

The Increasing Dominance of the State Bureaucracy in Developing Countries¹

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"We, the Heads of African and Malagasy States and Governments assembled in the City of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, (are)... conscious of our responsibility to harness the natural and human resources of our Continent for the total advancement of our peoples in spheres of human endeavour". (The O.A.U. 1963 Charter, in MINOGUE AND MOLLOY, *African Aims and Attitudes*, p.195)

"We all know well that the problems which have arisen in our country stem from the fact that our political organization preceded our social organization". (*Senator VERGUEIRO, Leader of the Liberal Party, Brazilian Senate, on July 12th, 1841*).

¹ Paper presented in Manchester University, May 1978, (former Department of Administrative Studies), to Prof. MARTIN MINOGUE.

1. Introduction: the ever modern issue of bureaucratic dominance

In this essay we will try to explain the increasing dominance of the state bureaucracy in developing countries. In so far as the question is confined to the study of the bureaucracy dominance in developing countries, it could lead one to think that the problem does not exist in developed countries. "In Western countries" -wrote FRED RIGGS- "it had become a habit to think of the bureaucracy as an instrumental apparatus for the execution of policies established through 'political', non-bureaucratic institutions. There have, of course, been serious scholars as well as emotional writers, who have stressed the difficulty of keeping bureaucrats under control or, as the administrative cliché has it, 'on tap but not on top'."²

A consequence of this conventional attitude was that relatively few scholars devoted themselves to an analysis of the political role of bureaucrats, even as far as developing countries are concerned. However, nowadays, it seem to be widely accepted that the bureaucracy has influence in politics -although the extent of such influence varies from precious little to great deal. A second common belief of present times is that in developing countries -compared with developed countries- the extent of bureaucratic involvement in politics is exceptionally high. This makes the study of the dominance of state bureaucracy in the former a more important task.

It is worth noting that this idea of officials holding real political power over society can be traced back to the very invention of the term bureaucracy, by the middle of the 18th century. To the word bureau -already meaning a place where Officials worked- the French writer VINCENT DE JOURNAY added the Greek suffix *cratòs*, which signifies rule or power, intending to reveal the existence of a fourth or fifth form of government (besides monarchy, aristocracy and democracy). The Dictionary of the French Academy accepted the word in its 1798 supplement and defined it as: "Power, influence of the heads and staff of government bureaux". In 1813 the word was already in a German dictionary of foreign expressions defined as "The authority or power which various government departments and their branches arrogate to themselves over fellow citizens"³. The problem we are concerned about here, was clearly there: the dominance of the state officials.

² See Fred W. RIGGS, "*Bureaucrats and Political Development: A Paradoxical View*", in *Bureaucracy and Political Development*, ed. by Joseph LA PALOMBARA, Princeton University Press, 1971, p.120-121.

³ The story of the invention of the word "bureaucratic", which soon acquired wide popularity - the term easily underwent the same transliterations as "democracy" or "aristocracy" - is told by Martin ALBROW}

2. Concepts of bureaucracy: two different perspectives

In order to answer the proposed question, the first and unavoidable step should be to define the key concept used in it, i.e., bureaucracy. That is not an easy task, since each writer has his own way of understanding bureaucracy, apart from the ideological-laden aspect of the problem. Nevertheless, trying to show the extreme diversity of definitions of bureaucracy as briefly as possible, we will group them in two categories: (a) the definitions relating bureaucracy to administration, and (b) those relating bureaucracy to organization, following an increasing level of generality.

There are three different kinds of definitions relating bureaucracy to administration. Firstly, the old etymological definition we have already referred to above: bureaucracy as the “rule by officials”. This is not only a historical definition, since it was endorsed -between the two wars- by some notable thinkers (H. LASKI, H. FINER, W. R. SHARP and D. WARNOTTE among them)⁴. Let us take, for instance, LASKI’s influential definition: “Bureaucracy is the term usually applied to a system of government the control of which is so completely in the hands of officials that their power jeopardizes the liberties of ordinary citizens”⁵. As an outgrowth of this original definition a second concept was elaborated: bureaucracy would not indicate any more the “rule by officials”, but the group itself of officials which exerts some control over the state apparatus. RIGGS expressed this concept defining bureaucracy in very simple words: “the formal hierarchy of government officials”⁶. Thirdly, we have the Weberian classical definition of bureaucracy: as the previous, he relates bureaucracy to administration, but does not confine it to the state machinery. Bureaucracy would be simply “administration by appointed officials”, which applies not only to government officials, but to any organization where the staffs are made up of appointees.”⁷

