as the market system is



abolished. Since nothing remains to be held in subjection, nothing necessitates the existence of a special coercive force, i.e., nothing necessitates the existence of the state. The interference of the state in social relations becomes progressively superfluous, as a result of which the state, over time, dies down. The governance of people is substituted by the administration of things, including the processes of production. The state is not “abolished,” but the state “withers away.”

## **VI. Conclusion**

This paper briefly discussed four views expressed with respect to the state. The functionalist paradigm believes that the nature of the state is closely related to the extent of organizational pluralism. The interpretive paradigm believes that the state is an actor who tries to realize its own policy goals. The radical humanist paradigm believes that the state is used by the ruling class to justify and maintain its dominance. The radical structuralist paradigm believes that the state, in a class-divided society, intervenes in order to keep the society in “order.”

Each paradigm is logically coherent – in terms of its underlying assumptions – and conceptualizes and studies the phenomenon in a certain way, and generates distinctive kinds of insight and understanding. Therefore different paradigms in combination provide a broader understanding of the phenomenon under consideration. An understanding of different paradigms leads to a better understanding of the multi-faceted nature of the phenomenon.

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