The Political Sociology of a Concept: Corporatism and the "Distinct Tradition"

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Research Note

THE POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF A CONCEPT: CORPORATISM AND THE "DISTINCT TRADITION"

The field of Latin American Studies owes much to Professor Howard J. Wiarda, whose pioneering work on "corporatism" and political culture during the 1960s and 1970s helped establish a new conceptual paradigm for interpreting the persistence of corporately defined, institutional identities throughout Latin America, despite the purported triumph of the "Liberal Tradition." A child of Dutch parents, his early travels throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America sparked a keen interest in the question of "third world development." Entering graduate school in the early 1960s, Professor Wiarda gravitated to the newly emergent field of modernization studies at the University of Florida, where he received his masters and doctorate degrees in Latin American politics. It was a time of tremendous social ferment in Latin America and his early fieldwork took him to the Dominican Republic, Mexico and Brazil, among other places. In each instance, he found recognizable patterns that transcended geographic locations, patterns that seemed to directly challenge the predominant arguments set forth in the modernization literature at the time. "So I began to devise my own model, derived not from some pre-conceived theory of how modernization *ought* to proceed . . . but from my own field experiences," as he writes in the research note below. Wiarda's insights came at a moment when military regimes across the region were pursuing modernizing agendas that, at the same time, were frequently rooted in a defense of traditional patriarchal norms. His arguments about culture sparked intense debate within the field of political science on the role of values and norms in explaining politics in the region, while his concept of "corporatism" became an important contribution to the field of comparative politics more broadly.

A prolific scholar, Dr. Wiarda has also directly participated in foreign policy debates and decision making, notably serving as the lead consultant

to the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, chaired by Henry Kissinger, in 1983-1984. He is currently Dean Rusk Professor of International Relations at the University of Georgia and a senior associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, in Washington, DC.

ERIC ZOLOV
Editor

Corporatism is undoubtedly one of the major concepts in political science, comparative politics, and Latin American studies of the last forty years. Along with developmentalism, dependency theory, state-society relations, center-periphery relations, rational choice, the new institutionalism, and, arguably, transitions to democracy, the corporatism literature has strongly shaped the discipline over the last four decades, influenced in profound ways how we think about sociopolitical and state-society relations in advanced industrial as well as developing nations, and had a profound impact particularly on Latin American studies.[1]

But there is still confusion over corporatism's precise definition, its various forms (traditional, "neo"), in what areas of the world it applies (Latin America, Southern Europe, Northern Europe, China, Japan, other developing areas), and, perhaps most importantly, whether corporatism is still relevant in an era of globalization, interdependence, and transitions to democracy—when, purportedly, democracy is "the only game in town." This essay seeks to provide new answers to some of these hallowed questions.

But the analysis provided here is more complex and, I believe, more interesting than that. For, along with Martin Heisler,[2] Ronald Newton,[3] Philippe

[1] Some of the books include Ralph Bowen, *German Theories of the Corporate State* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1947); Alan Cawson, *Corporatism and Political Theory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986); Andrew Cox and Noel O'Sullivan, eds., *The Corporate State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Matthew Elbow, *French Corporative Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953); Gerhard Lehmbruch and Philippe C. Schmitter, eds., *Patterns of Corporatist Policy-Making* (London: Sage, 1982); Carl Landauer, *Corporatist State Ideologies* (Berkeley: University of California, 1983); Frederick Pike and Thomas Stritch, eds., *The New Corporatism* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1974); and Peter Williamson, *Corporatism in Perspective* (London: Sage, 1989). For Latin America see David Collier, "Trajectory of a Concept: Corporatism in the Study of Latin American Politics," in Peter H. Smith, ed., *Latin America in Comparative Perspective* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995).

[2] Martin Heisler, ed., *Politics in Europe: Structures and Processes in Some Postindustrial Democracies* (New York: McKay, 1974).

[3] Ronald Newton, "On 'Functional Groups,' 'Fragmentation,' and 'Pluralism' in Spanish American Political Society," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 50 (1970), pp. 1-29.

Schmitter,[4] James Malloy,[5] and others, the present author is one of the original architects of "the corporative model."[6] And, just like dependency theory and the other approaches named above, corporatism has its gurus, specialized scholars, apostles, and camp followers. There are many among these ranks who continue to believe that the corporatist approach offers rich insights into not just Latin American politics and society but the functioning of other political systems as well. Yet they wonder why this approach has not been sufficiently fleshed out, defined, a response to its critics formulated, and the continued relevance of this approach, in the light of both globalization and democratization, appraised.[7] This analysis seeks to shed light on these issues; since my name is so closely associated with the corporatist approach, part of the analysis must necessarily be in the first person.

ORIGINS OF THE CORPORATIST APPROACH

At least four major influences came together in the original formulation of the corporatist model in the late-1960s, at least in my particular case. The first was a very strong academic background in Latin American area studies—I had five courses in Latin American and Spanish history, politics, and geography at the University of Michigan, plus two years of Spanish language training; then ten more Latin America courses at the graduate level,[8] another year of Spanish, two more of Portuguese, plus a TAship at the editorial office of the *Hispanic American Historical Review*, two grants while still a graduate student from the Rockefeller Foundation for field research and study in Latin America, and a three-year NDFL (National Defense Foreign Language and Area Studies) award to complete the Ph.D. degree. All this was done at the University of Florida, which then (1961-65) had, arguably, the best Latin American studies program in the country.[9]

[4] Philippe C. Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?" *The Review of Politics* 36 (January 1974).

[5] James Malloy, ed., *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977).

[6] Howard J. Wiarda, "Toward a Framework for the Study of Political Change in the Iberic-Latin Tradition: The Corporative Model," *World Politics* 25 (January 1973), pp. 206-235; Wiarda, *Corporatism and National Development in Latin America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981); and Wiarda, *Corporatism and Comparative Politics* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997).

[7] I have been asked by numerous of these scholars why I never responded to the critics, provided a better and clearer definition, and explained the background of the corporatism concept. I thought I had done all those things but maybe in obscure journals or books that were not reviewed in the right places, or that these things were self-evident (they, obviously, weren't), or by then I had gone on to other research projects.

[8] I am amused today when some of my graduate students suggest that two courses on Latin America are sufficient to constitute a major field.

[9] I am convinced that our training at Florida on Latin America was better than that of some of my contemporaries (who later became well known in the profession) from the more prestigious universities

A second strong influence was the faculty comparative politics contingent at Florida. The group included Arnold Heidenheimer, perhaps the leading American scholar of comparative public policy; Alfred Clubok, who taught courses on East Asia and the politics of developing areas; René Lamarchand, the budding African politics scholar; and, on Latin America, Harry Kantor and Alfredo Pareja. It was in Heidenheimer's year-long comparative politics seminar in 1962-63 that I first read about corporatism (although not fully realizing its importance then) in the classic texts by Herman Finer,[10] Carl Friedrich,[11] and Karl Lowenstein;[12] read Eastonian systems theory[13] and Almondian functionalism as applied to developing areas[14] in Clubok's classes; learned about African patrimonialism and clientelism from Lamarchand; and absorbed all of Kantor's encyclopedic knowledge of and contacts in Latin America.

A special mentor at Florida, third, was historian Lyle McAlister. Though a scholar of colonial Latin America, McAlister's most famous writings were on the *fuero militar*, or the corporate rights of the armed forces, which had both historical and contemporary implications.[15] Alongside the *fuero militar* was the *fuero eclesiástico*, the *fuero universitario*, and the corporate rights of other groups that make up Latin American society. It was not a far step, in the writings of McAlister students Ronald Newton[16] and myself, to a full-fledged theory of Latin American politics based on this notion of socio-political corporate group rights.

