

Theories of State and Collective Action

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ABSTRACT. - This paper aims to review theoretical arguments and constitute a framework to view the state, the economy, and interest groups within the concept of collective action. This study reviews *macro-level* explanations for institutions and collective action -namely perspectives towards political institutions (the state), state-society relations, etc. Micro level explanations of institutions and collective actions - namely theories explaining the rationale of individuals for participation in collective action is excluded from the content of this article for the reason of space. There is a wide literature of relevance to this study since political and social theories and/or models, primarily or secondarily, try to determine factors that influence the ability of different groups to organise in defence of their common economic and political interests. Therefore, I will examine the various existing theories, outline their common themes and assess their merits in explaining the patterns of collective behaviour of the state, businessmen, and labour.

Keywords: State, economic classes, collective action, political interests and interest representation.

Devlet Teorileri ve Kolektif Hareket

ÖZET. - Bu makale teorik tartışmaları inceleyerek kolektif hareket konsepti içinde devlet, ekonomi ve çıkar gruplarının incelenebileceği bir çerçeve oluşturma amacını taşımaktadır. Bu çalışmada kurumları ve kolektif hareketi makro düzeyde –yani, politik kurumları (devlet) ve devlet-toplum ilişkilerini- izahetmeye çalışan teorileri irdelemektedir. Kurumları ve kolektif hareketi mikro düzeyde –yani, bireyi kolektif davranışa ve harekete yönlendiren rasyoneli- izaha çabalayan teoriler yer azlığından bu makale kapsamının dışında bırakılmıştır. Farklı grupların kendi ekonomik ve politik çıkarlarını savunmak amacıyla örgütlenmelerini sağlayan etkenleri belirlemeye çalışan teorilerden oluşan çok geniş bir literatür söz konusudur. Literatürün genişliği bizi temel sayılabilecek politik teorileri inceleyip bu teorilerin devlet, işadamları ve işçi sınıfının kolektif davranışlarının genel yapısını izahetmelerindeki ortak ana temalarını ve bu çabalamalarındaki eksik ve üstün yönlerini tartışmaya yöneltmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler : Devlet, ekonomik sınıflar, kolektif hareket, ve politik çıkarlar, ve temsil.

Introduction

This paper aims to review theoretical arguments and constitute a framework to view the state, the economy, and interest groups within the concept of collective action. This requires the study of institutions, incentives, and behaviours. For example, the ability of the state to have its citizens comply with new rules and institutions is relevant to the theory of collective action. While some people accept them others will not accept these rules and

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institutions. The cost and benefit structure influences their decision to obey or defect. Collective action problems are also relevant for the strength of civil society. There is a myriad of factors, which create a strong civil society but the most important ones are whether or not there are incentives available to identical groups, or the possibility of affecting public policies through collective action is great enough to organise.

This study reviews *macro-level* explanations for institutions and collective action -namely perspectives towards political institutions (the state), state-society relations, etc. Micro level explanations of institutions and collective actions - namely theories explaining the rationale of individuals for participation in collective action is excluded from the content of this article for the reason of space. There is a wide literature of relevance to this study since political and social theories and/or models, primarily or secondarily, try to determine factors that influence the ability of different groups to organise in defence of their common economic and political interests. Therefore, I will examine the various existing theories, outline their common themes and assess their merits in explaining the patterns of collective behaviour of the state, businessmen, and labour.

Macro Level Theories of the State and Collective Action

Although the state is an entity whose purpose of existence is to produce collective goods, it is not immune to problems of producing collective goods just like other elements of civil society, which face problems to act collectively to pursue collective benefits. The collective action problems of the state and society are interrelated and embedded in macro structures and institutionalised relations, which are subject to the rational choices of individuals. What are the theories of the state explaining the relationships between the state and society? In what way does the state influence the collective action of citizens? What is proper for the state in order to manage socio-economic fractions and use them as a device of effective governance and sustainable development? In what ways are the patterns of state and collective groups relevant concepts in economic development? How does the state influence and manage social mobility and conflict among groups? These and similar questions have been provided with answers from different perspectives in political science. This paper is devoted to reviewing the approaches and their theoretical frameworks as relevant to the questions above.

A State-centred Historical Approach to Institutions and Collective Action

Katzenstein's edited volume *Between Power and Plenty* represents the beginning or revival of historical institutionalist thinking during the 1970s (Pontusson, 1995: 121). Reacting to the society-centred, behaviouralist analysis of the 1950s and 1960s, some political scientists moved, in the 1980s, to 'bring the state back in' as the focus of analytical attention (i.e., Evans, Rueschemeyer and Skocpol, 1985). These analysts were particularly concerned with the historical, path dependent evolution of political institutions, and with the question of the degree of state autonomy in such developments. This important research terrain of institutionalism has also been concerned with the state's autonomy and role in macro-social change and collective action.

In *Bringing the State Back In* Rueschemeyer and Evans (1985: 47) argued that 'coherent state action will be a concern of state elites, a concern for which they can mobilise outside support and that may come to stand in conflict even with dominant interests'. Such a task demands an internally coherent state, which is more embedded in society than insulated (see also Evans 1992). However, this embeddedness serves the autonomy of the state rather than the infiltration of the state apparatus by particular groups. While these political scientists conferred a central position to the state or political structure, they acknowledged that the state is a corporate actor consisting of conflicting fractions such as political parties, the bureaucracy, and the military. Nevertheless these state actors with distinct interests have a concern and consensus to act in a unified way determined by their institutional roles. Rueschemeyer and Evans continued that:

A certain degree of (bureaucratic) autonomy from the dominant interests in a capitalist society is necessary not only to make coherent state action in pursuit of any consistent policy conception is possible, but also because some of the competing interests in economy and society, even structurally dominant ones, will have to be sacrificed in order to achieve systematically required "collective goods" that cannot be provided by partial interests. (Rueschemeyer and Evans, 1985: 68)

Theda Skocpol proposed the investigation of the state and pattern of politics through what she interchangeably called 'Tocquevillian' or 'Macroscopic' explorations of the socio-political effects of states. In this perspective, Skocpol emphasises the role of the state in the emergence of collective action:

States matter not simply because of the *goal-oriented activities of state officials* (emphasis mine). They matter because their organisational configurations, along with their overall patterns of activity, affect political culture, encourage some kinds of group formation and

collective political actions (but not others), and make possible the raising of certain political issues (but not others).

