

Larry G. Gerber

Corporatism and State Theory

A Review Essay for Historians

Over the last twenty years political scientists and sociologists concerned primarily with western European developments since 1945 have attempted to define corporatism as an ideal model for use in analyzing this region's political economies.¹ Several influential American historians in recent years have also employed the concept of corporatism in examining the development of the modern American political economy. Although these historians have not ignored the contemporary European-oriented social science literature,

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the relationship between the work of historians describing the evolution of America's political economy and the theoretical literature based primarily on more recent European experiences and European concerns remains problematic.

Even before European social scientists began systematically to debate the accurate definition of corporatism, a group of New Left historians in the United States developed the notion of "corporate liberalism" to describe the political economy and ideology that first arose in America in the early decades of the twentieth century (Sklar 1970 [1960]; Kolko 1967 [1963]; Weinstein 1969 [1968]; Scheinberg 1966; Radosh 1967, 1970 [1966]).² A later variant of a corporatist analysis of modern American history, best expressed in the work of Ellis Hawley (1968, 1974, 1978, 1981a, 1981b, 1986, 1988, 1992 [1979]), rejects many of the conclusions of the "corporate liberal" school while sharing with it the belief that the concept of corporatism is critical for understanding twentieth-century American collectivism. Hawley (1988: 123) contends that the evidence presented by New Left historians to show pro-business corporate liberals "spoke for and exercised the power of a class and in this capacity had designed and built the twentieth-century state as a class instrumentality remain[s] thin and unpersuasive." Nevertheless, he also argues that a "corporatism of the liberal center" based on a belief in the desirability of promoting economic planning and coordination through government assistance to and promotion of "non-competitive, role-ordered occupational or functional groupings" has been central to the development of the modern American political economy (Hawley 1978: 312-15).

While frequently citing the most influential theoretical studies by European authorities, American historians during the last 20 years generally have not made very rigorous use of the analytical literature on corporatism when they discuss American developments. Notwithstanding the work of Hawley and other historians who have applied the concept of corporatism to the American experience (McQuaid 1978; Griffith 1982; Brand 1988; Lichtenstein 1982, 1989; Hogan 1987), most non-American social scientists (e.g., Salisbury 1979; Wilson 1982) argue that corporatism, as they define the term, has been virtually nonexistent in the United States. Something of a parallel situation exists in the case of Britain, where a discrepancy exists between the historically oriented work of certain scholars (Middlemas 1979; Beer 1969; Crouch and Dore 1990) who have used the concept of corporatism to describe the nature of British collectivism that evolved in the twentieth

century and the conclusions of most contemporary theorists of corporatism, who consider Britain to be as inhospitable to corporatism as is the United States. Almost every social scientist who has attempted to develop a ranking system to determine which western industrial nations are most or least influenced by corporatism shows both the United States and Britain near the bottom (Williamson 1989: 150; Tarantelli 1986).

The purpose here is to consider some of the issues raised by the extensive social science literature on corporatism, and the related field of state theory, and to see how this literature might best be used by historians. Although the initial impetus for this inquiry came from my own concerns as a student of modern American history, many of the lessons to be drawn from a careful reading of the literature on corporatism are equally relevant to historians of other countries. My aim is not to render final judgment on whether it is appropriate to apply the corporatist label to the United States or any other nation, but rather to distill from the literature on corporatism and the state certain relevant questions that might usefully inform the work of all historians dealing with the development of modern political economies.

Phillippe Schmitter (1979b [1974]) made the first attempt to define corporatism in precise terms as an ideal type to describe the political economies that were then emerging in western Europe. Schmitter sought to develop a model that took into account not only the expansion of state responsibilities, but also the new roles being taken on by centralized, functionally organized interest groups, most importantly those labor union federations and national employer associations that could be considered "peak organizations." Schmitter (*ibid.*: 13) proposed what is perhaps still the single most influential definition of corporatism:

Corporatism can be defined as 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.³

Schmitter conceded that corporatism shared many basic assumptions with pluralist models of political economy, in that both recognized the growing importance of associations and bureaucratic or technical expertise, as

well as the consequent decline in significance of territorial or partisan forms of representation. Both models also assumed an increasing interpenetration of private and public spheres of decision making and a long-term expansion in the scope of state involvement in the economy. Nevertheless, Schmitter (*ibid.*: 15) offered a definition of pluralism that very clearly distinguished it from his model of corporatism:

Pluralism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into an unspecified number of multiple, voluntary, competitive, nonhierarchically ordered and self-determined (as to type or scope of interest) categories which are not specifically licensed, recognized, subsidized, 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.