Reinforcing this perspective in my case, fourth, was a succession of research opportunities and case studies of Latin America and Iberia between 1962 and 1972. It is to be emphasized that my writings on corporatism were

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like Harvard, Yale, Berkeley, Columbia or Stanford, which either lacked Latin American studies programs at that time or had no or weak political scientists teaching Latin America. They may have gotten better training in international relations and global politics from such renowned scholars as Samuel Huntington or Stanley Hoffman, but Florida graduates were better trained on Latin America.

[10] Herman Finer, *The Theory and Practice of Modern Government* (New York: Holt, 1949).

[11] Carl Friedrich, *Constitutional Government and Democracy* (Boston: Ginn, 1941).

[12] Karl Lowenstein, *Political Power and the Governmental Process* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957).

[13] David Easton, "An Approach to the Study of Political Systems," *World Politics* 9 (April, 1957), pp. 383-400.

[14] Gabriel A. Almond, "Introduction," in Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, eds., *The Politics of Developing Areas* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1960).

[15] Lyle N. McAlister, *The "Fuero Militar" in New Spain* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1957); McAlister, "Civil-Military Relations in Latin America," *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 3 (1961), pp. 341-350.

[16] Newton, "Natural Corporatism and the Passing of Populism in Spanish America," *Review of Politics* 36 (1974), pp. 34-51.

arrived at not deductively from some grand, all-encompassing, predetermined theory, but inductively from real field work in Latin America. I first went to the Dominican Republic in 1962 where I discovered and wrote about the corporatism in Trujillo's Dominican Republic;[17] to Mexico in 1963 where I studied the corporatist, three-part structure of Mexico's Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI);[18] to Central America also in 1963 where everyone referred to the corporate power of the armed forces;[19] and back to the Dominican Republic in 1964-65 to study and write my dissertation on the persistence of corporatist forms of state-society relations even during the post-Trujillo transition to democracy.[20]

In 1966, 1968, 1970, and 1972 I was in Brazil working on a project on the Catholic labor movement[21] that again forced me, as it did fellow corporatism scholars Kenneth Erickson[22] and Philippe Schmetter,[23] to come to grips with the corporatist order of society, as distinct from a pluralist one or one of free interest group associability. That same year, 1966, that I first went to Brazil, I was also in Paraguay where I found in Alfredo Stroessner's a corporatist regime remarkably similar to Trujillo's;[24] in Argentina where I was fascinated by Perón's and the Peronistas' adherences to corporatist, Mussolini-like politics; in Chile and Uruguay which both had a more European-style system of democratic or societal (neo)corporatism; and in Peru where the dominant American Revolutionary Popular Alliance (APRA) party had a similar sectoral or syndical organization. Based on this research as well as briefer research and interviewing during this period in Panama and Venezuela, I began to formulate the ideas that would go into my "corporatist model" of Latin American politics.

[17] The thesis was written in 1962; it came out in book form as Howard J. Wiarda, *Dictatorship and Development: The Methods of Control in Trujillo's Dominican Republic* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1968).

[18] Howard J. Wiarda, "Mexico: The Unraveling of a Corporatist Regime," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 30 (Winter 1988-89), pp. 1-28.

[19] Steve C. Ropp, "What about Corporatism in Central America?" in Howard J. Wiarda, ed., *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America—Revisited* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2004), pp. 256-281.

[20] Howard J. Wiarda, *Dictatorship, Development, and Disintegration: Politics and Social Change in the Dominican Republic* (Ann Arbor: Xerox University Microfilm, for the Center for Latin American Studies, University of Massachusetts, 1975), 3 volumes.

[21] Howard J. Wiarda, *The Brazilian Catholic Labor Movement* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts, Labor Relations and Research Center, 1969).

[22] Kenneth P. Erickson, *The Brazilian Corporative State and Working Class Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

[23] Philippe C. Schmitter, *Interest Conflict and Political Change in Brazil* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1971).

[24] Howard J. Wiarda, "The Government and Politics of Paraguay," Unpublished paper, University of Florida, 1962.

It seemed clear to me almost immediately that Latin America did not conform to the supposedly universal models of economic development set forth by W.W. Rostow,[25] Robert Heilbroner,[26] and the U.S. foreign aid program (which Rostow largely designed); nor to the social-mobilization-leads-to-democracy model of Karl Deutsch;[27] nor to the middle classness-yields-democracy model of S.M. Lipset;[28] and certainly not to the functionalism of Gabriel Almond.[29] Based on my own research and case studies in the field (at that time Latin America was the only developing area I had been to), Latin America seemed unique, distinctive (hence the subtitle of one of my books, "The Distinct Tradition"). It struck me as particularly significant that wherever I went in Latin America, whether in military regimes or democratizing ones; in quite well-developed countries like Argentina, Uruguay, or Chile and developing ones like the Dominican Republic, Paraguay, or Central America; and in leftist-populist regimes like Mexico or Venezuela or (then) authoritarian ones like Brazil, Paraguay, and Nicaragua, I found the same or similar corporatist, organic, patrimonialist theories and structures of the state and society.[30]

I reasoned that this could not possibly be sheer coincidence; that the commonalities had something to do with the culture, structures, and systems that the colonial powers, Spain and Portugal, had brought to America, which were so different from those liberal-Lockean institutions Great Britain had brought to the United States.[31] So I began a research project that in 1972-73, 1974, 1976, 1978, and virtually every year since then would take me to Spain and Portugal to study the corporatism of the Franco and Salazar regimes,[32] and that was carried over into studies of the persistence of corporate-organic forms even in the post-Franco, post-Salazar transitions to democracy.[33] In 1977 and 1979-80 I expanded this research project to study the continuing corporatist organization of labor relations in Southern

[25] W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1960).

[26] Robert Heilbroner, *The Great Ascent* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963).

[27] Karl Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," *American Political Science Review* 55 (September 1961), pp. 493-514.

[28] Seymour M. Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53 (March 1959), pp. 69-105.

[29] Almond, ed., *Politics of Developing Areas*.

[30] Howard J. Wiarda, *Adventures in Research, Vol. I: Latin America* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2006).

[31] Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1955).

[32] Howard J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and Development: The Portuguese Experience* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1977).

[33] Howard J. Wiarda, *Transitions to Democracy in Spain and Portugal: Real or Wishful?* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1988), with Iêda Siqueira Wiarda.

Europe, encompassing Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, and (although I later excluded it from the study) Austria.[34]

This work adhered closely to the traditional canons of the scientific method as it is known and practiced in political science and the social sciences more generally. First, I did initial, exploratory field work; as a novice scholar, I got my feet wet in the fields of Hispaniola, Mexico, and Central America. From those experiences I formulated some preliminary queries, puzzles, and eventually hypotheses. I then went into the field on a longer-term basis—Brazil especially, Mexico, South and Central America, the Dominican Republic, Portugal, Spain, eventually Italy, Greece, and Austria—to test these hypotheses. I came back not only with a series of case studies but also with some more general propositions about development, change, and sociopolitical institutions in Iberia and Latin America. From these case studies, not from a prior theory or ideology, I began to formulate "the corporatist model" of Iberia and Latin America.

What went into the formulation of this model? There were four major ingredients in my own mind as well as those of several other analysts of the concept. The first was systems theory. From my graduate training with Heidenheimer, Clubok, as well as political theorist Manning Dauer, I was strongly steeped in Parsonian, Rostovian, Lipsetonian, Eastonian, Almondian systems theory. I saw societies and polities as *systems*, their component parts inter-related. But I knew from my field work in Latin America and Iberia that these countries did not conform to the particular U.S. and Western European-based Eastonian-Almondian systems theory that I had learned in graduate school.