To be sure, the “strengths” and “weaknesses” of states as sites of more or less independent and effective official actions constitute a key aspect of the organizational configurations and overall pattern of activity at issue in this perspective When the effects of states are explored from the Tocquevillian point of view, those effects are *not* traced by dissecting state strategies or policies and their possibilities for implementation. Instead, the investigator looks more macroscopically at the ways in which the structures and activities of states *unintentionally* (emphasis mine) influence the formation of groups and the political capacities, ideas and demands of various sectors of society. (Skocpol, 1985: 21)

In this context, not so much the intentional actions of political and bureaucratic elites and citizens but state structures and institutions affect the timing, goals, organisational strategies, the content and definition of interests, and overall politics of collective action. This is a slippery premise because while some scholars argue that the more government takes the place of associations, the more will individuals lose the idea of forming associations and need the government to come to their help (Kaufman, 1999: 1299), many others argued that the bigger government means the proliferation of interest groups. Similarly, W. D. Coleman (1990) argues that certain symmetry exists between different types of states and the structures of systems of comprehensive business associations. But ironically the state-centred arguments imply that this symmetry definitely suggest an asymmetry between state and society implying that the state is the only significant *datur formarum*, i.e. the giver of form.

Statist theorists believe that state actors and agencies determine the behaviour and role of groups in society and in the policy process (Smith 1993: 55). Kenneth Dyson (1980: 50), for instance, argued that the 'mode of interest-group politics' depends not so much on conditions of civil society and the structure of economy, but on 'frameworks of ideas and historical experiences of authority'. There are anomalies in the state-centred institutionalist arguments. For instance, they argue that the degree of state autonomy varies with its resources via the resources of society; for instance the absence of an enduring business unity or a strong bourgeoisie would allow the state to pursue its own economic agenda (Skocpol, 1985; Mintz, 1995: 410). However Skocpol (1980) argued that the state policy would fail (as in the case of National Industrial Recovery Act) because it lacks capabilities rather than the power of business (Smith, 1993: 51). Finegold and Skocpol (1984: 169) asserted that:

The fate of policy choices is shaped by the development of the state and the parties, organisations that have their own historical trajectories and cannot be taken for granted or reduced to manifestations of the current array of social forces.

The state-centrist/historical institutionalism even went further by claiming that the states have their own values, norms, and traditions embedded within institutions and distinct from the remainder of society (e.g. Eisenstadt, 1967; Skocpol, 1985; Heper, 1991), implying an untouchable institutional existence. By the same token, March and Olsen (1989: 21) defined political institutions as:

Collections of interrelated rules and routines that define appropriate actions in terms of relations between roles and situations. The process involves determining what the situation is, what role is being fulfilled, and what obligation of that role in that situation is.

March and Olsen argued that instead of the making of choices, it was the 'logic of appropriateness' that shapes individuals' actions within institutions. Routines, rules, and forms evolve through history-dependent processes that do not reliably and quickly reach unique equilibriums; the institutions of politics are not simple echoes of social forces; and the polity is something different from, or more than, an arena for competition among rival interests (March and Olsen, 1989: 159).

This presentation does not imply that statist arguments have been exhausted and proven to be useless. The most important criticism of historical institutionalism is that it gives formal and informal institutions a status of independent actors although in some context they are more like dependent variables to be explained while in others they can be used as independent variables because of their explanatory value. Institutions are designed and created by conscious, deliberating, and rational human beings to solve problems related to the social and economic realm (Pontusson, 1999: 130-1). State interest and institutions are not developed in a vacuum but within the context of civil society (Smith, 1993: 55). Institutions are neither actors nor ends but means. It is this aspect of institutions that makes politics a complex process of institutional design.

Pluralism, Neo-pluralism, and Policy Networks

There is often little agreement upon the defining characteristics as well as basic assumptions of pluralist theory and thus it is subject to ambiguities and misinterpretations (Judge, 1999: 128). For example, while pluralists adopt behavioural individualism as a method to explain group behaviour and leave out institutionalist explanations, neo-pluralist perspectives adopt institutionalism but undermine individualist-behavioural explanations.

Since pluralism rejects Elite Theory and sees the society consisted of groups, politics can be understood by looking at the interaction of groups (Berry, 1989; Truman, 1971). For Truman (1971: 15), the individual is less affected

by the society as a whole than differentially through several of its subdivisions or groups. This is seemingly contradictory because pluralism, according to Cawson (1986: 7-8), assumes that people determine their interests freely to the extent that statements about the interests of groups are the same as statements about individual members of groups. Observable behaviours of groups and individuals are the essence to judge individual interests in pluralist thought. This point is defended to the extent that discontented individuals form collective organisations to change government policy while inactivity means consent to government decisions (Cawson, 1986: 10). This assumption faced a challenge from Olson (1965) who argues that individuals will not organise to defend their collective interests unless collective action problems are solved.

Despite the assumption that members' interests equal group interests pluralists have no clear conception of collective good and are sceptical about the capacity of the state to produce collective goods for citizens. Robert A. Dahl argues that the common good is "culturally relative". "It is specific not only to its particular sphere, such as money or power, but to the time, place, historical experiences, and culture of a particular group of human beings" (Dahl, 1989: 304). Lindblom (1965) does not fully share the scepticism about achievability of collective good otherwise pluralism would never be a viable option and this would justify a call for corporatist or fascist arrangements. The continuity of social life depends on the ability of human beings to arrange collectively defined or accepted rules. He argues that mutual adjustment processes (MAP) can create and maintain commonality of culture, language, historical experience, standard of evaluation, moral rules and other dispositions towards procedural agreement (1965: 10). This view perfunctorily admits and calls for an institutionalist solution to collective good dilemma. Although Lindblom still rejects the idea that collective values can always be objective values, he nevertheless argues that collective values and goods can be agreed and effectively formulated by the MAP better than central decision-making and co-ordination (1965: 283-5). The MAP implies that "people can co-ordinate with each other without anyone co-ordinating them, without a dominant common purpose, and without rules that fully prescribe their relations to each other" (Lindblom, 1965: 3). With this theory Lindblom continues to defend the pluralist belief that interest groups can be organised and co-ordinated without central direction and a purpose commonly shared by groups. The state's role is thus maintaining these market-like processes rather than direct interference as is the case with corporatism, because MAP cannot always guarantee the protection of collective or particular interests in the face of powerful forces (Lindblom, 1965).