Thus Schmitter highlighted the difference between pluralism's emphasis on the value of "competitive interaction" among a proliferation of organized groups having no official ties to the state and corporatism's commitment to the use of state power to foster a spirit of cooperation among state-sanctioned, functionally organized groups that would make possible the creation of "an organically interdependent whole" (*ibid.*).

Schmitter also distinguished between two variants of corporatism. In "societal corporatism" the functional associations that come to exercise a degree of governing authority arise initially as a result of the autonomous activity of their members and only subsequently gain official recognition from the state. Thus, for example, trade unions organized originally by workers themselves might in a system of "societal corporatism" come to play an officially sanctioned role in the formulation of a national incomes policy. In contrast, state corporatism develops as an "antiliberal" system in which the governing associations are created from the outset by the state and, therefore, have no legitimacy of their own nor any real independence from the state, as was the case under fascism (*ibid.*).

It is the societal (or liberal, as described since by other scholars) variant of corporatism that is most relevant to historians interested in understanding the United States. Hence it is possible to concentrate on the issues raised by those social scientists who have sought to create a corporatist model that is applicable to the liberal democracies of western Europe, and to forgo discus-

sion of the "statist" or "authoritarian" models that have been developed to describe the political economies of various nondemocratic nations in Latin America, Asia, and Europe.

A good deal of the theoretical hairsplitting that characterizes social scientists' efforts to formulate definitions of corporatism and pluralism may be irrelevant to historians, since historians generally are more concerned with concretely detailing the complexities and inconsistencies of the past than with trying to abstract an underlying logic that can be summed up in an ideal type or model. Thus it may be of little consequence to historians whether corporatism is labeled a system of "interest intermediation," a "comprehensive economic system," or a distinct "political structure" (Schmitter 1979a; Winkler 1976; Panitch 1980). Historians can nevertheless benefit from the theoretical discussions of social scientists if they consider that literature more as a general guide for developing lines of inquiry than as a set of precisely defined models in need of testing. A number of useful questions emerge from a reading of the recent theoretical literature on corporatism.

The first involves the relation between ideology and institutions. Historians use the concept of corporatism both as a description of certain institutional arrangements and as a label for a particular set of ideological beliefs without always clearly distinguishing between these two categories. In contrast, political scientists and sociologists generally share Leo Panitch's (1980: 173) view that corporatism ought not to be understood primarily as an "ideology." Although disagreeing among themselves as to whether corporatism is essentially an economic or a political system, virtually all social scientists (e.g., Schmitter 1979b [1974]; Winkler 1976; Panitch 1980) define corporatism in terms of certain observable institutional arrangements, rather than as a set of ideas.⁴ Schmitter (1985: 37) argues that corporatist institutions did not arise as a result of "the willful calculation" of any individuals or group. Rather than being the product of "deliberate, grandiose efforts at 'political design,'" corporatism arose, in Schmitter's view, as "the largely unintended outcome of a series of disparate interest conflicts and policy crises." J. T. Winkler (1977: 82), who along with Schmitter is probably most responsible for injecting the concept of corporatism into contemporary discourse in the social sciences, also claims that the "impulse to corporatism has been pragmatic, not ideological, adaptive problem-solving, not the intentional imposition of a coherent economic strategy."