Second, because of my own research and background, I was strongly interested not just in Latin American history, sociology, and politics but also in political theory, comparative religion, and particularly Catholic political theory. Because of my teachers at Michigan and Florida, I knew this "stuff" backwards and forwards, particularly the great sixteenth-century Spanish writers Suárez, Molina, Vitoria, and Soto, who provided the justification for a corporately-organized colonial-imperial state as well as the revival of Catholic-corporatist thinking in the nineteenth century and in the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragessimo Anno* (1931).[35]

[34] Howard J. Wiarda, *From Corporatism to Neo-Syndicalism: The State, Organized Labor, and the Industrial Relations Systems of Southern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Center for European Studies, 1981).

[35] Howard J. Wiarda, "Corporatist Theory and Ideology: A Latin American Development Paradigm," *Journal of Church and State* 13 (Winter 1978), pp. 29-56.

Third, I had rich case study materials, from a variety of countries and from a variety of types of countries, on which I could draw.[36]

And fourth, although this came a few years later, I had begun to formulate the ideas for a non-ethnocentric, non-Western theory (or theories) of development, as compared with the orientation and biases of so much of the Western development model.[37] Mine was a model that verged on cultural relativism: it suggested that the writings of Rostow and others were so ethnocentric that they had little relevance to today's, non-Western developing nations; that beginning with the landmark Iranian revolution of 1979 (not my favorite regime but we needed to recognize its historical significance), countries in the third world were embarking on a course to find *their own* theory and model of development that was neither Soviet-Marxist nor U.S.-developmentalist;[38] that we needed to broaden our purview to include distinct Islamic, Asian, African, and Latin American models of development; that there were some universals in this process but that each society or culture area, following Frank Sinatra, would have to find "their own way" to development and democracy.[39]

The corporative model was set forth in a series of papers, journal articles, and books that became more detailed and thorough as my knowledge and understanding grew. I had written a paper that included a discussion of corporatism in Paraguay as early as 1962, and my MA thesis on Trujillo that same year similarly contained a brief discussion of control over all corporate groups,[40] but the first detailed, published work on corporatism came out in 1968 in my book on Trujillo. That was followed in 1969 by a monograph on

[36] A Japanese colleague, Hiroshi Matsushita, who serves as an unofficial biographer and is the foremost exponent chronicler, and popularizer of corporatist theory and approaches in Japan, told me that he was studying Peronism in Argentina in the early 1970s when he first came across my *World Politics* article on corporatism. At that time he was taking two graduate seminars at the University of Mendoza, one on systems theory and the other on Catholic political thought. He saw immediately that what I had done was to wed systems theory to the foundations of Catholic political theory and culture in a way that provided a unique Latin American model of development. When he later read my work on ethnocentrism and the need for non-Western theories of development, the circle was complete in Prof. Matshushita's mind: he now had not only a model of Latin American development but a method for constructing a distinctive Japanese or Asian one.

[37] Howard J. Wiarda, *Ethnocentrism and Foreign Policy: Can We Understand the Third World?* (Washington, D.C. American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1985).

[38] Howard J. Wiarda, ed., *Non-Western Theories of Development* (Fort Worth, Harcourt Brace, 1998); and Wiarda, ed., *Comparative Democracy and Democratization* (Forth Worth: Harcourt Brace, 2001).

[39] I first published these ideas in widely accessible form while a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (AEI) in the early 1980s. Because AEI and some of its scholars *did* have what they saw as a universal model of development (free markets) and democracy (American-style pluralism), these writings got me in bad trouble with my colleagues and the Institute, and almost cost me my job there.

[40] Wiarda, *The Methods of Control*.

the corporatist origins of the Brazilian Catholic labor movement;[41] the next year I wrote and then presented in the spring of 1970 for the first time a full-blown version of the corporatist model at the Mershon Center for Education in National Security at Ohio State University.[42] An updated and shortened version of that paper was presented at the 1971 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association and published in *World Politics* in January, 1973.[43]

There followed several other papers on corporatist theory and political sociology in the 1970s,[44] as well as a book on corporatism in Latin America collecting these early writings in 1981.[45] Meanwhile my large case study of corporatism and development in the Dominican Republic was published in 1975,[46] followed by my book on Portuguese corporatism in 1977.[47] In the 1980s and 1990s while working in Washington, D.C., I mainly wrote on foreign policy issues, but returned to the corporatism themes in *Transitions to Democracy in Spain and Portugal* (1988),[48] *Corporatism and Comparative Politics* (1996),[49] *The Soul of Latin America* (2001),[50] and *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America—Revisited* (2004).[51] The published record is a rather complete one; I would like to think that my writings on the corporatism theme became more sophisticated and refined over the decades.

I cannot presume to speak for the other early scholars of corporatism, but I assume their trajectories were not altogether different from mine. For

[41] Wiarda, *The Brazilian Catholic Labor Movement*.

[42] Howard J. Wiarda, "Elites in Crisis: The Decline of the Old Order and the Fragmentation of the New in Latin America," Presentation at the Mershon Center, Ohio State University, 1970. Half of that pape became the *World Politics* article of 1973; the first and introductory part, "Elites in Crisis," was incorporated as the introductory theoretical chapter in Wiarda, *Dictatorship, Development, and Disintegration*, and was later published as a separate chapter in Wiarda, *Corporatism and Development in Latin America*.

[43] Howard J. Wiarda, "Toward a Framework for the Study of Political Change in the Iberic-Latin Tradition."

[44] Howard J. Wiarda, "Corporatism and Development in the Iberic-Latin World," *Review of Politics* 36 (January 1974), pp. 3-33; Wiarda, "Corporatism Rediscovered," *Polity* 10 (Spring 1978), pp. 416-28; Wiarda, "The Corporative Origins of the Iberian and Latin American Labor Relations Systems," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 13 (Spring 1978), pp. 3-37; Wiarda, "The Corporatist Tradition and the Corporative System in Portugal," in Lawrence Graham and Harry Makler, eds., *Contemporary Portugal* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), pp. 89-122; Wiarda, *Transcending Corporatism? The Portuguese Corporative System and the Revolution of 1974* (Columbia, SC: Institute of International Studies, University of South Carolina, 1976); and Wiarda, "Corporatist Theory and Ideology."

[45] Howard J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and National Development in Latin America*.

[46] Howard J. Wiarda, *Dictatorship, Development, and Disintegration*.

[47] Howard J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and Development: The Portuguese Experience*.

[48] Howard J. Wiarda, *Transitions to Democracy in Spain and Portugal*.

[49] Howard J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and Corporative Politics*.

[50] Howard J. Wiarda, *The Soul of Latin America: The Cultural and Political Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001).