In this pluralist view sketched above, the state or government is seen as a mediator and arbiter between organised interests as opposed to the “capitalist bias” of the state in Marxism. On the other hand, in corporatism, it is rather interest organisations or associations that mediate between the state and individuals. Pluralism as defined by Schmitter (1979: 15) is:

A system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organised into an unspecified number of multiple, voluntary, competitive, non-hierarchically ordered and self-determined (as to type or scope of interest) categories which are not specially licensed, recognised, subsidised, created or otherwise controlled in leadership selection or interest articulation by the state and which do not exercise a monopoly of representational activity within their respective categories.

Neo-pluralist writers such as Lindblom (1977) and Dahl (1989) accepted the criticisms assembled by elite theory and Marxism against classic pluralism, which argued that inequalities were non-cumulative among the groups and not a single group including the state, which is neutral, possesses domination. Neo-pluralists admit that business generally has a superior influence on policy decisions and citizen preferences in liberal democracies. However, internal checks (by politicians and bureaucratic agencies considering the interests of their own and of other quiescent groups such as party organisations for election concerns) and external checks (by counter-groups on alert to prevent harmful policies embraced by competing groups) are important counterweights that exist to constrain the domination of business (Lindblom, 1977: 189; Smith, 1993: 16-7).

Dahl (1989: 252) provides summary characteristics of a dynamic pluralist society: dispersion of political resources, strategic locations, and finally, bargaining positions. This characterisation of society is compatible with that of policy network literature according to which “policy-making is becoming increasingly pluralistic” within “increasingly specialised arenas with a limited number of participants” (Smith, 1993: 56). Despite the lack of indication that the policy network paradigm is within the pluralist tradition it seems closer to neo-pluralist point on a scale of pluralism versus corporatism. The division of governmental processes into policy domains creates policy networks in which rational debates take place between rational collective actors (Rhodes and Marsh, 1992; Rhodes, 1995). Within these policy domains, the creation, direction, and co-ordination of issues as well as distribution and control of power and resources among actors are determined (Knoke, 1990: 19).

The main difference between pluralist and policy network approaches is the latter's institutionalist character in contrast to the positivist-behaviouralism of the former (Blom-Hansen, 1997). The second difference is that policy

network analysis accepts the autonomy of the state while pluralist theory sees the state as a neutral mediator or just another interest group. In this context exclusion of certain interests from policy networks by dominant interests, exchange of information, resources and support among interdependent institutional actors, and defining the rules with which the 'game' is played become the features of policy networks (Rhodes, 1995). The policy network approach uses network analysis as a basis for the study of power, exchange and dependency relations between groups and state agencies in policymaking. It does not primarily explain by using the network metaphor how groups emerge and solve collective action and co-operation problems at the individual level. Knoke and Kuklinski (1991: 176) argued that "the structure of relations and the location of individual actors have important behavioural, perceptual and attitudinal consequences both for the individual units and for the system as whole". Network analysis can be helpful in examining the recruitment processes of collective action organisations, specify information linkages, resource exchanges, and interpersonal bonds both horizontal (member-member) and vertical (leader-member) (Knoke, 1990: 227). However what brings the policy networks close to neo-pluralist modes of interest representation is its claim that the process of institutional arrangements are incremental and evolutionary in which no-one is in complete control (Blom-Hansen, 1997). Smith (1993: 54) argued that "State autonomy is not a zero-sum. It is not something that belongs either to the group or to the state agency... Therefore, the degree of state autonomy available often depends on the type of policy network". The numerical or financial strength of diverse interest groups does not always explain differences in policy outcomes, which are indeterminate (Peters, 1999: 118). Rather the opportunities and constraints created by different institutional configurations at a macro-level enhance and limit the capabilities of different groups (Ostrom, 1995: 174-8). Critics of policy networks such as Dowding (1995) argue that the model needs to integrate rational choice and game theory into the concept of networks. It also has an inadequate theory of the state (Dowding, 1995) which is seen as "a complex set of institutional arrangements for rule operating through continuous and regulated activities of individuals acting as occupants of offices.... Although some interests are privileged, the state has varying degrees of autonomy from those interests and can act in its own interests" (Rhodes, 1995: 11). Katzenstein (1978) identified as crucial variables for the establishment of policy networks the measure of *centralisation* of the state-society (relations) and the degree of *differentiation* between the two. State autonomy is not sacrificed to the collaboration of interest groups in policy networks. It is still important, even a sine qua non, because as Waarden (1992: 44) stated:

The close cooperation of state agency and clientele in pursuing particularistic interests may produce various 'collusive coalitions' against other agents and clientele, will tend to fragment

the state organisation, frustrate attempts to formulate policies in the general interests, and will reduce the coherence in general government policy.

These final arguments are a clear indication that neo-pluralist or at least the policy network literature incorporates some assumptions and concepts of the rational choice and game theory and, thus, one can speak of a convergence. For instance, the interdependency, coalitions, the processes of resource transactions, and bargaining among the network members are the characteristics of an iterative $N > 2$ person games. The concept of policy network recognises the interdependency and conflict between the state institutions, state actors and private interests and by so doing the concept is more appreciable to the rational choice approach than to state-centrist institutionalist or behavioural-pluralist explanations.

Marxist Theories of the Capitalist State and Collective Action of Classes

Marxist approaches to the state and society can make important contributions to the understanding of collective political action. Although they are often combined with varying degrees of consistency and mutual qualifications, they involve different theoretical assumptions, principles of explanation and political implications (Jessop, 1990: 25). There is, for example, instrumentalist, elitist, functionalist, collective capitalist state, and state monopoly capitalism theories with different implications about the autonomy of the state from class relations. Marxist theories evolved to accept that the democratic capitalist state has a degree of autonomy to manage conflicting interests of capitalist economies, to defend collective interests of capitalists, and to develop an hegemonic accumulation strategy (Poulantzas, 1973; Offe, 1985; Dunleavy and O'Leary, 1987; Jessop, 1990).

In general, Marxists treat interest groups as less significant in the analysis of power structure and political conflict because groups simply emerge out of their economic situation and they are not a totality of individual interests prior to social relations (Elster, 1985; Offe, 1985; Cawson, 1986: 8-11). Marx emphasised the selfishness of human nature and rejected that ideology and religion are altruistic institutions favouring equality, justice, and common good for people. The only solution for this dilemma is the alternative of socialism to private enterprise system, i.e. capitalism (Ostrom, 1990: 9). Marxism in general denies individual voluntarism in a capitalist society by arguing interests, organisations, and power of groups lie in the relation between capital and labour. Although classes are seen as potential actors for collective action, for Marx, achieving a common good is a highly doubtful venture especially for the working classes if their members remain rational self-interested individuals (Olson, 1965: 108). A capitalist economy is a composition of institutions designed to keep voluntary choice and

freedom of human subjects under control. Under capitalist relations of production, which compels an asymmetric system of interest articulation, the members of subordinate classes experience difficulties in finding out what their objective and true interests are (Offe, 1985: 197).