Should historians, then, follow the lead of the social scientists and refer

to corporatism only when considering actual political or economic structures? Not necessarily. British political scientist Alan Cawson (1978: 187), whose own definition of corporatism "is concerned with practice rather than ideology," still acknowledges that theory plays a crucial role in legitimizing institutional arrangements.⁵ Certain Marxist theorists (Carnoy 1984; Poulantzas 1972), concerned with the role of the state and the question of legitimacy, use the Gramscian concept of "hegemony" to explain how the establishment and maintenance of an ideological consensus is an essential factor in the perpetuation of any social system. Social thought and social practice may never be identical, but neither do they ever exist in total independence of one another. Because over time ideas shape institutions as much as institutions shape ideas, historians should consider corporatism both as an ideology and as a set of institutional arrangements.

One lesson to be learned from the social science literature, therefore, is not that ideology is a negligible aspect of corporatism, but rather that a focus on ideas in isolation from their institutional consequences reduces ideology to an abstraction that has only limited relevance for understanding the history of human societies. For the sake of clarity, historians (as well as social scientists) should make clear when they are using the concept of corporatism in relation to the realm of ideas as opposed to the realm of actual institutions. At different times the ideological or institutional aspects of the concept might be of greater interest to the historian; however, both dimensions are ultimately crucial for a full understanding of the way in which modern collectivism has evolved.

The second issue raised by the social science literature concerns the utility of distinguishing between different levels of organization within a nation's political economy. Most theorists of corporatism use the concept to describe labor-capital-state interactions affecting the political economy as a whole. The single most often cited example of corporatist arrangements involves the establishment of a national incomes policy through negotiations between the highest levels of government and peak associations representing all workers' and all employers' organizations. Yet Cawson (1986: 68-82) has argued convincingly that even if corporatism at the level of the nation-state (what he calls "macro-corporatism") is "arguably the most important variety of corporatism," the concept is also applicable at less inclusive levels of economic and political organization. Cawson uses the term "meso-corporatism"

to describe corporatist practices involving sectoral interest associations or regionally defined elements of the nation, and “micro-corporatism” to characterize corporatist practices involving individual firms.⁶

Such conceptual distinctions can be quite useful in tracing the evolution of corporatist institutions or ideologies. New practices or new ideas might well originate and develop at one level of organization before being either generalized or particularized to a broader or more specific level of organization. The question then becomes what common values, ideas, or practices are applicable to each of the three levels to justify the use of the term *corporatism* to describe all three situations. For example, the relative appeal of the ideals of cooperation and competition may serve as one factor distinguishing corporatism from pluralism at the level of the shop floor within the individual firm, at the level of an entire industry, and at the level of the political economy as a whole. At any given moment in history, however, the cooperative or the competitive ideal might exert more influence at one level of organization than at another. Representatives of labor, capital, or the state might find it in their self-interest to appeal to corporatist values at one level of organization, while rejecting them at another level. Therefore a three-tiered analysis of the evolution of collectivist structures and ideologies may produce insights that an undifferentiated analytical framework might tend to obscure.

A third issue of interest to historians that is central to recent social science literature concerns the role of groups in the public-policy-making process. A number of scholars have followed Schmitter’s lead in viewing corporatism as a particular form of interest group organization, even as they have sought to refine Schmitter’s original description of the functions performed by corporatist groups. Although clearly sympathetic to the basic thrust of Schmitter’s initial work, Gerhard Lehmbruch (1979a, 1979b) has argued that corporatism involves more than “interest representation,” whereby organized groups articulate the interests of their members and then try to lobby or negotiate with other parties in behalf of those interests. Lehmbruch claims that the officially recognized groups in a corporatist system also play a significant role in the implementation of public policy. For example, union leaders who represent workers in the formulation of a national incomes policy might then help carry out such a policy by exercising restraint in their wage demands during future rounds of collective bargaining.

Schmitter (1979a: 93) himself later substituted the phrase “interest

intermediation” for “interest representation” in his subsequent discussions of corporatism in order to indicate that corporatist associations, in particular those involving employers and workers, engage in a variety of activities, including administration of policy and disciplining of their own members, as well as interest representation and articulation. Cawson (1986: 39), in fact, claims that the “distinctive” feature of corporatism “is the fusion of representation and intervention in the *relationship* between groups and the state,” so that “interest representation and policy implementation” are inextricably combined.⁷ The language of social scientists may on occasion be rather off-putting, but historians interested in analyzing the historical evolution of the role of specific organizations of workers or employers, and of specific state agencies, would do well to keep in mind the distinction between the tasks of representation and implementation that social scientists have identified in their efforts to devise models of corporatism and pluralism.