[51] Howard J. Wiarda, ed., *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America—Revisited* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2004).

example, Ronald Newton similarly studied under McAlister at Florida and then did case study work on corporatism in Argentina[52]—historically, under Perón, and then continuing in the post-Perón opening to democracy. James Malloy was intrigued by the corporatist-syndicalist organization of the National Revolutionary Movement (NMR) in Bolivia, the subject of his doctoral dissertation and later books.[53] Martin Heisler studied the ongoing presence of corporatism in the postwar states of Europe and elevated it into a full-fledged model of the European polity.[54]

Philippe Schmitter, similarly, discovered corporatism in his case studies of interest representation in Brazil and Portugal.[55] In the earliest of these, the Brazil study, Schmitter emphasized both the cultural and the institutional aspects of corporatism; but by the time he did the Portugal study, he focused only on institutional factors and turned into a critic of corporatism's cultural underpinnings. Schmitter also had the advantage, along with Heisler, of discovering corporatism in Northern Europe before most of the rest of us did. Hence, he could write of corporatism as a general theory devoid of any regional or culture-area ties, while others—Malloy, Newton, Fredrick Pike, and myself—were still focused on the Latin American or, in my case, Iberian-Latin American area study. Schmitter offered a widely quoted definition of corporatism: "a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized 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."[56] Yet his definition was still tied to the more authoritarian versions of his early case studies, Brazil and Portugal, and fit only uncomfortably with the democratic corporatism practiced in Germany, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian countries. His emphasis on institutions alone as *the* cause of corporatism and his scathing criticism of cultural backgrounds and approaches caused him to miss a great deal in the history and functioning of corporatism not only in Southern Europe but also, it now turns out, in Austria, Germany, and the Netherlands, among others, as well (see below for more discussion).

[52] Ronald C. Newton, "On 'Functional Groups,' 'Fragmentation,' and 'Pluralism' in Spanish American Political Society"; also "Natural Corporatism."

[53] James Malloy, *Bolivia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1970).

[54] Martin Heisler, *Politics in Europe*.

[55] Philippe Schmitter, *Interest Conflict and Political Change in Brazil*; Schmitter, "Corporatist Interest Representation and Public Policy-Making in Portugal," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., September 5-7, 1972.

[56] Philippe C. Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?" *The Review of Politics* 36 (January 1974), p. 93.

The publication of my own early article on the corporative model in *World Politics* in January, 1973, a year before Schmitter's, had an explosive and immediate impact on the entire field of Latin American studies. For, like me, there was a whole generation of 1960s-1970s young scholars and graduate students who had been trained in both Easton-Rostow-Lipset-Almond systems theory *and* in Latin American area studies. Yet when these young scholars went out into the field to write their doctoral dissertations, they found almost to a person that the grandiose, universal systems theory of Easton and Almond in which they had been trained "didn't fit" the countries where they did their research. Only two explanations were possible: either the systems theory they employed was correct and the countries they studied were, in the word of the time, "dysfunctional"; or else the theory was wrong and the countries involved had their own system but one that didn't conform to the Almondian scheme.

Eventually by the early 1970s, enough dissertations and books on enough countries had been written that we concluded it was the earlier systems theory that was wrong as well as, perhaps, the countries. That is why the corporatism model received such a warm reception in the field, for it managed to resurrect grand systems theory and comparative politics analysis but in a way that made it compatible with the particular Latin American experience. My contribution was to tie together the systems theory of the comparative politics field with the area studies experience of Latin America in new, innovative, and challenging ways. The model had a clear and major impact on a field that had long been struggling with the same issues as I: how to bring the broad field of Latin American studies into mainstream political science,[57] and at the same time how to fashion the main political science theory and approaches so that they had *relevance* for Latin America. That is what the corporatist framework provided.[58]

THE ARGUMENT

When I first went to Latin America in the early 1960s, I found few of the elements I had been conditioned to look for from my graduate training. I found very little input-turnover-output à la Easton's systems theory; instead

[57] See especially the writings of John Martz, "The Place of Latin America in the Study of Comparative Politics," *Journal of Politics* 28 (February 1966), pp. 57-80.

[58] In my files I have a thick manila folder of letters from Latin America scholars telling me how much they appreciated the corporative focus, that it opened their eyes to new research possibilities, and, most importantly for the argument presented here, that it made what they saw as a critical connection tying the field of Latin American studies (7,000 members of the Latin American Studies Association) together with mainstream political science and comparative politics.

I found mostly disorganization, dysfunction, and chaos in the countries I studied, though I later came to understand there was a "system," of sorts, to the chaos. I did not find much economic development leading to social justice and an age of high mass consumption à la Rostow; instead I found a great deal of economic stagnation and poverty, coupled with corruption and bloated, inefficient, non-performing state bureaucracies derived from the ISI (import-substitution-industrialization) model.

Nor did I find from Lipset and Deutsch much social mobilization and a growing middle class leading to democracy; rather, I found, à la Petras[59] and Huntington,[60] a fragmented middle class without a commitment to democracy and social mobilization that provoked the established and elite interests (Army, Church, oligarchy) to sponsor *coups d'etat* and long-term military authoritarianism, and almost no transitions to democracy. Finally, I found very little of Almond's functionalism: almost no interest articulation or interest aggregation, as he described it, no real rule-making or rule-adjudication, but mostly disruption, clan and extended family rivalries, clientelism and patrimonialism, fragmentation, and national breakdowns into revolution, civil war, U.S. military interventions, and disintegration. After observing this in several countries, I concluded that something was clearly wrong ("dysfunctional") not just with the countries I studied but also with the very models I had initially used to study them.

So I began to devise my own model, derived not from some pre-conceived theory of how modernization *ought* to proceed, as above, but from my own field experiences. I discovered that the paradigms and systems theory I had been using did not fit the countries I wanted to study. I discovered concurrently, parallel to Islam in the Middle East or Confucianism in East Asia, that in Latin America there was a whole *system* of thought, history, culture, religion, and economic and sociopolitical organization "out there" that failed to conform to the Western model. If I still wanted to be a systems analyst, I reasoned, I would have to formulate my own system paradigm. That is what the "corporative model" was all about.

What would be the ingredients in such a model? First, I looked at political theory and discovered there was a rich history and tradition of Catholic political thought and sociology especially relevant to Latin America with which most scholars were unfamiliar and which lay outside the usual (and secularizing) tradition that ran from medieval to Machiavelli, to Hobbes and

[59] James Petras, in *New Politics* (Winter 1962) and (Winter 1965).

[60] Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968).

Locke, to Rousseau and the Enlightenment, to Kant and Hegel, and to the moderns: Marx, Mill, Durkhein, Weber, T.H. Green. Second, I looked at class structure and social organization, discovering not only a hierarchical system of caste and class but also a vertical system of separate, segmented, *corporatist* estates and professional associations (Army, Church, oligarchy, bureaucracy, university, guilds, unions, peasant organizations, etc.) that remained in place and had not disappeared as modernization went forward. Third, I discovered in the political sphere a strong state system that regulated and sought to control the group life that swirled about it, either through cooptation in some cases or repression in others. This was a far cry from the inevitable-progression-to-democracy that Rostow, Lipset, Almond, and most of the development literature suggested. It was out of these three ingredients that I built my corporatist model.[61]

I defined corporatism as "a system of social and political organization in which major societal and interest groups are integrated into the governmental system, often on a monopolistic basis or under state guidance, tutelage and control, to achieve coordinated national development."[62] Note the role of the state in this system and its relations to the main *corporate* or societal interest groups that make up political society. I saw the Latin American and Iberian nations as a set of complex systems in which the state seeks to enhance and expand its power over the corporate groups (still in Latin America more a medieval than a modern concept) that swirl around it, while the corporate groups and interests seek to maintain some degree of constitutionally or organic law-mandated autonomy from the state, gang up to resist it, or perhaps, take it over for themselves. I purposely kept the definition quite general initially because I wanted it to be broad enough to cover a variety of institutional arrangements. And second, I wanted to keep it somewhat vague because, with corporatism, I sought to capture a mood, a style, a whole way of thinking and operating—a political culture—rather than any precise institutional arrangement. There could, in other words, be varieties of corporatism just as there were varieties of liberal democracies and of Marxist regimes.