There are two important state theories, selected from the Marxist literature, conducive to our objectives: *collective capitalist state* and *state monopoly capitalism*. The former structure must establish legal and monetary systems necessary to facilitate the production and exchange of commodities and the accumulation of capital and rational economic calculation (Jessop, 1990: 35). A collective capitalist (developmental) state is supposed to nurture its initially vulnerable industrial bourgeoisie and then facilitate and restructure the basis of capital accumulation. It intervenes in the economy in order to “overcome the mental/manual divisions within the bourgeoisie and insure that they do not tear one another to pieces” (Frankel, 1982: 263). This Unitarian-collectivist capitalism depends on the ideological hegemony of the dominant classes over popular classes achievable through the existence of particular forms of organisation and representation. “Their unity and alliance depends on a modicum of self-sacrifice of immediate interests and on their commitment to a common world outlook” (Jessop, 1990: 40). The hegemonic strategy of the dominant classes will be a success only if subordinated classes accept it. For Jessop, this approach implies that state intervention is not always directed towards the needs of capital but “generally reflects a response to the political repercussions of accumulation” (Jessop, 1990: 40). The collective capitalist state in theory is capable of solving the collective action problems of both business and labour classes.

State monopoly capitalism, on the other hand, is more predatory since it is a fusion of monopoly corporations and the state into a single instrument of economic exploitation and political domination (Dunleavy and O'Leary, 1987: 240). According to this theory, the growth of giant industrial corporations and of large financial combines under auxiliary state rule leads to almost complete exclusion of other capitalist fractions from influence over the state (Dunleavy and O'Leary, 1987). This form of capitalism is more likely to be challenged by the competitive sectors (subordinate bourgeoisie) and the working class who realise the convergence of their interests against this particular type of domination. However this type of state is also able to create additional costs for labour and subordinate business to organise collectively because of selective compensation and patronage. This seems especially the case for economies, which have experienced state-led industrialisation and the containment of pressure from below.

The state that is concerned with the possibility of revolution by subordinate classes has to separate itself from ruling class fractions for its own sake and for the sake of capital. For Marxists, this is a dilemma for the capitalist state, a dilemma that necessitates a division between the economic and political spheres. Therefore, the modern capitalist state evolved into “a distinct ensemble of institutions and organisations whose socially accepted function is to define and enforce collectively binding decisions on the members of society in the name of their common interest or general will” (Jessop, 1990: 341). According to neo-Marxism, unlike state-centrist explanations, state institutions and organisations may have their own logic but cannot exercise power of their own. Instead state power is a complex social relation and/or the state is the site of strategy:

Thus a given type of state, a given state form, a given form of regime, will be more accessible to some forces than others according to the strategies they adopt to gain power; and it will be suited more to some types of economic or political strategy than others because of the mode of intervention and resources which characterize the system (Jessop, 1990: 260).

And society:

Is simply a fluid inter-discursive space . . . in which different social forces compete to stabilize orientations and expectations around rival societal projects . . . Thus one could argue that a successful hegemonic project penetrates different functional subsystems, organisations and identities, and set limits on how far they can operate purely autonomously. In a hegemonic order each functional sub-systems would, for example, retain its own 'code'; but its 'programme' would take account of wider social goals. . . They would reflect on the repercussions of their own actions on other organisations and general social objectives and seek to adjust them accordingly . . . None of this implies that hegemony rests on total unanimity or blind obedience- instead it provides a conception of the common good and a framework within which different forces can cooperate and/or coexist with a relative degree of harmony (Jessop, 1990: 335-6).

It seems that Marxist theories contain significant allusions to collective action problems. The orthodox arguments are more different from the rational choice view than modern Marxism. Marxist theory understands classes organised within the framework of dominant production mode as the core institutions (structures) that determine preferences and actions of individuals. In general orthodox Marxist theory rests on a conviction that individuals cannot act freely and creatively in an oppressive social structure characterised by capitalist domination. Therefore cross-cultural differences in the behaviour and institutions of states, workers, and capitalists can be traced to historical variations in class structures.

According to Alberto Melucci, the Marxist tradition saw collective action as “the expression of a structural class condition from which behaviour sprang”. The identity of being a member of the working class or owner of

capital almost surpasses all other identities that individuals attach themselves (Melucci, 1995: 107). Lichbach (1995) writes that “Marx believes that individuals constitute a class only insofar as they are engaged in a common struggle against another class. Class struggle begets class formation and subsequently, collective dissent” (Lichbach, 1995: 100). Collective action is an end result of class-consciousness, which develops when classes interact, compete, and conflict with each other (Elster, 1985: 345). Elster (1985: 347-8) argues that Karl Marx recognised that self-interest poses a major problem for mass movements of both labour and capitalist classes. He defines positive class-consciousness as “the ability to overcome the free-rider problem in realising class interests” (Elster, 1985: 347). He noticed the altruistic elements in Marxist accounts of collective action, since a clash between capitalists and workers may well be harmful to the short-term interest of labour, and “only their unborn descendants may see the benefits of socialism”. As for those who “have nothing to lose but their chains” and those “who wants to beat his adversary will not discuss with him the costs of war”, collective action is a necessity rather than a choice (statements belong to Marx and cited in Elster, 1985: 353, 368). Some (Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein, 1989: 20-1) argued that according to Marx, the collective action problem is not a historical constant but a product of capitalism, which imbues workers with an individualistic rationality that inhibits their collective effort.

Elster (1985: 352) argued that in the absence of direct relations between antagonistic classes in large corporations, the resentment will tend to be diffuse rather than specific, with correspondingly less motivating power. For instance, professional managers as a go-between class mitigate direct conflict between the capitalists and the workers. Conversely, Lipset, Trow, and Coleman (1962: 172) pointed at Marx’s realisation of the fact that “workers in small craft shops, who work side by side with their employers, associate with them informally and develop personal ties with them, are markedly less class-conscious and less involved in workers’ organisations than are workers in large industry”. These accounts entail that the collective action of the labour class is an exception rather than a rule. However, the capitalist class, as argued by Engels, is always organised. “Their small number, the fact that they constitute a particular class, their social and commercial relations make formal organisation superfluous” (Engels, as cited in Bowman, 1998: 328). Furthermore, Offe (1984: 47) proposed that the degree of organisation of class, both labour and capital, increases as one moves from the competitive sector to the monopoly sector as the resources and power of these classes also increase.