The previous discussion leads to a fourth question arising from the social science literature: What is the relationship between corporatism and pluralism? Dissatisfaction with the then-dominant, American-inspired, pluralist paradigm led Schmitter and other scholars to develop theories of corporatism to characterize more accurately the actual role of interest group organizations in the political economies of western Europe.⁸ However, some political scientists have claimed that, upon close examination, liberal corporatism is virtually indistinguishable, as an analytical concept, from pluralism. Ross Martin (1983), Gabriel Almond (1983), and others (Jordan 1981; Cox 1988; O’Sullivan 1988) have argued that corporatist theorists either ignore much of the work of earlier pluralists or present a false model of pluralism. According to these critics, corporatist theorists overemphasize the extent to which pluralists assume that all groups, whether functionally organized or not, are equally important in the competition for influence and power. Critics also fault proponents of corporatism for claiming that pluralists assume a clear dividing line between the public and private spheres of decision making, and that the state does no more than respond to the pressures and initiatives of interest groups. Schmitter (1979b [1974]: 15–16), however, explicitly acknowledges that pluralist and corporatist models do not necessarily differ on these points. Although corporatists certainly do emphasize the primacy of functionally organized interest groups, namely labor and capital, and the high degree of interaction between public and private decision making, they

do not cite these factors as the critical characteristics distinguishing corporatism from pluralism.

Martin (1983: 96) poses a more serious challenge when he contends that the process of intergroup collaboration and consensus building that Lehbruch, in particular, emphasizes as a distinctive element of corporatism differs hardly at all from the bargaining characteristic of a pluralist system. Lehbruch's (1979a) own use of the word *bargaining* to describe the interaction between corporatist groups and Colin Crouch's (1983) use of the phrase "bargained corporatism" as a synonym for "liberal corporatism" seem to lend credence to Martin's argument. Crouch (*ibid.*) along with other radical proponents of corporatist theory, such as Panitch (1981) and Dominic Strinati (1982), conceives of "collaboration" not as a means by which labor and capital pursue a common transcendent interest but rather as a process by which organized labor ultimately is co-opted into a system that perpetuates the dominance of capital. Collaboration for these writers is a rather one-sided form of "cooperation." The distinction between the competitive bargaining of pluralism and the cooperative collaboration of corporatism may thus be, at least in part, only a matter of rhetoric.

Yet, as Crouch persuasively argues, there remains a meaningful difference between the actual modes of interest group interaction in pluralism and corporatism, even if the two approaches ought to be understood as different points on a continuum, rather than as totally contradictory opposites. Crouch (1983: 456–57) contends that "the appropriate continuum that will give us a contrast between pluralism and corporatism will have poles that place opposed weights on the two aspects of intermediation; discipline of members in favour of a general interest, and representation of their particular interests." At one pole, "the interest organizations carry out no representative functions at all and simply discipline their members" (*ibid.*: 457). This would be the equivalent of what Schmitter labels "state corporatism" and Crouch calls "authoritarian corporatism." At the other extreme interest organizations "prosecute the demands of members without compromise at all." Crouch describes such a situation as "contestation." He places pluralism toward the contestation end of the continuum but recognizes that while pluralist groups engage primarily in representation, they also become involved, to a limited extent, in disciplining their own members, as in the case of union officers fulfilling a collective bargaining agreement by preventing wildcat strikes. "Lib-

eral" or "bargained" corporatism, in Crouch's view, falls between pluralism and authoritarian corporatism in that it entails a more even balance between representation and discipline. This notion of a continuum to explain the relation between pluralism and corporatism has been adopted by several scholars, though not always with the same variables serving as the defining traits.⁹

Even though historians ought not become too caught up in the fine points of conceptual model building, it is useful for them to distinguish between corporatism and pluralism as ideological and institutional systems, while at the same time appreciating the common origins of these two approaches to collectivism. The idea of a continuum connecting pluralism and corporatism as two related but divergent responses to the demands generated by the pressures of twentieth-century capitalist development may prove especially useful in trying to understand how specific historical actors may at times have vacillated between two seemingly contradictory positions, or how institutional developments may also have swung between two seemingly contradictory organizational models.