There are other three kinds of definitions which -in broader terms— relate bureaucracy to organization. The first tendency (owing great deal to the “ideal type” of bureaucracy proposed by Weber) sees in the concept of bureaucracy all the virtues of a “rational” organisation. Bureaucracy -defined by PETER BLAU- is the “organisation that maximizes efficiency in administration or an institutionalised method of organized social conduct in the interests of administrative efficiency”⁸. At variance with this “positive” tendency is the “negative” one led by M. CROZIER and others, who define bureaucracy as the “inefficient organization”.⁹ Close to the popular sense of the word,

(Bureaucracy, London, MacMillan, 1970, pp.16 - 18).

⁴ ALBROW op.cit. p.92

⁵ Appeared in 1930 in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol.3., p.70

⁶ RIGGS,op.cit., p.122

⁷ In fact, Weber never defined “bureaucracy”. Then, his general concept must be constructed by inference from the large number of passages where he made allusion to it. (See ALBROW, op.cit., pp.40 - 41, and 98.)

⁸ BLAU, Peter. *Bureaucracy in Modern Society*, New York, Random House, 1956,p 10

⁹ See HEADY, Ferrel, -bli2 Administration: A Comparative Perspective,

bureaucracy (for them) is the antithesis of administrative vitality and managerial creativity. However, the dominant tendency (represented by TALCOTT PARSONS, HYNEMAN, SIMM and others) seems to be value-free, considering bureaucracy an approximate synonym of large-scale organization. They define bureaucracy as an organization's basic structural characteristics. The problem in fact lies on determining what those "basic characteristics" are. There is no agreement about it, despite the effort made by HEADY to reduce those characteristics to three: "hierarchy", "specialization" and "competence".¹⁰

3. State bureaucracy: the twin concept of political elite

Whatever the definition of bureaucracy we prefer, it seems, that there is no choice when the concern is bureaucratic participation in the formation of public policies. In this case - and it is precisely the case of the present essay - the relevant concept is the restrictive one, which confines bureaucracy to the public servants, or governmental administrative components of political systems.

That seems to be the conclusion of the main writers in studies of developing societies. It is common to most of the essays in LA PALOMBARA's collection *Bureaucracy and Political Development*, explicitly in RIGGS' and DORSEY's.¹¹ Even LA PALOMBARA wrote that:

"By and large, however, the bureaucrats of major interest to us are generally those who occupy managerial roles, who are in some directive capacity either in central agencies or in the field, who are generally described in the language of public administration as "middle" or "top" management. The reason for this more restrictive use is self-evident: the managerial group in the bureaucracy is more likely to have a direct bearing on political and other kinds of national development".¹²

The same opinion is shared by FERREL HEADY.¹³ In fact, this restrictive concept of bureaucracy is exactly what the authors name "state bureaucracy" and which appears in the title of this essay.

In principle, the military fit the concept of state bureaucracy. However, it is the

London, Prentice Hall, 1966, p.17 - 18, and ALBROW, *op.cit.*, pp. 89 - 90

¹⁰ About the "dominant tendency" see HEADY, *Op. cit.*, pp.17 and 20; and ALBROW, *op.cit.* pp. 100-102.

¹¹ RIGGS, *essay cit.*, *Loc. cit.*, John DORSEY, in the same collection, "The Bureaucracy and Political Development in Vietnam", P.322.

¹² LA PALOMBARA, *Ope ci t.*, p.7

¹³ HEADY, *op.cit.*, p.22

usual convention in public administration literature to concentrate on the civil, rather than the military bureaucracy, which is left to the political science. We would not like to break the convention. But it is worth noting with MERLE FAINSOD that military governments are driven to rely heavily on the civil service. The experience has shown that “the transfer of power from politician-dominated regime to a military regime may have the paradoxical result of reinforcing the influence and the authority of civilian administrators”.¹⁴ Anyway, a military government is a very good example of bureaucratic dominance, to the extent which the military organization is also part of the public bureaucracy.