For Offe and Wiesenhal (1980), as far as capital and labour are concerned, there are two logics of collective action, not one. Although collective organisations are more important to labour, workers face more serious dilemmas and paradoxes for organised action than business because of the nature of the labour factor of production. While workers cannot merge (only associate) because their commodity (labour) is an insuperable individuality, capital can merge and enter into formal organisations to protect its collective interest, which is simply to maximize profits. Therefore, workers' collectivity very much depends on the degree of consensus on the redefinition of subjective individual interests as objective collective interests and a trade-off between a variety of interests such as wages, job security, and working conditions. Before reaching a consensus they have to agree about collective identity, willingness to engage in collective action, the internal democracy of trade unions, etc. With these unfavourable circumstances for labour solidarity and collectiveness, what organises workers essentially is not the trade union but capital because workers must belong to a firm before even we begin to talk about workers as a collective group (Offe and Wiesenhal, 1980; Offe, 1985: 176-8). Conversely, Offe and Wiesenhal (1980) argued, capitalists' most important interests are served not through their interest associations but in the market (beneath the level of association) and by the state (above the level of association). Moreover, "capital has at its command three different forms of collective action to define and defend their interests- the firm itself, informal co-operation, and the employers or business association, whereas labour has only one" (Offe, 1985: 179). The problem of conflict between capitalists is alleviated by the collective capitalist (or the welfare) state. Offe (1985) also argued that business associations are more advantaged in terms of their ability to offer selective incentives (that are hard to find in the market) to potential members despite their differences in size and sector.

Above accounts of Marxist thought ignore the fact that the availability and sufficiency of resources in the hands of capitalists to engage in collective action without wider class-consciousness may create factionalism within the business class as they lack collective solidarity. In fact employers, despite their privileged position, face diverse and conflicting interests in terms of their product and labour market (Bowman, 1998). Owners of capital are vulnerable to fragmentation, as they want to pursue their own interests very often at the expense of their collective interests as a class (Held 1989; Dunleavy and O'Leary, 1987). Therefore they tend to be more exclusive than trade unions. The state and government policy are very likely to differentially affect business interests and stimulate adversarial political action (Moore and Hamalai, 1993: 1898). Hence, the power and interests of the capitalist state to unite a business class is also doubtful.

Likewise, for Jessop (1983), there are conflicts between 'capital in general' and 'particular capitals'. This is the main problem to be resolved for capitalist collective action. He defined the problem roughly as the following. Because capital in general is not an economic agent and particular capitals (individual capitalists) are competitive and profit oriented, the latter will not embrace the cost to promote the collective interests of the former unless the interests of particular capitals are consistent with that of general capital. Capitalists will attempt to define and articulate collective interests of capital against both particular capitals' and non-capitalist interests when they are inconsistent with the will of capital in general.

There seems to be some gaps in this theory, especially when Marxists' (including Jessop) believe that the collective good for capital in general is the continuity of capitalist accumulation. However, there may be different strategies of accumulation adhered to by subgroups formed by particular capitals and classes. The theory of Jessop would approach Olson's distinction between collusive and encompassing coalitions if it is interpreted in the following manner. Large financial and industrial corporations are usually in a position to define the will of capital in general basically as the preservation of the existing form of accumulation strategy. Particular capitals, which are the beneficiaries of existing accumulation strategy, will attempt to destroy or contain emerging rivals (rival particular capital) who are interested in changing the system of accumulation and distribution. This interpretation fits Jessop's own overall argument especially when he says, '[associational] representation on its own will not secure the long-term interests of capital accumulation'. An accumulation strategy or a growth model, as defined by the hegemony of dominant fraction(s) and protected by the state can provide a stable framework within which conflicting interests can be managed without disturbing capitalist accumulation (Jessop, 1983: 149).

Olson (1965: 145-6) asserts that "the business community *as a whole* is not a small privileged or intermediate group- it is definitely a large, latent group. As a result it has the same problems of other segments of society". Bowman (1998) suggested that collective action could not be confined to co-operation through paying membership dues, which is relatively easy for businessmen. Co-operation in the market and politics through acting collectively is more important yet harder for businessmen. "The major threat to the basic interest of each capitalist in economic survival comes not from workers but from other capitalists" (Bowman, 1989: 3). Traxler (1993: 686) observed that business associations are not to represent their interest vis-à-vis labour but more often direct their associative activities against groups within their own class. In general as Melucci (1995: 118) argued, "production cannot be

restricted to the economic-material sphere; it embraces the entirety of social relationships and cultural orientation". Furthermore, the "new social movement" writers argue that class based explanations for collective action is obscure in post-industrialist societies (e.g. Maheu, 1995).

The most recent Marxist accounts of the modern capitalist state embrace some ideas adjacent to state-centrist, neo-pluralist and corporatist models seeing that scholars - not essentially Marxist - occasionally integrate Marxist theory with its class perspectives into institutionalist and rational choice perspectives. This is a result of two factors: (1) the apprehension of collective action problems inherent in both capitalist and labour classes; and (2) the impracticality of capitalist dominance without inventing institutions (repressive and ideological apparatuses) to conceal this domination. This is because the state and political institutions are always prone to *a crisis of hegemony* (as used by Gramsci) or *representational crisis* (as used by Poulantzas) because these institutions are the instruments beneficial mainly to the interests of a dominant capital or a dominant mode of production characterised by the equilibrium between various modes of productions and class relations (see Offe, 1984).

Corporatist Perspectives on the State and Collective Organisations

Although there is not an explicit institutional analysis contained within corporatism, it can be seen as a hybrid form of the institutionalist perspective (Peters, 1999: 117). The Marxist view - that the manner in which the state and its power is organised (institutionalised) corresponds in some way to the conditions of the economic base- is shared by other schools of thought (Harris, 1983: 317), especially by corporatism. In fact Schmitter (1979: 24) suggests that "corporatization of interest representation is related to certain basic imperatives or needs of capitalism to reproduce the conditions for its existence and continually to accumulate further resources". Corporatism draws on "a long tradition of elitist/managerial and Marxist analyses of the liberal democratic state" (Williamson, 1989: 140). Schmitter (1979: 13) defined corporatism as:

A system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organised into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognised or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports.

According to Cawson, corporatist arrangements are based on the distinction between functional interest groups and preference groups. While the former

can be drawn in corporatist arrangements, the latter is excluded because the latter category of interests are organised on the basis of shared value and moral positions. Consequently they remain within the pluralist sphere of interest groups since they do not seek to become “self-regulating agents of policy implementation”. On the other hand, functional groups based on economic and professional classes are more likely to become part of corporatist policymaking processes, which involve monopolistic and self-regulating interest groups (Cawson, 1986: 37-38).