A final set of issues raised by the literature on corporatism concerns the role of the state in modern collectivist societies. Although few scholars of corporatism have followed R. E. Pahl and J. T. Winkler (1975: 30–31) in explicitly defining corporatism as a system of "state control" within a context of "private ownership" ("fascism with a human face"), virtually all theorists of corporatism would agree with Cawson (1986: 82) that without the presence of "state actors" in the process of interest intermediation, there is no corporatism. In fact, corporatist theorizing largely arose as an effort to create a model that would offer a more satisfactory description than previously existed of the complex role played by the state in modern political economies.

In this effort, theorists of corporatism were joined by another group of social scientists whose primary concern was not creating a specifically corporatist model for analyzing the postwar political economies of western Europe, but who instead sought to develop a more general theory for comprehending the role of the state in all capitalist societies. The work of state theorists such as Pierre Birnbaum (1982), Fred Block (1987), and Theda Skocpol (1980) has much in common with the work of the theorists of corporatism, though each body of literature developed to a certain extent along a separate track (see also Bade and Birnbaum 1983; Skocpol and Finegold 1982; Evans et al. 1985). While the debate about corporatist model building took place with

little participation by American social scientists and with virtually no reference to the earlier school of corporate liberal historiography in the United States, American scholars have played a central role in the development of state theory and have quite explicitly looked at their work as an attempt to develop a more sophisticated approach to the relationship between capital and the state than the New Left had offered in the 1960s.¹⁰

A central issue in both the new state theory literature and the work on corporatism has been the extent to which the state enjoys autonomy in relation to the dominant classes or groups in civil society. Scholars of quite different political perspectives have agreed that both pluralist and traditional Marxist theories conceive of the state essentially as “a passive respondent to pressures and imperatives generated within civil society” (Zeitlin 1985: 25).¹¹ Thus both pluralist and traditional Marxist conceptions of the state are “society-centered,” in that they emphasize the ultimate power of groups or classes and minimize or ignore the possibility that the state itself might be an independent or autonomous actor in the formation of public policy.

Few theorists of corporatism would endorse Pahl and Winkler’s (1975) claim that the state exercises final control in a corporatist society. Andrew Cox (1988: 33) nevertheless argues that once corporatists include in their definition of corporatism the necessity of state licensing of interest groups, they at least implicitly acknowledge that the “state ultimately must dominate,” because it retains the crucial power of being able to grant “a monopoly of representation rights to certain interests.”¹²

Such a view, however, does not adequately take into consideration the notion of mutual interdependency between groups and the state that is central to most discussions of liberal corporatism. Interest groups may turn to the state, often unwillingly, because they are unable to accomplish their objectives by themselves, but it is also the case that the state may license or in some other way give official recognition to interest groups precisely because it is dependent on these groups for information and expertise in the process of policy formulation, and for their involvement in the implementation of policy. David Coates (1984: 127) thus argues that “the rise of corporate structures” is actually “a reflection of the weakness of the state, not its strength.”

Both the literature on corporatism and recent theorizing about the state mutually reinforce the notion that state actors must be considered as playing an at least partially independent role in shaping the evolution of a society’s

political economy, but there is little agreement about either the precise nature of that independence or the objectives that ultimately guide state action. Nicos Poulantzas (1972) developed an influential neo-Marxist theory of the state's "relative autonomy," in which he argued that while state actors do not necessarily respond to immediate pressures and demands from the capitalist class, their ultimate goal is to adopt policies that will preserve the capitalist system for the long term. Still writing within the Marxist tradition, Fred Block (1987) subsequently theorized that state actors ought not simply be viewed as farsighted protectors of capitalism but rather as individuals pursuing their own interests as politicians. Block asserts that political self-interest would normally require state actors to adopt policies which would foster the accumulation of capital as a means of assuring economic growth and prosperity. At times, however, pressures growing out of class struggle in society might cause state managers to act in ways that would be inimical to the interests of capital. Thus state actors have their own agenda and enjoy a real independence, even if under most circumstances they are constrained to act in ways that benefit capital.

