

State-Society Relations and National Development: A Comparison of Argentina and Taiwan in the 1990s(*)

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Research on national development in developing and newly industrializing countries (NICs) has focused on issues of economic growth and social change independent of each other, without paying much attention to the way the two elements relate to each other and to the conditions that could lead to their simultaneous occurrence. This paper argues that explanations of how economic growth with -- or without -- 'positive social change' can occur require attention to changing state-society relations. This research investigates the cases of Argentina and Taiwan, where economic growth in the 1990s has not translated into positive social change. By analyzing changing state-society relations, this research shows that relations of power within societies have a clear effect on national development; it also reveals how different social actors may be able to influence a state's developmental strategies. This paper re-evaluates traditional views of the state and society in Argentina and Taiwan by examining the fluctuating composition of the societal base of the state and the changing relations between the state and its societal coalition. The analysis reveals the processes under which economic growth without social change is occurring in both countries, and provides general insights into the way dynamic state-society relations can influence national development in other contexts.

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Introduction

In recent years, a substantial amount of research on national development in developing and Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs) has focused extensively on the identification of developmental strategies that have led to rapid economic growth (Bradford, 1990; Gereffi, 1990; Gereffi and Hempel, 1996). Development studies have also paid attention to reconceptualizing national development not only as an economic goal but also as a social objective (Spalding, 1990; Goulet and Wilber, 1992; Kincaid and Portes, 1994; Straussfogel, 1997). Following in that vein, research has indicated that development should also involve improvements in social welfare and enhancement of citizenship rights (Kincaid and Portes, 1994; Jelin, 1996a); this can be broadly categorized as 'positive social change'. Although research on development has acknowledged that economic growth and positive social change are both parts of a definition of national development, to date there is still a lack of research that identifies, evaluates and explains under what conditions both goals are, or can be, achieved.

I contend that one crucial step towards the identification of those conditions lies in an examination of the relations between economic growth and positive social change, to understand the distinct way in which the two condition each other at different times and across places. In this paper, I shed light on this last issue by arguing that an explanation of how economic growth with B or without -- positive social change can occur requires attention to changing state-society relations in the particular contexts of study. I argue that the articulation of economic growth and positive social change comes as the result of more extensive sets of relations, such as the relations between state and society. Accordingly, in this paper I examine the way in which the relations among the state, the societal base of the state -- that is, the coalition of different social groups from which the state draws its support and/or legitimacy -- and other internal and external social forces, can affect state policy and state action. I suggest that these institutional linkages can be directly or indirectly responsible for the presence or absence of positive social change during periods of rapid economic growth and, consequently, affect national development.

Through a comparative analysis of Argentina and Taiwan, this paper contributes to the existing literature on national development in NICs and developing countries by exploring two issues. First, this research briefly documents the existence of a divergence between sustained economic growth and positive social change -- deterioration of the conditions of social welfare and/or citizenship -- in Argentina and Taiwan during the last two decades. Since accounting for all indicators of economic growth and positive social change is, of course, virtually impossible, the research focuses on some indicators that illustrate the fundamental argument being made. The analysis interprets this divergence critically, taking into account the substantive differences between Argentina and Taiwan.

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Second, this research explains the divergence through an analysis of the way national development in Argentina and Taiwan is affected by the relations among the state, the societal base of the state, and other societal coalitions. This requires the identification of social actors, groups and institutions that are part of the state and civil society and of the way in which these actors are related to one another in each spatio-temporal context. The historical component of this research focuses on those events that can effectively contribute to an explanation of the dynamics of state-society relations, and it is not intended to be a comprehensive historical account. At issue is uncovering some of the factors that produce a divergence between national economic growth and positive social change and an explanation of the reasons why such divergence varies across time and place.

States, societies and national development: the institutional perspective

Institutional accounts, including the literature on the coalitional bases of states and political regimes, have built on political economy concepts and attempted to explain outcomes of development trajectories as the product of different relations of power in society (Deyo, 1989; Cheng, 1990; Deyo, 1990; Ellison and Gereffi, 1990; Kaufman, 1991; Haggard and Kaufman, 1995). The focus of this body of work is on the analysis of different national institutions such as the state, firms, political coalitions and other social actors. Different development outcomes, such as economic growth, or the presence or absence of social policy, are mediated by such institutions. In general, the aim of the institutional perspective is to understand state structures and roles, relations between state and society, and the manner in which states can contribute to national development (Evans, 1995).