Corporatism, for Jessop (1990: 120), “institutionally fuses political representation and economic intervention, both of which are traditionally separated by parliamentary-bureaucratic system”. This fusion is an indication of a corporatist refutation of the pluralist and liberalist assumption that the best social and economic equilibrium (and collective goods) will be achieved automatically without state intervention by freely competing forces. Schmitter (1979: 27) quotes Kramer (1966) arguing, “the more this spontaneous harmonisation proves to have little relation to reality, the more the government is impelled to interfere in order to secure a deliberately regulated and planned integration of interests”. Neo-corporatism or “private interest government” according to Streeck and Schmitter is capable of solving problems related to legal regulation, legitimation and markets by more effective means. It is an attempt to provide for the production of categorical/collective goods by more effective means than state regulation; to impose discipline on the inevitable factions which arise in a democratic polity and market economy; and to make organised interest politics more compatible with the requirements of the market (1991: 237-8). Streeck and Schmitter (1991: 236) argued that “categorical good” and “collective good” are partially compatible and overlapping because public interests as collective goods can be realised through complex bargaining process between associations and the state.

Corporatism is not taken into consideration as a general theory of the state, society or the economy (Cawson, 1986; Smith, 1993: 31) although it attempts to organise them into an effective system of governance. In this regard Williamson (1989: 131) argues that:

This point, however, is perfunctorily re-interpreted to one of whether the state can design its own ‘policy instrument’ whereby it can choose the form of its ‘interactions with social groups and can impose upon these groups the conception of its interests and mode of collective action it prefers’. In short, the state cannot impose a solution upon societal conflicts, but it can introduce arrangements for their solution.

According to Therborn, the relevance of corporatism to collective action theories can be inferred from its characteristic of being a kind of social

action, associative action. "Collective action stands in contrast not only to individual action, but also to commanded action determined by another, exterior actor, a patron, a sovereign, or a boss of one sort or another" (Therborn, 1992: 27). Corporatism assumes that interest associations are not just aggregation of members' interests but also the process of organisation can shape members' interests (Cawson, 1986: 9-11; Williamson, 1989: 76). Cawson (1986) argues that in corporatist logic, the internal cohesion of the association and the ability to discipline and sanction its members depends on its relationship to the state as the corporatist organisation borrows legitimacy and authority from the state - instead of constituency - to achieve that performance. Atkinson and Coleman stress that a corporatist system will function successfully only if the state is strong, autonomous, and not open to capture by the associations that are incorporated into the policy networks. Also associations must be able to control their members - that is to say the concertation, centralisation and integration of sectoral and regional associations for the achievement of public policy objectives (Atkinson and Coleman, 1985: 25-26; Streeck and Schmitter, 1991). The concentration and centralisation of interest association is a precondition for corporatism and a dynamic process resulting from a shift from liberal capitalism to corporate capitalism (Cawson, 1986: 88-9) or as some times called organised capitalism (Offe, 1985).

Corporatist associational activities representing categorical interests as a monopoly is not subject to competition (Williamson, 1989: 76). The corporatist model, furthermore, implies that the dilemmas and problems posited by the theory of collective action, such as the free rider dilemma, Olson's (1965) dilemma, and the *exit* option (Hirschman, 1970) of members are solved or made irrelevant in corporatist arrangements. The corporatist approach disregards the role of selective incentives for falling into the luxury rather than necessity categories (Williamson, 1989: 78). Basically corporatist associationalism suggests that individual members are not like individual customers and that competition over membership inhibits the association's primary role of representation. However, Williamson argues that the non-competitive nature of associations under corporatism limits the redefinition of individual interests (Williamson, 1989: 92). It is important to see the fact that voluntary membership empowers individuals to enter into bargaining relations with the leaders and breaks down bureaucratic barriers for collective participation. The state can overburden corporatist associations with bureaucratic tasks that will leave little time and space to the leaders to consult with members (Williamson, 1989).

In terms of membership, according to Williamson (1989: 79-93), associations attract more potential members in a societal corporatism or

liberal economy especially if they (1) are specialised and distinguished in representation; (2) have the ability to resolve conflict among members and define the best interests of members; (3) have close relations with the state or privileges assigned by the state; (4) have the ability for leadership to ensure compliance of members; and if they (5) have autonomy from the state and ability to self discipline members rather than being disciplined by the state.

An important point to be noted is that it is not the superior management of representation that makes corporatist arrangements prevail in some countries but not others. There still must be preconditions for the corporatist system to emerge. These preconditions or factors that reinforce corporatist systems are various and not valid in every society. Economic and political crises, extremely low tolerance for disorder and conflict, general suspicions of party politics, class unification, legal and administrative tradition, and tight-knit relations between the state and society appear important preconditions (e.g., Therborn, 1992; Katzenstein, 1984). The fact that the most successful corporatist systems are found in relatively smaller economies, or in low-and/or-homogeneously populated countries, or in the countries that underwent a serious crisis or threat reminds us of the arguments raised by Olson (1982) in *the Rise and Decline of Nations*. Corporatism can also be seen as a viable option in an environment where the collective consciousness and collective action reservoirs of economic and professional groups are still in their infancy.

According to Williamson, corporatism is an attempt to develop a policymaking model based on class conflict, which is also rooted in electoral competition. Corporatism did not solve the problem of exclusion of parts of both labour and capital (Williamson, 1989: 95). Scholten (1987) argues that a corporatist mode of representation may become subject to criticism from emerging social movements and subordinate interest groups. These groups will claim the existence of privileged interests and a repressive political system. Furthermore, many societies suffer from societal cleavages stemming from past events and processes in the formation of nation and state, to persistent communitarian and normative divisions based on religious, secular or linguistic criteria (Scholten, 1987: 1). In a non-authoritarian setting the resistance by groups to compulsory membership and jurisdiction can be faced by the state in line with the suggestions of societal corporatism, defined by Schmitter (1979). According to Schmitter (1979), transition to societal corporatism (also named as neo-corporatism and private interest government), is more difficult for countries, which locked into state corporatism at an earlier stage of development. On the contrary, societal corporatism is viable in societies with a liberal-pluralist past, i.e. a previous pattern of relative non-interference by the state 'which only gradually came

to expand its role at the request of organised private interests'. Societal corporatism is characterised with autonomous associations which have developed through lingering encounters between classes and sectors in the presence of competitive party politics to which wider appeals could be addressed. Likely characteristics of state corporatism, on the other hand, would be asymmetric short-term, conflicting relations among groups, pervasive state control, no effective means of representation, asymmetric dependence among dominant interests, inauthentic and fragmented representation, weak associational loyalties, and suppressed or manipulated conflict (Schmitter, 1979: 40-1).