What to call this model that I had fashioned? I was not, it may be surprising to hear, necessarily wedded to the term corporatism. I played around with several possibilities, including patrimonialism, organicism, "Mediterranean politics," and corporatism—all of which as descriptive terms might

[61] Space considerations rule out a longer treatment here, which in any case focuses on the anatomy and political sociology of the corporatism concept. Readers interested in more detailed exposition can pursue the items referenced above.

[62] Howard J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and Comparative Politics*, p. ix.

have served quite nicely. I was not thinking at the time of a precise analytic term, subject, by political science criteria, to rigorous testing and empiricism. Rather, I was looking for a shorthand label that would describe what my field research was revealing. I chose the term "corporatism" because (1) it had a nice ring to it, (2) it described nicely albeit incompletely the main features I had observed about Latin American politics, and (3) while the other terms were already being used ("patrimonialism" by Riordan Roett, "organic statism" by Alfred Stepan), no one was employing the corporatism label. But the very use of this term descriptively set me up for the charges that I had used it too vaguely, without a rigorous definition, and without testable hypotheses. The term also carried connotations that in some quarters meant it was loaded.[63]

In my mind, then, corporatism was a way of looking at (a *verstehen* approach) and understanding Latin America and Iberia on their own terms, in their own language and cultural conditions, in their own sociopolitical context, rather than through the biased lenses of U.S. and European-based developmentalism. Among some colleagues in the 1960s and 1970s, this repudiation of the developmentalist literature as ill-fitting and inappropriate in the Latin American context led to Marxian dependency theory; in my case, since I was equally critical of the Marxist categories as applied to Latin America, it led to corporatism—not in the politically charged way that the previous footnote describes and not yet as a rigorously analytic and testable concept. That could come later, I thought, once we knew more and had done other case studies; at the time I sought to use corporatism only in a broad and descriptive sense, enabling students and scholars to understand the Latin America area better through *its own* socio-political institutions and not from the point of view of ill-fitting imported models, be they Rostovian, Almondian, or Marxian. Too rigorous a definition at this early stage of the concept, I reasoned, was premature and could well lead to our missing important aspects that need to be better examined.

THE CRITICS

Now looking back over some 35 years, two things stand out concerning the criticisms of the corporatist model. The first is how little criticism there

[63] It was hard to write about corporatism as a neutral, social-scientific term because of its widespread association with 1930s fascism and World War II. That was brought home to me after a lecture in the Netherlands when an elderly gentleman came up to me afterwards and said he had "fought" corporatism in World War II. "And now you're asking me to accept that as a neutral, descriptive term as applied to certain countries," he went on; "I cannot accept that."

has been. The second is how predictable the criticisms that have been leveled have been, given both the flaws and the self-limitations in the model as it was originally presented. By now, corporatism is widely accepted as one of the major approaches within comparative politics as well as Latin American studies. At the same time, the concept has been refashioned, redefined, and reformulated over these three and a half decades in response to a number of the early criticisms. That is precisely, in my mind, how the scholarly enterprise ought to proceed.

The first serious, scholarly criticism of the corporatist model came from Prof. Linn Hammergren, then of Vanderbilt University.[64] Based on her extensive field work studying local government administration in Peru, Professor Hammergren argued that the approach was too "architectonic"; that by focusing only on institutions at the national political level, the model ignored that most government designs, corporatist or other, had little effect at local levels where, especially in the third world, the government's reach and writ were small. It is all well and good, Hammergren said, for government at the national or center level to declare itself "corporatist," as the Peruvian government of 1968-75 did; but unless that government's policies and programs reach down to the level of the local village, which it did not or at best only weakly, it does not make much difference what the government calls itself, what label it uses.[65]

I agree with much of Hammergren's comments. Most of the state systems in Latin America are strong in aspiration but weak in effective policy implementation. That is true whether the system is called corporatist or something else. Of course, the long-lived dictatorships in Latin America—Trujillo, Somoza, Stroessner, Castro—with spies, agents, or party organizations in every town and village, could maintain control and make their policies felt even at local levels. But in general Hammergren is correct: what goes on at the often under-institutionalized national level in the third world often has little immediate effect at local levels. On the other hand, no one would deny, including Hammergren, that who or what faction is in control at the national level, and the model, system, or policy they put in place, does make a major difference in the system as a whole.

[64] Linn Hammergren, "Corporatism in Latin American Politics: A Reexamination of the Unique Tradition," *Comparative Politics* (July 1977). My response was entitled "Corporatism in Iberian and Latin American Political Analyses: Criticisms, Qualifications, and the Context and 'Whys' of the Debate," *Comparative Politics* (January 1978), pp. 307-312.

[65] David Chaplin, ed., *Peruvian Nationalism: A Corporatist Revolution* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1976); David Scott Palmer, *"Revolution from Above": Military Government and Popular Participation in Peru* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Latin American Studies Dissertation Series, 1973).

A second criticism of the corporatist model and approach came from the Marxist left.[66] This took the form of a full-length critique in a radical-leftist journal, *Latin American Perspectives*. The author, Keith A. Haynes, was a young scholar strongly influenced by Marxian dependency theory. The critique, as would be expected, focused more on the "sins" of omission in my corporative model than any sins of commission, mainly the lack of attention to class factors, capitalism, and U.S. imperialism and interventions. Worse, from the critic's point of view, the focus on corporatism detracted attention from the all-important factor of class structure and class struggle.

In response, let me say, perhaps surprisingly, that I do not disagree strongly with Haynes' critique. First, as one who has long been a critic of U.S. military interventions in Latin America, especially involving the 1965 Dominican Republic intervention that almost cost me my first academic job,[67] I do not think I need to be apologetic on this score at all. Second, the corporative framework was aimed at uncovering the *internal*, *Latin American* political process—though I now agree with Haynes that the model would have been enriched had I brought in such exogenous factors as U.S. Embassy machinations in internal Latin American affairs or the impact of the IMF, World Bank, and global economic forces on domestic politics. Third, the model I presented sought to focus attention on both class-caste *and* corporate divisions in society and how these two are interrelated, with class structure demonstrating hierarchical social differentiation and corporatism showing the vertical, segmented, or "pillared" structure of society. I actually believe that is the correct way to view Latin American social structure, through both class-caste and corporate lenses and their interrelations, and I do not see any need to offer a corrective on that score.[68]

A third criticism centers on the absence, in my original formulation of the model, of a clear definition of corporatism.[69] To this charge I need to plead guilty, or at least partially so. In defense, two factors need to be taken in account. The first is that in later writings, I did offer a clear definition of corporatism amenable to testable hypotheses.[70] Second, at the time the original model was published in *World Politics*, my intention, as indicated, was to

[66] Keith A. Haynes, "Authoritarianism, Democracy, and Development: The Corporative Theory of Howard J. Wiarda," *Latin American Perspectives* 15 (Summer 1988), pp. 131-150. My response was in the Fall 1989, issue, pp. 60-63.

[67] Howard J. Wiarda, *Universities, Think Tanks, and War Colleges: The Main Institutions of American Educational Life—A Memoir*. (Philadelphia, PA: Random House/XLibris, 1999) Chapter 4.

[68] L.N. McAlister, "Social Structure and Social Change in New Spain," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 43 (1963), pp. 349-370.

[69] This was the thrust of Schmitter's criticism in "Still the Century."

[70] Howard J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and Comparative Politics*.

describe a mood, a certain way of thinking about and organizing Iberian and Latin American national social and political life that was not present in the United States; not to offer a rigorous definition focused on a particular set of institutional arrangements. My definition, in other words, encompassed political-cultural variables as well as institutional ones. I thought that persons, who had serious academic training on Latin America area studies and extensive field experience in the region, would surely come to the same conclusions: that Latin American corporatism had been shaped by both political-cultural and institutional or structured factors. To me, this was so obvious as to be self-evident.