Should the “political elite” be included in the concept of state bureaucracy? Considering the aims of the present exercise we would answer negatively. In fact, our concern here is the increasing dominance of the state bureaucracy. It implies the idea that the state bureaucrats are “invading” a field that does not belong to them by right, namely the political decision-making. It also implies that the political control over the state bureaucracy is increasingly weak and ineffective. Those assumptions require the existence outside the bureaucracy of a political elite, whose legitimate claim to exerting political power is increasingly threatened or diminished in reality. For these reasons we will distinguish the political elite from the state bureaucracy.

Nevertheless it should be recognised that the political elite can constitute itself a bureaucracy, at least as dominant as the state bureaucracy may be. This seems to be the case of a totalitarian party system, where the sole party, at least in theory, controls the state bureaucracy, but is itself an almighty bureaucracy, beyond any control by the ordinary members of the community. On the other hand, as FAINSOD admits the state bureaucracy itself can be the ruling element in the political system, the very political elite, what appears to have happened in certain phases of colonial rule.¹⁵

4. State Bureaucracy and Western Civilization: the Weberian model

The state bureaucracy is undoubtedly a product of a long political evolution of the Western civilization, which emerged after the fall of the Roman Empire. And it was not until the end of the 17th century that something like the state bureaucracy, as we now know, showed its early signs.

Many historical factors had prepared the rise of the state bureaucracies: first of all,

¹⁴ FAINSOD, Merle, “Bureaucracy and Modernization: The Russian and Soviet Case”, in Bureaucracy and Political Development, cit., p.236

¹⁵ FAINSOD, op.cit., p.236

the creation of the nation-state, starting from the 15th and 16th centuries, with the invention of the centralized nationwide administration, the government through papers and the formal instrument of the written law, all laid down by the monarchical absolutism; secondly, some basic achievements of the liberalism, such as the principles of national sovereignty (meaning the state depersonalisation, with the Nation replacing the King as the source of power and the basis of civil service)¹⁶, the primacy of Law (as expression of the general will) and the “plebiscitarianism” (meaning that “all powers intervening between the individual and the state must be destroyed - such as estates and corporations, etc. - so that all citizens as individuals possess equal rights before the sovereign, national authority”);¹⁷ and, finally, some economic conditions such as the development of a money economy, the industrial revolution and the very capitalist system, with the separation between the worker - and the employee in general - and the means of production.

Without those premises the state bureaucracy, as well as the other bureaucracies - would not have appeared and developed. It was Weber who best described the main “ideal” characteristics of the new pattern of organization: (1) defined rights and duties, which are prescribed in written regulations; (2) authority relations between positions, which are ordered systematically; (3) appointment and promotion, which are regulated and are based on contractual agreement; (4) technical training (or experience) as a formal condition of employment; (5) fixed monetary salaries; (6) a strict separation of office and incumbent in the sense that the employee does not own the “means of production”; and (7) administrative work as a full-time occupation.¹⁸

In spite of the common background, the Western countries revealed two different bureaucratic systems. On one hand, in England and in the U.S.A., the democratic political institutions developed before the bureaucratic expansion, so that the state bureaucracy would be limited and controlled by political institutions from the cradle and throughout its process of growth. On the other hand, in France -and especially in Germany- the bureaucracy to a certain extent preceded the political institutions: the very national power was consolidated through a pre-existent bureaucratic apparatus, and this may perhaps explain the strength and relative dominance historically showed by French and German bureaucracies.¹⁹

Even considering the “natural” formation of the Western State bureaucracies, the fact that they tended to acquire increasing power did not escape Weber’s observation.

¹⁶ CHAPMAN, Brian. “The Profession of Government”, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1959, p.269

¹⁷ BENDIX, Reinhard, Nation-Building and Citizenship, New York, John Wiley and Sons, 1964, p.75 and 145.