Another line of argument in the state theory literature, best represented by the work of Theda Skocpol and her colleagues, focuses less on the motives of state actors and more on the issue of "state capacities" (Evans et al. 1985). Skocpol argues that the "administrative organization of government is crucial" in determining the ability of a state to implement interventionist policies, whatever the objective of those policies might be (Skocpol and Finegold: 260). The structure of government institutions in any society, she contends, is "never automatic or economically determined" but rather is always the product of historical contingency (Evans et al. 1985: 25). In fact, there is general agreement among scholars who focus on the problem of the state (Nettl 1968; Dyson 1980; Evans et al. 1985) that it is reasonable to divide modern states into two categories, strong and weak, with the former being characterized by the historical development of powerful central authority and a highly evolved government bureaucracy, and the latter by the relative absence of such traditions.

Significantly, political scientists single out the United States and Britain among advanced industrial nations as the most noteworthy examples of societies historically characterized by the "absence of a well-developed 'state tradition'" (Jessop 1982: xvi; see also Nettl 1968; Dyson 1980). This view of

the historical weakness of the American and British states clearly parallels the claims made by most theorists of corporatism that neither the United States nor Britain has proven fertile soil for the growth of corporatism. The limited state capacities of each nation, both before and during the twentieth century, may bring into question the appropriateness of applying the corporatist label to either nation, but in neither case can the state be ignored as a factor in the development of some form of modern collectivism. Even with relatively limited capacities, in both America and Britain the state ultimately played a critical role in shaping the development of each nation's political economy. The influence exercised by the state may often have resulted from what might be described as negative rather than positive forms of action, but the state's independent role must still be appreciated.

The theoretical discussions herein highlight the importance of critically examining the role of the state in shaping the evolution of any political economy. Historians need not adopt a priori assumptions about either the degree of independence or the motives of state actors, but the social science literature dealing with the state can sensitize historians to a number of issues concerning state action. Historians cannot fully understand the process by which modern economies, even ones as market oriented as is that of the United States, have evolved without taking into consideration the role played by the state, the intentions of those individuals exercising state power, and the state's administrative capacity for action at any particular point in time. Historians should also address the difficult question of what interests actually end up as the beneficiaries of specific state actions.

The social science literature on corporatism and state theory is rich and still rapidly expanding. For historians working on twentieth-century topics involving questions of political economy, public policy, and ideological development, this literature is well worth exploring. For American historians in particular, exposure to the theoretical work that has been done over the last 20 years by political scientists and sociologists on the postwar development of European corporatism can be especially valuable. Not only can such exposure help American historians pose certain questions that may usefully inform their research, but it can also help them escape the parochialism that often causes them to see American history outside the context of broader developments in the western world. Although most historians, American and non-American, are still likely to confine their primary research to a single

country, knowledge of the literature on corporatism and state theory can add a depth of comparative perspective that can only enrich any historian's treatment of the past.