An accompanying criticism was that the approach was "culturalist" and, therefore, subject to all the criticisms that cultural approaches are often subject to: that they are vague, tautological, involve national stereotypes, and are used as imprecise, catch-all explanations when no other "serious" explanation is possible.

Well, first of all, I see no reason to apologize for emphasizing culture: not only is it important (maybe *the* most important factor), but it is also in a long and distinguished political-sociological tradition that includes Max Weber,[71] Margaret Mead,[72] Ruth Benedict,[73] Clifford Geertz,[74] Almond-Verba,[75] Peter Berger,[76] Samuel Huntington,[77] Harry Eckstein,[78] Aaron Wildavsky,[79] Mary Douglas,[80] David Landes,[81] and Ronald Inglehart[82]—not bad company, one would have to concede. Second, despite the effort by critics to oversimplify and typecast my writings this way, I have never been an advocate for a

[71] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribner's, 1958).

[72] Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (New York: Marrow, 1961).

[73] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (New York: Mentor, 1957); Benedict, *The Crysanthemum and the Sword* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967).

[74] Clifford Geertz, *After the Fact: Two Countries, Four Decades, One Anthropologist* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

[75] Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Boston: Little Brown, 1963); Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture Revisited* (Boston: Little Brown, 1980).

[76] Peter Berger and Lawrence E. Harrison, eds., *Developing Cultures* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

[77] Samuel Huntington and Lawrence Harrison, eds., *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

[78] Harry Eckstein, "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change," *American Political Science Review* 82 (September 1988), pp. 789-804.

[79] Aaron Wildavsky, "Choosing Preferences by Constructing Institutions: A Cultural Theory of Preference Formation," *American Political Science Review* 81 (March 1987).

[80] Mary Douglas, in Richard J. Ellis and Michael Thompson, eds., *Culture Matters* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997).

[81] David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are so Rich and Some so Poor* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998).

[82] Ronald Inglehart, "The Renaissance of Political Culture," *American Political Science Review* 82 (December 1988), pp. 1203-1230; Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Societies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990).

purely culturalist approach. Careful readers of both my case and comparative studies, as well as my more theoretical materials, will know I stress multicausation, or the *interrelations* of economic, social, geographical, historical, class, sociopolitical, institutional, and cultural variables.[83] No one of these may be used to the exclusion of others, nor should a single-causal explanation be elevated into an importance it does not have. I have *never* advocated a monolithic culturalist explanation, though it is true that in some writings I have emphasized culture more than the other factors listed. But that is a matter of taste and research preference, not a claim that culture as an explanation is necessarily to be privileged over other explanations.

As to whether culturalist explanations are vague, tautological, or faulty in other ways, I refer the reader to the recent works of Ronald Inglehart, who has provided us with some of the most interesting and sophisticated work in the field, as cited above. Not coincidentally, Inglehart's findings, scientifically derived from comparative public opinion survey research, support my own research conclusions on Latin America; more than that, Inglehart's work suggests that of all the explanations listed above, the political-culture one may carry the most explanatory power.[84]

Another issue deserves mention in this context, and that involves the question of whether there is a "distinct tradition" in Latin America or not. The answer is yes and no. Bear in mind that when I formulated "the corporative model" and wrote about the "distinct tradition," my field research experience was limited to Latin America, Portugal, and Spain, with only brief tourist trips (*not* extensive research experience) in Northern, Western, and Central Europe. So, when I wrote of Iberia and Latin America representing a "distinct tradition," I had in mind three things: (1) Latin America with its Catholic history and corporatist sociopolitical structures was very different from the "Anglo-Protestant" (Samuel Huntington's term) tradition of the United States; (2) Latin America failed to conform to the supposedly universal but actually quite Euro-American and ethnocentric models that Rostow, Almond, *et. al.* had concocted for them; and (3) Iberia and Latin America, as a product of sixteenth-century Spain and Portugal, were predominantly "Western" in their main institutions, but represented à la Louis Hartz's "fragments" thesis,[85] a distinct ("Catholic," "Hispanic," "Southern

[83] See especially Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline, *An Introduction to Latin American Politics and Development* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2nd edition, 2007); and Wiarda and Kline, eds., *Latin American Politics and Development* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 6th edition, 2007).

[84] Ronald Inglehart, "Political Culture and Democracy," in Howard J. Wiarda, ed., *New Directions in Comparative Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 3rd edition, 2002), pp. 141-164.

[85] Louis Hartz, ed., *The Founding of New Societies* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1964).

European," "Mediterranean,"—all of these designations with rich literatures in themselves that we cannot go into here, but for starters see the extensive writings of Fernand Braudel[86]) and unique history within the Western one.

It was only a few years later, by which time other scholars of corporatism had discovered and begun to dissect its manifestations in Northern Europe (Austria, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Scandinavia), that I myself was able to do extensive field research in both Austria and the Netherlands. In the Austria research, I wrestled with the issue of whether corporatism there was more Catholic and "Southern European" (like Italy or Spain) or Germanic and Northern European (more like Scandinavia). The answer was, a little of both. In the Netherlands, I was particularly interested in the writings on corporatism by Calvinist scholar (and later prime minister), Abraham Kuyper,[87] both because he wrote at about the same time as the famous Catholic "corporatist" encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, and because I had long known about the Protestant version of corporatism but had not had the opportunity to explore it further. The upshot of this research would be the conclusion that (1) the Iberian-Latin American version of corporatism was still unique and distinctive, but (2) corporatism per se was not, and (3) there was a greater variety of corporatism than I had previously thought.

One further element in this part of the story is relevant, and that involves the fact that after I wrote the original *World Politics* piece outlining the corporatist model, I received dozens of unsolicited letters (this was before email!) from all over the world saying, in effect, "thank you for your analysis; your model is relevant in my country as well." The letters came from such diverse countries as the Philippines (not unexpected, since it, like Latin America, had undergone centuries of Spanish Catholicism and imperialism), Indonesia, South Africa, Tanzania, Thailand, Japan, China, South Korea, Taiwan, Egypt, and Tunisia. Once again, it was not until some years later that I was able to visit most of these countries and see their brands of corporatism for myself. I was fascinated by the rich variation in corporatist forms and institutions that I observed. But the conclusions were not much different from those I had reached ten to twenty years earlier when working in Northern Europe: (1) corporatism was not unique to Latin America or even to the Western tradition in its several varieties; (2) there were a variety of corporatist forms and practices relating both to the history and culture of the various countries and to their special sociopolitical or institutional

[86] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and Mediterranean Civilization in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972); and Braudel, *A History of Civilizations* (New York: Penguin, 1993).

[87] On Kuyper see James D. Bratt, ed., *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdman's Publishing Company, 1998).

arrangements, which were different from both my Iberic-Latin model and Schmitter's neo-corporatist one; and (3) the particular Iberic-Latin American kind (Catholic, quasi-medieval) was still quite unique and distinctive, although there were parallels in other countries.[88]

THE DECLINE OF CORPORATISM?