From an institutional perspective, the state is seen as a key actor in the process of national development. Several studies have shown the influence of the state's involvement in the development process. Early institutional accounts have explained how states can provide a suitable environment for capital (Gerschenkron, 1962), and have shown states' capabilities to organize financial markets (Hirschman, 1958). More recent institutional accounts have revealed how states can induce private capital to become more entrepreneurial (Amsden, 1990), or to guide its investment (Wade, 1990a). One difficulty with this state-centered literature is its static description of processes of socio-political interaction. Societies and states are often labeled either 'strong' or 'weak' to account for the success or failure of development strategies (for example, see Migdal, 1988; Deyo, 1990). In this fashion, institutional accounts explore the strength or weakness of states and societies relative to either capital and economic development (Wade, 1990) or to social control (Migdal, 1988). This 'strong' or 'weak' state and society argument has been advanced to explain the different experiences of NICs in Latin America and East Asia (Deyo, 1989; 1990; Kaufman, 1990; Evans, 1995). Jenkins (1991) even claimed that a distinction was to be made between state intervention (in Latin American NICs) and effective state intervention (in East Asian NICs) to explain the different results obtained in Latin America relative to East Asia, and to emphasize the role of a 'strong' developmental state.

Revised institutionalism has challenged the strong or weak state-society dichotomy and concluded that state-society relations are dynamic, because relations of power among social actors are contingent on different social, political and economic conditions over time (Douglass, 1994; Moon and Prasad, 1994). The strong or weak state-society approach fails to acknowledge the dynamism and complexity inherent to state structures because it depicts the state as an internally cohesive and unitary actor. This perspective also fails to understand that state bureaucrats are not insulated from society, but rather interwoven with it through formal and informal channels (Moon and Prasad, 1994; Evans, 1995), and that direct causal relationships between government intervention and economic performance over time cannot be established without attention to contingent or unintended intervening effects (e.g. turmoil in international political and economic systems).

The recognition of the state as an active participant influencing the directions of national development strategies (Gerschenkron, 1962; Amsden, 1990; Wade, 1990a; 1990b) discredited the original claims that attributed the success of some NICs (especially in East Asia) to the precepts of self-adjusting markets supported by neoclassical economics. As Wade (1990b) explained, the self-adjusting markets approach left the explanations of success in the arms of private entrepreneurs, an open economy, a state that refrained from policy-induced reforms and a market that reflected 'real' scarcities which were overcome by achieving economies of scale via exports. But the postulates of the 'developmental state', which attributed the success of the East Asian nations to the high level of autonomy of the state vis-a-vis other social forces and interest groups (Wade, 1990b, Jenkins, 1991), were challenged by the recognition that the state interacts with external and internal forces and that, as a result of this, the state should be seen as another institution

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among the many in society (Moon and Prasad, 1994; Park, forthcoming).

An institutional framework that focuses on state-society coalitions is a useful theoretical alternative to explain those aspects of the process of national development that are not accurately addressed by neoclassical and pure statist approaches. Analyzing national development from such a revised institutional viewpoint means acknowledging that groups that have impacts on society, including the state, are heterogeneous in their forms. An institutional framework that attempts to address issues of national development, however, would remain incomplete if it failed to account for the variable composition of social forces over time. Social forces share spaces of action among themselves and do not operate in a social vacuum. Social forces interact, conflict with each other, and form coalitions that transform their composition, their goals, and their ability to attain those goals (Migdal, 1994). A more complete conceptual framework for an analysis of national development, then, is one that is sensitive to the mutually transforming quality of state-society relations (Migdal et al., 1994), and one that allows for a reconceptualization of the categories used to describe evolving social forces (Migdal, 1994).

This revised institutional framework allows for the comparison of the experiences of Taiwan and Argentina, in a way similar to previous comparative work on national and regional development (see Ettliger, 1991; 1994). The framework in this research is both comparative and institutional because it focuses on concrete variations across places over time, and because it explains the interrelations among politics and institutions in a historically sensitive manner. The comparison in this paper can be framed under what Tilly (1984) calls a 'variation finding' mode of comparison. This means that the comparison focuses on explaining differences between two contexts in relation to a similar process. Ultimately, this research informs a geography of development, as the dynamic relation of the framework's two main components -- state-society relations and variable social forces -- accounts for context-specific processes and cross-national variation and provides a more complete explanation of the way in which national development unfolds in different spatio-temporal contexts.(1)

Setting the scenario: Argentina and Taiwan

Argentina and Taiwan are well-suited for comparative analysis and for the goals this project pursues. Changing state-society relations play a crucial -- although not exclusive -- role in shaping national development trajectories in both countries, particularly in relation to issues of political inclusion and state policy towards distribution. Evidence from the present situation calls for a challenge to traditional views of the state and society in Argentina and Taiwan. The latter requires critical inquiry into the categories used to describe state and society, and leads to a consideration of theft interaction in a more dynamic setting.