Notes

- 1 Some of the most important works are Anderson 1992; Berger 1981; Cawson 1978, 1986; Cox and O'Sullivan 1988; Crouch 1979, 1983; Grant 1985; Harrison 1980; Jordan 1981; Lehbruch and Schmitter 1982; Martin 1983; Nedelmann and Meier 1977; Pahl and Winkler 1975; Panitch 1980; Pekkarinen et al. 1992; Pike and Stritch 1974; Schmitter and Lehbruch 1979; Williamson 1985, 1989; Wilson 1983; Winkler 1976, 1977; and Zeigler 1988.
- 2 Although not directly identified with the New Left school of interpretation, Gilbert (1972) also explored the rise to dominance of a corporatist outlook.
- 3 Writing almost a decade before Schmitter, Shonfield (1969 [1965]) offered one of the first comprehensive efforts to analyze the structural trends that were shaping "modern capitalism" in the post-World War II period. Focusing on the tremendous expansion in state functions and, in particular, on the significance of the Western democracies' newly established commitment to full employment and experimentation with new forms of economic planning, Shonfield at times referred to "corporatism," but he did not use or define the concept in a systematic fashion.
- 4 Cawson (1986: 38) refers to corporatism as a "specific socio-political process." As Nedelmann and Meier (1977) have pointed out, it is, however, often difficult to tell whether the various interpretations of corporatism that theorists have developed are intended as "descriptive" accounts of "certain empirical phenomena" or as "explanatory" models designed for heuristic purposes.
- 5 Cawson (1978: 180) defined corporatism as "a politico-economic system in which the state directs the activities of predominantly privately-owned industry in partnership with the representatives of a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated interest groups." In a later work, Cawson (1986: 38) modified his definition: "Corporatism is a specific socio-political process in which organizations representing monopolistic functional interests engage in political exchange with state agencies over public policy outputs which involves those organizations in a role which combines interest representation and policy implementation through delegated self-enforcement." Salisbury (1979: 222) also makes the point that "group legitimacy and group hegemony are mutually interdependent."
- 6 For a full-length study that concentrates on meso-level developments, see Anderson 1992.
- 7 For an earlier and somewhat different approach to defining corporatism, see Cawson 1978. Grant (1985: 4) also considers "the elements of negotiation and implementation" to be equally essential to liberal corporatism.

- 8 Noel O'Sullivan (1988: 3-4) also makes this point. Andrew Cox (1988: 30) argues that it was not only intellectual dissatisfaction with pluralism, but also the desire of a "younger generation" of academics to find "something" with which "to make a name" for themselves that led social scientists to develop the "corporatist movement." In discussing the origins of corporatist theorizing, A. Grant Jordan (1981: 109) makes a similar argument about the tendency of academics to dissent from orthodoxy. In the 1960s, several political scientists began to question the validity of certain aspects of the pluralist model of political economy. These critics challenged the pluralist claim that, especially in the United States, competition among a wide variety of relatively equally balanced interest groups, often with overlapping memberships and quite diverse purposes, actually determined the allocation of resources and power. Moreover, these critics questioned the pluralist notion that the state acted either as a neutral umpire or simply as an arena for a fair and equitable working out of group conflicts. For leading examples of this form of critical pluralism, see Schattschneider 1960; Kariel 1961; McConnell 1966; and Lowi 1979 [1969]. Postwar American pluralism differed significantly from an earlier version of pluralist theory developed in England in the first decades of the twentieth century. For an overview of the differences, see Nicholls 1974.
- 9 Cawson (1986: 42) describes a continuum connecting "pluralism," "corporate pluralism," and "liberal corporatism" based on the degree to which political interests have become concentrated into a limited number of groups, which have "fixed interest domains" and a "hierarchical" system of order, and do not directly engage in competition with each other.
- 10 In addition to the authors cited in the text, a representative list of recent works in the field of state theory would include Alford and Friedland 1985; Block 1987; Carnoy 1984; Dyson 1980; Elkin 1985; Jessop 1982; Miliband 1969; Netti 1968; Nordlinger 1981; Poulantzas 1972; Zeitlin 1985; and Wolfe 1977. Block and Skocpol (1980), in particular, refer to what they see as the theoretical inadequacies of the New Left's corporate liberal conception of American history.
- 11 Zeitlin (1985), however, questions the success of corporatist theory to move beyond pluralism and Marxism's treatment of the state. For a similar argument about the similarities between the views of the state in pluralism and Marxism, see Wolfe 1977.
- 12 O'Sullivan (1988: 19) charges that the gravest "defect" of corporatist theory "consists of the inability to develop a coherent theory of the state." See also Zeitlin 1985 and Birnbaum 1982 for similar criticisms. Proponents of a corporatist model such as Cawson (1986: 18) and Peter Williamson (1985: 147) acknowledge that "the concept and the theory of the state presents a problem which has yet to be adequately resolved" by theorists of corporatism. Williamson (*ibid.*: 156), who is far more sympathetic to the concept of liberal corporatism than Cox or O'Sullivan, also concludes that corporatism "should be regarded as a set of political structures designed to maintain a position of state domination."

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