During the 1980s and 1990s, both corporatism and the study of it went into decline. There were numerous reasons for this trend. First, democratization, as the "Third Wave"[89] of democratization that began in the 1970s and spread widely in the 1980s and 1990s (including Spain, Portugal, Latin America, Asia, Russia, Eastern Europe) led to far greater freedom for social, political, and corporate interest groups. Free associability and pluralism would, presumably, undercut state regulation and control of interest groups, or corporatism. "Transitions to democracy" became a new and attractive research focus. Second, the lowering of tariff barriers and the greater mobility of both labor and capital (as in the EU) would, presumably, decrease the ability of national governments to control and regulate organized labor or business enterprises, thus reducing the hold of corporatism.[90] Third, the end of the Cold War nullified Marxism-Leninism as a potential state model. Now, not only was democracy "the only game in town," but there was no room or need for purported "third ways" between democracy and communism, such as corporatism.

Fourth, privatization and state downsizing, which had the goals of creating more efficient capitalistic markets and reducing bureaucratic inefficiency and corruption, also had the effect of reducing corporatism. As privatization reduces the size and reach of the state, it also reduces the capacity of the state to regulate the economy as well as corporatist interest groups. Fifth, the "Washington Consensus," which guided U.S. policy toward Latin America and elsewhere in the 1990s, championed free trade, democracy, and open markets. To the extent that these policy initiatives were implemented, corporatism, for the reasons indicated above, was reduced. And sixth, globalization. Many of the trends indicated above can be subsumed under the heading of "globalization." Globalization, as here used, may have political (democratization) as well as economic (free trade, open markets, free movement of

[88] Howard J. Wiarda, *Corporatism and Comparative Politics*.

[89] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twenthieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

[90] But see Markus L. Crepaz, "Corporatism in Decline? An Empirical Analysis of the Impact of Corporatism on Macroeconomic Performance and Industrial Disputes in 18 Industrialized Democracies," *Comparative Political Studies* 25:1 (April 1992).

labor and capital, multinational corporations) aspects.[91] To the extent globalization triumphs, therefore, corporatism would also be reduced.

I have to say that I accepted most of these arguments for a time—and still do, but to a lesser extent than ten-fifteen years ago. My "biographer" and colleague, Hiroshi Matsushita, has recently conveyed to me how shocked he, his colleagues, and their students were when, in 1987, on a lecturing tour of Japan, I announced to several audiences that I had "abandoned" my earlier focus and writings on corporatism. Professor Matsushita's recollections may be better than mine, for I do not recall using the term abandoned; if I did use that word, it was a poor choice of phrasing because what I meant to convey was that corporatism had been partially eclipsed, not that it had been erased. Perhaps something was lost in the translation from English to Japanese.

Matsushita's notes and writings from that period indicate that I had made three basic arguments. Note that these lectures were delivered before the end of the Cold War and before the attention to globalization, and therefore do not include all the arguments which, now with a longer historical perspective, are listed above. First, following Harold Bloom,[92] Francis Fukuyama,[93] and Samuel Huntington,[94] I had argued that on a global basis democracy was now becoming universal, enjoyed worldwide legitimacy, and therefore no other system or "ism," including corporatism, was permissible. Second, I had argued that specifically in Latin America, democracy had triumphed in 19 of the 21 states (all except Cuba), and therefore corporatism and authoritarianism—the "evil option," about which I had earlier written—were no longer permissible. Third, I had justified U.S. pressure against Nicaragua when it was under Sandinista rule in the 1980s, and therefore, according to Matsushita, had also abandoned my earlier position of cultural relativism. Though I had argued for at least some degree of cultural relativism on the basis that areas like East Asia, the Islamic world, and Latin America had to find *their own, indigenous* path to development, I did not see the importation of a foreign ideology, Marxism or Marxism-Leninism, into Nicaragua as representing such an indigenous or home-grown model.[95]

[91] Howard J. Wiarda, ed., *Globalization: Universal Trends, Regional Variations* (Dartmouth, NH: University of New England Press, 2008).

[92] Harold Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).

[93] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Avon Books, 1993).

[94] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave*.

[95] Howard J. Wiarda, "Pluralism in Nicaragua?" in Department of State, *Papers Presented at a Conference in Nicaragua* (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, 1982).

AUTHORITARIANISM AND CORPORATISM—REVISITED

Whatever the validity of Professor Matsushita's recollections of my evolving position on corporatism—he sees a dramatic shift, I see only a modest evolution—he and I agree that in recent books, I have gone back to the original position. The first of these, *The Soul of Latin America: The Cultural and Political Tradition* (Yale University Press, 2001), is a book that I had been meaning to write for 30 years and only got around to, because of other writing commitments, in the late 1990s. It is the full-length treatment of corporatism and the corporatist model in Iberia and Latin America that scholars and colleagues had been urging me to write ever since the first iteration of that model came out in *World Politics* in 1973.

The book delves deep into Iberian-Latin American history, political theory, sociology, and development. It shows the origins of Iberic-Latin civilization in ancient Greek political theory; Roman law, institutions, and the corporative organization of society; and medieval Catholic thought and social organization. It particularly focuses on the formative sixteenth century, the writings of Suárez and that quite remarkable group of Spanish Jesuits who presented a model of top-down, corporatist, and Christian state-society relations alternative to the secularist writings of Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Locke; and the carryover of the institutions and the political culture undergirding it to the New World. It then proceeds to show how continuous this tradition and set of institutions were, surviving the Bourbon reforms of the eighteenth century, independence and the challenge of liberalism in the nineteenth century, and the rise of fascism and Marxism-Leninism and the challenge of democratization in the twentieth century. But if Latin America presents a distinct model and tradition of development, the book asks in its last two chapters, then what are the implications of this often illiberal and only partially democratic culture and society both for Latin America and for U.S. foreign policy, which now has the advancement of democracy as its main operating premise?

The second book, where we return to these and similar themes, is an edited volume entitled *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America—Revisited* (University of Florida Press, 2004). The book is obviously a revised look at a well-known 1977 book with the same title, edited by James M. Malloy and written at the height of scholarly attention to corporatism in the mid-1970s. But then, as Latin America undertook a major transition to democracy, Malloy's work on corporatism, as did my own, went into eclipse for a time as new models of civil society, social movements, and democratization flourished. Nevertheless, by the middle-to-end of the 1990s, not only was it clear that Latin American democracy was often incomplete,

illiberal, and not very democratic ("democracy with adjectives"),[96] but it also became obvious to quite a number of scholars that corporatism was still alive and functioning, often in a modified form, even in this era of supposed democratization. Hence the idea for a new, or "revisited," look at the persistence of corporatism and authoritarianism in Latin America.

The book brought together some of the foremost scholars in the field, including David Scott Palmer, Brian Loveman, David Myers, Harvey Kline, Linda Chen, Timothy Power, Mahrukh Doctor, George Grayson, and Steve Ropp. There were chapters on the Andes countries, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Central America. There were also theoretical chapters by Paul S. Adams on corporatism and by Menno Vellinga on the state. I wrote an Introduction and Conclusion, first advancing the argument and then summing up the findings.

The main finding of the book was that while democracy and pluralism have advanced in much of Latin America, corporatism has also demonstrated a quite remarkable resilience and persistence even within ostensibly democratic regimes. This finding is quite in keeping with the conclusions reached by Fareed Zakaria in *Illiberal Democracy*,[97] Marina Ottaway in her studies of the persistence of authoritarianism in Africa,[98] and by other scholars who find that the so-called "Third Wave" of democracy has stalled or even passed, and/or that it has produced many overlapping or hybrid systems—referred to as "mixed," "controlled," "limited," etc.