¹⁸ BENDIX, op.cit., p.109

¹⁹ See about that the hints given by RIGGS, op.cit., p.127

First, because they developed technical and essential knowledge in order to administrate in the new environment. Secondly, because they accumulated information much of it denied to the rest of the community. But Weber believed that the bureaucracies could be prevented from reaching the point where they controlled the policy and action of the organization they were supposed to serve, since mechanisms for limiting their scope were established.²⁰

5. The Spread of Western Civilization: the peripheral World drama

Fortunately or unfortunately, development ultimately means “modernization” and “modernization” ultimately means “Westernisation”.²¹ By saying this we do not mean that development should be moulded in the Western Europe experience, nor should it lead to a predetermined Western-country economic stage; but that development - as the human mastering of nature through science and technology to improve the “well-being” of all members of society - is itself a Western ideal, whether capitalist, socialist or communist the process may be; and, moreover, that it is impossible to be attained unless situated in the ideological and technological Western context.

The Western civilization -pushed by the “catholic”²² vocation that is inherent in its economic, social and philosophical spirit- spread out all over the world. If one attends to that the ideologies and the external form (institutions) of the Western civilization are much easier to be assimilated than its inner cultural core -which was the very cause of Western development- then one starts to understand the drama of the peripheral world. The “developing” situation is a direct result of the Western impact on “traditional”²³ countries and can essentially be explained as a pervasive imbalance between the Westernised institutions plus the socio-economic values formally adopted by the upper sections of society, and its resistant traditional inner structures and values. Demographic explosion, appalling unemployment, disruption of the agricultural sector,

²⁰ See ALBROW, *op.cit.*, pp. 46 and 47

²¹ “ ‘Modern’ means being Western without depending on the West. The model of modernity is a picture of the West detached in some way from its geographical setting; it permits Soviet Russia and China to affirm ideals with a Western content while they remain politically and emotionally anti-Western. This is what “being modern” has meant to the elites of the new states. The new states are in their eyes not yet modern... The image of the Western countries and the partial in-corporation and transformation of that image in the Soviet Union provide the standards and models in the light of which the elites of the new states of Asia and Africa seek to reshape themselves. (Edward SHILS. *Center and Periphery: Essays in Microsociology*. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1975, p.486)

²² “Catholic” here is used in the etymological sense of the term, which means “universal”, or “directed to the world as a whole”

²³ We follow here SHIL's definition: “By traditional is meant the salience of lineage, the widespreadness of religious belief, simple technology, illiteracy. The most significant fact is that their central political traditions do not include those of democratic, representative, constitutional government”. *Cop.cit.* loc.cit.)

are concrete aspects of this fundamental disequilibria. So it is the increasing dominance of the state bureaucracy, as we will see.

Perhaps the most characteristic sign of the Western expansion was the import - by the peripheral world - of the Western State bureaucracy. We tried to create a sort of classification of the ways by which this institution transfer has happened, in three different types: (a) "Transplantation", (b) "Transformation", and (c) "Transaction".

The "transplantation" happened in Latin America, during the last century, under the prevailing ideology of liberalism. By this type we mean two realities: (1) the creation of a machinery not existing before, following the Spanish and Portuguese patterns; and (2) the cultural identity of the state bureaucratic elite with the cultural basis of the imported model. Taking for granted this identity, why did this transfer bring about a traditional-orientated bureaucracy and not the successful modern-oriented bureaucracy which resulted from the British transplanting to the U.S.A., Canada and Australia? The reasons are twofold: firstly, the administrative system established in Latin America has its roots in the 16th century "traditional" Spain and Portugal. Secondly - and more important - in Latin America we had the transplant of institutions, with the pre-determined task of creating a society, whereas in countries such as the U.S.A./Canada and Australia, the society itself was transplanted and the bureaucratic institutions were created and developed from the society.

In Asia and the Middle East, roughly speaking, happened a "transformation" of institutions. By this we mean: (1) not the creation but the Westernization of a machinery already existent in many places; and (2) the bureaucratic elite comes from the indigenous culture, although it has undergone a process of "westernization". In the sub-Saharan Africa it is happening an intermediate process of transfer we called "transaction", in which:

(1) as in Latin America, no machinery existed before; (2) but as in Asia and Middle East, the bureaucratic elite has its origin in the indigenous culture. In Asia and Africa "transformation" and "transaction" are happening in this century, so that they would show the influence of socialist prevailing environment. On the other hand the antagonism between the indigenous elite and the ex-colonial elite made likelier the use of the Western model as reflected in the Soviet-Union and China, because of their anti-Western rhetoric.