The Neo-institutionalist Economy Approach Towards the State, Interest Groups, and Development

There are differences between the developed and the underdeveloped countries and these differences are observable in terms of the level of industrial development, modern/traditional dichotomy, and social stratification. There are some peculiarly common institutional and functional aspects of the political system of developing countries. In the developing countries the state apparatus seems to be more encouraging for individual and informal actors to engage in rent seeking, autocratic and predatory activities, as the state is exclusive and civil society lacks institutionalised interest articulation. Patrimonialism and paternalism are two of those common aspects, for example, in Middle Eastern Politics (Bill and Leiden, 1979). Informal groups and powerful individuals may become impressively influential in a patrimonial system. In a patrimonial system, the leader rules through a personal network whose members are chosen among those in whom the leader can trust. In these polities usually people lack trust in government and governments lack trust in people. Paternalism is also commonly referred to as a feature of developing states, which means that the leadership or the ruling class knows best for the people regardless of the latter's consent. Populist policies of governments have little to do with social and economic interest articulation from below in such countries. The articulation of interests on an issue is usually mobilised by politicians who wish to expand or maintain their tenure. Ethnic, religious, and other social cleavages provide parties with considerable amounts of loyal supporters and people with protection and other exclusive goods, which are not secured by formal institutions since political, legal, and financial institutions are used arbitrarily (Bates, 1995: 36).

This kind of dependency between politicians and citizens without truly democratic and constitutional institutions sponsors conditions of frustration and resentment among social strata in developing countries (Lofland, 1996:

184). Bill and Leiden observed that institutionalised (bureaucratic) groups hold a more central position in the Middle East than do associational groups. In addition, parliaments and parties are relatively recent institutions, while “bureaucracies and armies are institutional groups of a more ancient vintage” (Bill and Leiden, 1979: 78). Basically such political systems in developing countries offer little incentive to interests to organise in associational forms. Furthermore, the institutions in underdeveloped countries tend to be less reliable by, for instance, businessmen and less capable to solve problems of exchange and cooperation.

The relation between economic development and the accumulation of interest groups is of concern for many social scientists. The perception of economic development and social change conveys the belief that change is not a spontaneous and impulsive process despite the general acceptance that this change involves a great deal of uncertainty and unintended consequences. Most students of pluralist/group theories agreed that interest groups and political participation are by-products of a growing division of labour in the society and the expansion of civil society as a result of socio-economic development (e.g. Almond and Powell, 1978; Huntington and Nelson, 1976; and Truman, 1971). Socio-economic development brings about new types of goals, demands, classes, organisations and institutions with which people increasingly identify (Diamant, 1966). New interest groups can emerge as a result of economic development and change. However, it is hard to argue that there is a one-way causal relationship between development and increased collective participation. For instance development favours individual mobility both geographically (migration) and hierarchically (change in status and income group) over collective political action (Huntington and Nelson, 1976). This mobility increases individual opportunities to *exit*, in Hirschman’s (1970) terminology, rather than *voice* (remaining and participating in a group).

What part does the state play in all this? State-centrist models see the role of state as paramount in modelling economic development and political institutionalisation. Bill and Leiden argue that “the political system is pre-eminently a system with a primacy and autonomy that permits the introduction and generation of change. It is the political system that leads, guides, and directs” (Bill and Leiden, 1979: 7). On the other hand, Haggard and Kaufman argue that governmental elites and state institutions are pivotal to the launching of reform efforts but the international pressures are crucial in influencing the policy choices of reformers. Furthermore, collective action problems in a given society (in terms of willingness of individuals and firms to bear the cost of change) have pivotal influence on the success and failure of structural adjustments. In many developing countries, the asymmetry

between concentrated losers and diffuse gainers is particularly marked. Powerful business, state bureaucracy and employees - groups inclined to oppose export-oriented strategies - are likely to be overdeveloped (Haggard and Kaufman, 1992: 18-19).

What is the relation between collective action and institutional change? Although the state has been paramount in socio-economic development and institutional reform, the change of state institutions may lag behind the change in social institutions, and vice versa, (classes, interests, norms, behaviour, knowledge, etc.) in many societies for usually three reasons: because of the lack of knowledge of state agents about these changes, the cost of producing new institutions are prohibitive, or because the required change is contrary to the interests of dominant political actors (see North, 1990). According to North, state institutions can be resistant to change not because they are capable or autonomous but because they continue to deliver distributive advantages to the dominant collective actors. They are 'humanly devised constraints' that determine incentives and shape human interactions in all societies (North, 1990: 3-4). According to North, institutions that enable the parties to exchange will produce more growth and change relative to those that fail to realise this potential. There are relatively exogenous factors of change too. Changes in transaction costs¹, - for instance a decline in relative prices will reduce transaction (including information) costs - will change individual and collective preferences about institutional frameworks (North, 1990: 92-93). These exogenous changes in transaction costs will reduce the cost of autonomous collective participations and coalitions or change the preferences of existing groups including political parties. Consequently these social actors force the state to make changes in existing formal institutions. Therefore, the need to investigate the impact of interest groups on the development of economic and political institutions must be acknowledged.

What is the relation between economic development and collective action? Neo-liberals tend to conceive even long-term investment as an individual act and thus magnify individualism. The investor may be an individual but long-term investment requires collective action and coordination. Development occurs only through investment and production both tangible and intangible. Hirschman is probably the first economist to link development to collective action by reducing all the shortages in prerequisites of economic development to one basic scarcity, investment *en masse*.

¹ Transaction cost refers to the cost of various activities which involves a relationship of exchange which include the search for information; bargaining; making contracts; monitoring and enforcement; and protection of property rights subject of this exchange.