The specific findings of our "Corporatism Revisited" book include the following: First, while corporatism in many countries was formally abolished in law and constitution, little follow-up enabling legislation was ever passed, with the result that the old labor laws, labor courts, government arbitration panels, etc. of corporatism often continue to operate. Second, many countries continue to treat such organized bodies as the Church, the armed forces, business associations (guilds), organized labor, and so on under the older corporatist rubric. Third, many of the new, so-called "pacts" between business, labor, and the state are still corporative in character. Fourth, many of the new "public-private partnerships" also are corporatism in updated dress. Fifth, many corporatist practices are still prevalent particularly in the areas of labor relations, social welfare (group categories), and social policy in general.

[96] Howard J. Wiarda, *Dilemmas of Democracy in Latin America* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005); also John Peiler, *Building Democracy in Latin America* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998); and Felipe Agüero and Jeffrey Stark, eds., *Fault Lines of Democracy in Post-Transition Latin America* (Coral Gables, FL: North-South Center Press, Univeristy of Miami, 1998).

[97] Fareed Zakaria, "Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (November-December, 1997), pp. 22-43.

[98] Marina Ottaway, ed., *Democracy in Africa: The Hard Road Ahead* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1997).

Sixth, many government agencies—regulatory agencies, councils of state, administrative bodies—continue to have corporative, functional, or sectoral systems of representation. Seventh, the language of politics is still often corporatist: *gremios* (guilds), *sindicatos* (syndicates), *corporaciones* (interest groups), *fueros* (group rights), *verbas* (grants), *autonomías* (local or regional groups), and so on. Eighth, newer social groups—women, peasants, indigenous, and domestics—are being brought into the political process under many of the same corporatist repression/cooptation strategies that earlier were used with business, labor, and middle class professional groups. Ninth, while corporatism in many countries has been formally abolished at the national level, it is being resurrected at local or perhaps state levels where mayors, governors, and town councils are forcing religious, human rights, labor, indigenous, and other groups to register, acquire juridical personality, and reveal funding and membership lists—all precisely what corporatist systems do. And tenth, corporatism tends to emerge in times of crisis. As the Latin American (and other) countries experience economic and/or political crises, and as the state once again comes to play a larger role in the economy, we can expect corporatist regulatory controls over social groups to be resurrected as well.

All this, to my mind, makes Latin America very exciting and interesting again for researchers. If the only developmental outcome in the region were open markets, American-style democracy, and free trade—the Washington consensus—it would be quite a boring area to study. But all these mixed, hybrid, and crazy-quilt forms of democracy *and* corporatism, free markets *and* statism, and top-down controls *and* free associability make Latin America a very interesting place to study. Perhaps, contrary to Fukuyama, the "great systems debate" is not yet over, at least in Latin America and much of the third world.

CONCLUSIONS

The first thing to say in conclusion is that, looking back over 35 years, corporatism has now been widely accepted as one of the main approaches or theoretical frameworks in the political science/comparative politics field. Corporatism is no longer "exotic"; rather, it is now routinely used in discussions of sociopolitical organization and state-society relations in different countries and regions of the world. Corporatism is no longer so controversial and has become an accepted part of the comparative politics discourse: when we see corporatism we now call it that without much dispute or need for further explanation; everyone knows what it is and uses the term. Such routinization of the use of the term and the corporatism literature is perhaps the best indication of its acceptance and institutionalism: where it is useful and sheds light on what we are studying, we use the corporatist literature and

approach; where not, we search for other models. This is, pragmatically, as it should be and how new approaches get incorporated into the field.[99]

A second conclusion relates to the persistence—surprising to some—of corporatism even under democracy. By the 1990s, a transitions-to-democracy paradigm, in Latin America and other areas, was beginning to replace the earlier corporatist one, on the assumption that corporatism and authoritarianism went together, and once the latter was overthrown, the former would also give way to free associability and pluralism. That has indeed occurred in many countries but only partially so. By now we have come to understand that most of the transitions to democracy of the past two decades were incomplete, producing mainly illiberal democracies and other mixed forms. But those "mixes," as outlined in the previous section, contain many corporatist features; indeed, the persistence of corporatism and now the rise in some Latin American countries of neocorporatism, even *within* democratic regimes, is one of the great unstudied issues of these times.

Third, it is striking that in the new literature, the old debate between the cultural versus the structural-institutional basis of corporatism is still alive and even well and flourishing. In Austria, for example, often cited as the most corporatist country in the world, and therefore the one where globalization, EU policy, the multinationalization of business and labor, etc. should have produced a decline of corporatism, that has not necessarily happened. Instead, corporatism may be as strong as ever. Austrian scholars attribute that both to the strong institutionalization of corporatism, *and* to its history and culture as a Catholic, Hapsburgian (like Spain), "pillared" (*lager*), medieval guild-state, and bureaucratic top-down society and country.[100] Similarly in Latin America: clearly one of the impediments to greater, deeper democratization has been institutional weaknesses, but part of the answer lies also in the fact that even now, Latin America has not fully or completely embraced democracy; certainly not in its liberal, atomistic, individualistic, Lockean, North American form.[101] To the extent Latin America is undemocratic, it tends to be corporatist and organic-statist.

Fourth, we need to specify where and how, precisely, the corporatist model is still useful. Clearly Latin America has democratized at least par-

[99] Howard J. Wiarda, *An Introduction to Comparative Politics* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2nd edition, 1999); Wiarda, ed., *New Directions in Comparative Politics*.

[100] Markus Crepaz, "Corporatism in Decline?"; also Paul S. Adams, "Corporatism and Comparative Politics: Is There a New Century of Corporatism?" in Howard J. Wiarda, ed., *New Directions in Comparative Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002), pp. 17-44.

[101] Howard J. Wiarda, *The Soul of Latin America*; Howard J. Wiarda., ed., *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America*; and Wiarda, *Dilemmas of Democracy*.

tially over the last 30 years, incorporating the political party, electoral, and representational arenas. Those are what political scientists, institutionalists, and the transitions-to-democracy proponents have both concentrated on and championed. But I wish to suggest that there are entire other arenas of social and political relations "out there" that are not particularly democratic and may be more corporatist than democratic. These include, in whole or in part, the realms of labor relations, state-society relations, government social policy, the role of the state and government decision-making, and the role and position of the armed forces, religious groups, labor unions, business groups, universities, bureaucracies, etc. (all corporatist or semi-corporatist groups) *vis-à-vis* the central authority. Indeed I would submit there are two main arenas of politics in Latin America, one liberal-democratic, one corporatist, existing side by side. Part of the job of a Latin American leader these days is to manage and reconcile both of these arenas, as well as the overlaps, conflicts, and interrelations between them.[102]

Finally, let me emphasize that the corporatist model as here and elsewhere[103] presented should be viewed as a changing and dynamic model, not a static or immobile one. New groups rise and need to be accommodated to the system while old ones may fade in influence. New issues need to be faced as the outside world (globalization) keeps imposing. Perhaps most important for this discussion is that, while an older form of authoritarianism or closed corporatism in Latin America is in decline, a newer form of European-style, open or neocorporatism may be gaining ground. Working in favor of that trend are both institutional tendencies and the cultural continuity themes discussed earlier. Working against it is the fact that Latin America's earlier experience with authoritarianism and corporatism was such an unhappy one that it does not wish to hear that word again, even in its "neo" forms. But if that is the case, if Latin America's liberal-democratic institutions, as seems evident, are still weak and inchoate, and it would prefer not to mention its other or corporatist history and tradition, then one could probably predict that area will face ongoing problems of governance, effectiveness, and stability.

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[102] Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline, eds., *Latin American Politics and Development*; Wiarda, *Dilemmas of Democracy*.

[103] Paul S. Adams, *The Europeanization of the Social Partnership: The Future of Neo-Corporatism in Austria and Germany* (Amherst, MA: Ph.D. Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Political Science, University of Massachusetts, 2007).