We will now proceed with a systematic discussion of those reasons explaining the dominance of the state bureaucracy in developing countries.

6. First reason: the State primacy

There is a common agreement -transcending political ideologies, culture and style- that bureaucracy should be basically instrumental, which is based on the Western experience and implies the affirmation of political control over the administrative system, whatever the character of the political leadership. Of course, this does not mean that bureaucracy can or should play strictly this instrumental role.²⁴ However, in developing countries even this relative instrumental feature, i.e., the political control over bureaucracy, seems elusive. It seems to exist a tendency of bureaucratic dominance.

We believe that the first explanation for this dominance should be found in a common fact showed in all the three kinds of institution transfer referred to above: i.e., the primacy of the State in the political formation of the developing countries, as well as in promoting economic and social change.

In Latin America and Africa the pre-existence of the State in relation to the national society was radical. The countries in those areas had State before having had people in the political sense of the word. Moreover, not only ill the State come before the nation, as such, was constituted; but, the State was the instrument through which the nationalities were built (or have been built). What a difference if we compare with the Western political reality - which has in the U.S.A. the outmost example - where the people (as a national community), not only existed before the setting-up of political structures, but -through a constitutional pact- created the political apparatus (the United States of America).

There is still the task of socio-economic development, which in Western Europe resulted mainly from private efforts, but in the Third World - it seems today very clear - can only be achieved if the State takes the lead. In Latin America, the State this century is facing the economic challenge after having solved the national problem in the last one. But what to say about Africa where the State leadership have to face both problems at the same time? It is not enough to strive for economic development: they have also to try to maintain the national unity.

In Asia, the antecedence of the State does not look so evident, but still exists in so far the State leadership has been the agent of political modernization and -as in the other areas- of socio-economic development.

The primacy of the State we think is the best explanation for the fundamental fact - noted three times at least by Heady in his book, and also by Riggs as causing the state bureaucracy dominance: "the weakness of (the transitional societies) extra-bureaucratic political institutions",²⁵ or that "groups capable of competing for political influence or of imposing close controls over the bureaucracy are few and far behind, so

²⁴ See Heady, *op.cit.*, pp.98 - 99

that often it is able to move into a partial power vacuum".²⁶ So, in a pre-existent-formative state, the bureaucracy assumes the role of key-institution which the political leader has to rely absolutely upon. The bureaucracy can become itself the ruling group.

A Brazilian writer on his country's bureaucracy,²⁷ arrived at the same conclusion Riggs clearly expounds: "premature or too rapid expansion of (State) bureaucracy when the political system lags behind tends to inhibit the development of effective politics".²⁸

The pre-existence of a formative state, with all its bureaucratic apparatus, inhibits the development of the public opinion, political parties, independent pressure groups, authentic Parliamentary institutions and so forth. This lack of strong popular political institutions generates a political vacuum, where the state bureaucracy can operate with almost no control at all (unless a one-party system full of vitality is created to accomplish this function). The lack of control, ultimately, leads to the dominance of the state bureaucracy over society.

7. The second reason: "the praetorian society".

As we have already analysed, the State primacy in developing countries tends to hinder the development of legitimate political institutions, creating a sort of political vacuum. In such societies, when social and economic development widens the range of political participation, allowing emerging groups to put forward their demands to the political system, we have a situation Huntington calls "praetorianism".

The praetorian society can be described as the political community where does not exist consensus about the institutions, leadership, and methods, which must serve as intermediaries to moderate and solve conflicts. In such society forces confront each other nakedly, with their own actors and through their peculiar methods. "The wealthy bribe; students riot; workers strike; mobs demonstrate; and military coup".²⁹

Therefore, praetorian societies are characterized by permanent instability, political disorder, and weak as well as ineffective governments. There are few alternatives for this situation: either the disorder and instability persists till a revolution arises to reshape the all society, or the military coup, trying to remedy the situation. However, if they are not able to create legitimate political institutions, the situation will deteriorate

²⁵ RIGGS, *op.cit.*, p.121

²⁶ HEADY, *op.cit.*, p.72. See also pp. 101 and 64

²⁷ FADRO, Raymundo. *Os donos do poder*. (The Power Owners). Porto Alegre, Editora Globo. 1958.