Countries fail to take advantage of their development potential because, for reasons largely related to their image of change, they find it difficult to take the decisions needed for development in the required number and at the required speed. (Hirschman, 1958: 25)

Regarding the question whether collective action is more probable in stable or turbulent societies, Olson (1982) argues that stable societies also tend to accumulate special interest groups or distributional coalitions who will continuously demand subsidies and protection from government after attaining previous ones. According to Olson (1982: 47) distributional coalitions tend to reduce efficiency and growth and make political life more divisive as new groups will emerge to get some share for themselves from those resources. Distributional coalitions usually oppose social pressures for institutional change and the abolition of arbitrary or protective policymaking. Especially those collective action organisations representing only narrow segments of the society:

Have little or no incentive to make any significant sacrifices in the interests of the society; it can best serve its members' interests by striving to seize a larger share of a society's production for them. This will be expedient, moreover, even if the social costs of change in the distribution exceed the amount redistributed by a huge multiple; *there is, for practical purposes, no constraint on the social cost such an organisation will find it expedient to impose on the society in the course of obtaining a larger share of the social output for itself.* (Olson, 1982: 44)

On the contrary, encompassing and comprehensive organisations tend to support reform policies, the rule of law (depending on whether the rule can see mutual benefit), and institutional changes that are intended to increase the productive capacity of the country or industry. The developmental capacity of an economy and industry in general will be affected by “whether or not the relevant institutions for collective action are encompassing” (Olson, 1982: 49). Olson further argues:

Encompassing organisations have some incentive to make the society in which they operate more prosperous, and an incentive to redistribute income to their members with as little excess burden as possible, and to cease such redistribution unless the amount redistributed is substantial in relation to the social cost of the redistribution. (Olson, 1982: 74)

New institutional economics like neo-classical economy suggests that competition is the key to change and development; however, unlike neo-classical economics it also suggests that individual rationality or markets by themselves will not bring about the development of collective welfare. Individual rationality creates negative externalities for others and thus will not promote socially rational outcomes (Bates, 1995: 30). Therefore non-market institutions need to be created in order to provide incentives and constrains for rational individuals or groups to contribute to the provision of public good. A developmental economic policy and the state must initiate

growth by creating incentives and pressures for society to change, innovate, and produce and then it must stand ready to react to, and to alleviate, undesired effects of change in a variety of areas (Hirschman, 1958: 202). Neither Hirschman's (1958) and Gerschenkron's (1962) arguments nor "new institutional economics" favour the centralisation of economic investment activity by the state since this would create vested interests that shun risk, uncertainty, and extra cost to invest and innovate in order to be able to compete with other countries. Instead, the role of the developmental state should be focused on breaking down the resistance to change and growth through a wide array of incentives rather than securing the interests of economic collusions.

While reformers and policy advisors are attempting to design and introduce new, formal institutions, it should be understood that these measures would confront and interact with remnants of old arrangements and spontaneously developing informal institutions (North, 1990). When appropriate social norms and institutions are missing the cost of transaction or the enforcement of these new institutions will be too high even for powerful states. The source of this cost is collective interests made up of individuals who can establish structures that rival those of the state (Eggertsson, 1990: 36). Conflicts and inconsistencies between formal and informal, old and new, institutions can produce unanticipated consequences, including noncompliant behaviours and underground economic activities.

Economic and political development appears as an ongoing process in which the state passes reform policies that generate tension among the privileged groups (losers) and at the same time opportunities for the new actors (winners). The former have vested interests that enable them to organise collectively while the latter lack incentives to organise in the face of uncertainty about future gains (Haggard and Kaufman, 1992; Schamis 1999). Growth induces large groups of beneficiaries to concentrate for a while on their private affairs rather than on collective interest representation. They will go together through any disappointment experiences that may unfold during that phase (Hirschman, 1982: 15). Therefore, reformist governments need the mobilisation and co-operation of these beneficiaries to cope with opposition from vested interest groups (Evans 1992; Haggard and Kaufman, 1992; Schamis, 1999). This will repeat in a cyclic form since the winners will eventually become special interest groups near to end of reform period and may oppose subsequent reform policies (Schamis, 1999).

Neo-classical political economy sees individual entrepreneurship and market competition as the principal factor for both development and achievement of the highest collective good and believes that collective action and

institutional design inhibits entrepreneurship. On the other hand, the literature on developmental economics and “new institutional economics” does not condemn collective action indiscriminately and argues that institutions are necessary to overcome market failure (North 1990; Harris et al. 1995; and Chang and Rowthorn, 1995). The transition economies have revealed that liberalisation, stabilisation, and privatisation may be necessary but are by no means sufficient conditions for creating market economies. The existence of property rights, minimum transaction costs, the rule of law enforced in a transparent even-handed manner, and effective financial institutions are essential prerequisites of development and a market economy.

Conclusion

This paper concludes that a broadly defined rational choice approach, which contributed to the emergence of more comprehensive paradigms like the ‘new institutional economics’ is most useful because these approaches locate collective action (and the notions like ‘the economy of scale’ and ‘transaction cost’) in the centre of political science (Buchanan, 1989: 13; North, 1990; Ostrom, 1990; Peters, 1999). However, this review also shows that the state-centrist, neo-Marxist, neo-pluralist, and neo-corporatist theories also deal with collective action phenomena through different set of assumptions and concepts. For this reason they cannot be dismissed unequivocally and some of their assumptions and concepts can be integrated to the explanations on the subject of collective action. Based on the literature review above, it seems appropriate to say that competing theories and methods are on the path of convergence as they increasingly share similar paradigms.

David Held (1989: 336) argued that political analysis and social sciences are “inherently multi-theoretical activities”. However taking on board certain approaches or theories means the existence of the intention to refute the applicability of a number of theories. The following approaches have been identified with their main weaknesses: (1) state-centrist and historical institutionalism which see institutions (especially the state) as determining variable of human action and ignore micro-economic or individualistic explanations; (2) the corporatist perspective which sees individual incentives as a luxury and sees the state recognition as the most important variable for the collective action of economic classes, (3) pluralist and sociological perspectives which argue that a shared and common interest, common identity and ideology are sufficient to create organised collective action; and finally (4) the Marxist perspectives which assume that collective action is primarily related to economic classes and production relations.

This study does not dismiss these perspectives altogether because some of the conceptual tools and assumptions they developed can actually be useful and are in agreement with more contemporary perspectives like Rational Choice, Public choice, and Neo-institutionalist Economics. For instance, this study argues that the state is the most important collective action organisation which can make institutional arrangements in order to solve collective action problems of societal actors. However it is not immune to collective action problems. In fact the state provides many incentives to conflicting interests which can penetrate and control state resources for their particularistic purposes at the expense of more general purposes. Again the concepts of 'collective capitalist state' and 'state monopoly capitalism' can be borrowed from Marxist theory and used to refer to particular types of state. Similarly, the concept of 'policy network' can be used in describing the policy environment as given which requires the analysis of the relations between actors and institutions, which induce collective action problems.

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