²⁸ RIGGS, *op.cit.*, p.126

²⁹ HUNTINGTON, Samuel. *Political Order in Changing Societies* Yale University Press, 1968. p.196

from coup to coup till a revolution eventually happens.

In the case of a military government being established, we will have a state bureaucracy rule perhaps in its clearest way. The civil state bureaucracy will largely profit from the situation, in so far as the military are forced to rely heavily on the civil service to remain in power.³⁰ A coalition is created where the military will use the civil servants to be able to govern, and the civil bureaucrats will use the military political power to increase their privileges and their participation in policy decision-making.

On the other hand, as long as the situation of disorder and instability under weak governments goes on, the high ranks of the civil service also will tend to benefit: in an environment of tough competition they are not only the group closest to the centre of decisions, but they are the only group there (besides the military) who are permanent in their positions.

Thus we conclude that "praetorianism" is another important cause explaining why in most developing countries the state bureaucracy plays an increasing dominant role.

8. The third reason: "the prismatic society".

To the bureaucratic dominance in developing countries we presented till now two explanations: one related with the political formation, and the other with the political structure of development societies. Let us add another explanation which takes into account the socio-administrative system as such, that is to say, the Riggs' "prismatic model".³¹

As all post-Rostowians, Riggs departs from the classification of societies in "traditional" (=not industrial), "transitional" (=striving to speed up industrialization) and "modern" societies (= relatively industrialised). As far as the social-administrative system of those countries is concerned, he distinguishes three different models, the "fused", the "prismatic" and the "diffracted" (the terminology is taken from physics and the analysis of light), each one correlated respectively with the traditional, the transitional and the modern types of societies. The models are defined in terms of the number of functions performed by the social-administrative structures (by "structure" he means any pattern of behaviour which has become a standard feature of a social system, for instance a government bureau). In the fused model each structure in the

³⁰ See FAINSOD, op.cit., Poc. cit.

³¹ See Administration in Developing Countries. The Theory of Prismatic Society (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1964, especially pages 3 - 75)

system tends to perform a large number of diffuse functions; at the other extreme of the spectrum (the diffracted model) each structure tends to perform limited number of specific functions; by the middle of the spectrum in the “prismatic” model, where the structures - like a prism - have started the diffraction process but it remains incomplete.

It is very interesting his analysis on the dynamics of changes leading from a traditional to a modern, through a transitional society (process which he does not consider inevitable, nor necessarily destined to success). The process of “diffraction” may have been produced, either (1) by an aggressive internal middle-class which had to fight against the power of the aristocratic elites in response to pressures for change, grown largely from within; or, (2) by the elites themselves, subject to compelling external pressures - in our language the “expansion of Western Civilization” - which forced them to take the lead in launching risky and even potentially suicidal processes of change. (Elites not subject to such pressures would have few incentives to lead the way on such a dangerous journey). The first process (he called “endo-prismatic”) can only be found in the pre-modern societies of Europe, such as England, France, Holland, where the scientific and industrial revolution took place. The second one (the “exo-prismatic” process) marks the changes of the contemporary non-Western transitional countries. To study today’s developing countries is to study the “exo-prismatic diffraction” process.

His description of the external impact of the “diffracted” civilization on the elites of the fused societies (both the old established or the newly independent) is exciting: the primary stimulus seems to be the problem of defense; the need for adopting modern weapons and military organization, as well as reshaping profoundly the civil bureaucracy, in order to maintain the independence of the country they rule, and which they feel threatened by superior organization and weapons which cannot be resisted by bows and arrows. The consolidation of the whole bureaucratic apparatus, on one hand requires health and education facilities, power stations, roads and so forth, and on the other economic activities to pay for those large expenditures. This is the way the “diffraction” normally starts: from top to bottom, by the state elite through the State bureaucracy.

Now we can situate the problem of the bureaucracy power. In a traditional-fused society, the State bureaucracy - when it can be said that it really exists - is controlled by the “aristocratic” political elite and subject to it. In a modern-diffracted society, the state bureaucracy is so specialised and interacts in such a way with the wide range of strong competing groups and complex non-State bureaucracies, that the political institutions, whether pluralist or totalitarian, are in a good position to control and limit the power of the bureaucracy. However, and now we will quote RIGGS,

“It is precisely in the prismatic situation that bureaucratic power is most likely

to rise to unprecedented heights. Here, although formal political institutions may have been created by constitutions and laws, they often turn out in practice to be relatively powerless. By contrast, the new industrial and scientific technology places in the hands of modernizing elites and state officials vast new weapons of social control. The result is that quite often bureaucracies - military more often than not - have usurped in the name of "tutelage" or popular "guidance" the roles which, in a modern society, are played by legislators, elected executives, and party leaders".³²

It is because the developing countries are "exo-prismatic" socio-administrative systems that the state bureaucracy exerts within them a so dominant role. The final conclusion drawn from the "prismatic model" is: if the "diffraction" is completed, the bureaucracy will lose his dominance. Therefore the paradoxical view: the bureaucracy who started diffraction tries to check it in order to maintain its dominance.

9. Fourth reason: the political System

Some authors - such as Fainsod and Heady - discern what can be summarised as the influence of the political system upon the state bureaucracy power, or at least, the effects of the former on the latter.

There is coincidence of opinion that in a pluralist competitive system- where it really exists in developing societies in spite of all difficulties, many times created by the bureaucracy itself, - "the trend is toward less rather than more bureaucratic involvement in the exercise of political power and toward a better balance between the bureaucracy and other political institutions",³³ which appears to be the case of India.

In the dominant party political systems - whose most extreme example is the one-party regime of a totalitarian nature - "the imbalance that can be expected is not one that overweighs but one that underweighs the (state) bureaucratic element"³⁴ in relation with what can be called the "party-bureaucracy". Concerning the authoritarian regimes (excluded the dominant-party systems) a distinction should be drawn between the traditional-autocratic systems as Saudi-Arabian and Iran, and the "lacking-legitimacy" military or civilian dictatorships, still the common feature in the developing world. The first category can be described as "ruler-dominated bureaucracies",³⁵ where the political leader uses his bureaucratic establishment to project his control and impose his purposes on the community, although some individual members of the bureaucracy may exercise considerable influence because of the confidence which the rules reposes

³² RIGGS, *op.cit.*, p.74

³³ HEADY, *op.cit.*, p.109. see also FAINSOD, *op.cit.*, p.

³⁴ HEADY, *op.cit.*, *loc.cit*; see also FAINSOD, *op.cit.*, *loc.cit*

³⁵ FAINSOD, *op.cit.* p.236

in them. It is in the second category that the control over the bureaucracy are weakest and the risks of indefinite bureaucratic power dominance are greatest. The lack of legitimacy compels the ruling group to woo the support of the state bureaucracy in order to materialise their rule. It is a coalition where the state bureaucracy has great bargaining power.

10. Conclusion

We tried to show why the state bureaucracy (the group occupying managerial roles and being in some directive capacity in the public administration) has a dominant position (in developing nations) totally unacceptable, to the vast majority of developed countries' standards. Among the possible reasons, we pointed out: (a) the political imbalance caused by the spread of the Western Civilization in regions lacking the basic conditions to assimilate its inner culture; (b) the primacy of the state in building nationalities and in promoting development in the Third World; (c) the "praetorianism", or the inexistence of legitimate institutions to mediate conflicts and reconcile demands; (d) the "exo-prismatic" socio-administrative system, where the function-specialization of the structures has not yet been completed; and (e) the authoritarianism of the political regime, especially in the case of military dictatorships.

Finally, we avoided judgement about the implications of this inordinately strong position of the state bureaucracy, knowing the dispute between the prevalent negative view (La Palombara, Riggs and Goodnow, for instance),³⁶ and the more sanguine appraisal of others, like Braibanti, Fritz Marx and L. Binder,³⁷ because it would lead us very far beyond the aims of this essay.

³⁶ See HEADY, pp. 101 and 102

³⁷ See HEADY, *op.cit.*, *loc.cit*

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