In Argentina, state expenditure on social welfare has traditionally been high. Historically, the state's commitment to social welfare, full employment and real wage growth has been directly related to the pivotal role that the 'popular sector' -- non-elite groups -- has played in the societal base of the Argentine state (Deyo, 1990). For example, labor support was instrumental for the ascendancy of some political leaders and presidents (e.g. Peron in 1946 and 1973, Menem in 1989). The influence of the popular sector on state policy led to a characterization of Argentina as having a 'weak' state and a 'strong' society (Deyo, 1989; 1990). In Taiwan, state expenditure on social welfare has been relatively low, in particular at the beginning of the industrialization period. Also, the popular sector in Taiwan was usually excluded from political participation because a dominant party -- the KMT -- has ruled the country. In light of this situation, Taiwan has been characterized as a country with a 'strong' state and a 'weak' society (Deyo, 1990).

Although in the last six years Argentina's Gross Domestic Product has grown at an average of 7.7% per year and investment has increased from 14% to 20% of the GDP (Table 2) (Ministerio de Economia, 1995; Clarin, 1996), unemployment and underemployment in Argentina have more than doubled, reaching historical highs of 20% and 10% respectively (Table 1) (Segade, 1995; Southern Cone Report, 1995; Clarin, 1996). These results are artifacts of neoliberal policies, including privatization, trade liberalization, and fiscal policies aimed at reinforcing state solvency (Haggard and Kaufman, 1995). Conversely, economic growth in Taiwan (Table 1) has generally been accompanied by a low unemployment rate (Table 2), a relatively equitable income distribution, and wage increases for at least part of the population (Gereffi, 1990). In fact, Taiwan is today the world's twentieth largest economy, the thirteenth biggest trader and holds the second largest foreign exchange reserves after Japan (The Economist, 1996).

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Table 1 Selected economic indicators: Argentina and Taiwan

	Argentina	Taiwan
GDP, 1987 (US\$ millions)	71,530	105,750
GDP, 1994 (US\$ millions)	280,200	241,200
GDP growth, 1990/94 (Average)	7.7%	6.6%
Consumer Price Inflation, 1994	3.9%	4.1%
GNP per capita, 1987 (US\$)	2,390	5,550
GNP per capita, 1994	8,197.8	11,454
Export growth, 1992	2.1%	7%
Export growth, 1994	20%	9.4%
Exports, 1994 (US\$ billions)	15.7	92.2

Sources: Gereffi (1990: 13); INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos), Buenos Aires (1995); The Economist (1996a: 12).

Table 2 Unemployment rates in Taiwan and Argentina, 1970-95

	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993
Taiwan	1.7	2.4	1.2	2.9	-	1.5	1.5	1.5
Argentina	4.9	2.6	2.2	6.1	8.6	6.9	7.0	9.9
	1994	1995	1996					
Taiwan	1.6	2.5	2.5					
Argentina	12.2	18.4	17.0					

Sources: Southern Cone Report, December (1995: 5); Taiwan statistical yearbook (1995); The Economist (1996a: 39); Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos, Buenos Aires (1997).

In Argentina, concomitant with these economic reforms and adjustment plans, the public sector has undergone severe budget cuts and most who serve the public (e.g. professors, doctors and even low-level state employees) have experienced a deterioration in their living standards (Knippers Black, 1995). Also, the rapid growth of the private sector, following privatization, has come at the expense of basic services such as education, health and housing (Knippers Black, 1995). Argentina's income gap has widened; whereas the bottom 20% of the population earned 7% of the national domestic product in 1986, it earned only 4% in 1992 (Buenos Aires Herald, 1992). Conversely, in Taiwan, state spending on welfare has increased substantially over time. For example, in 1995, the Taiwanese state introduced a national health insurance program to cover the country's 21 million people (The Economist, 1996). According to data from the EIU Country Profile on Taiwan (1995), the government-sponsored program covers 9 million people who previously did not enjoy any kind of health insurance and 90% of the total population. In comparison, state expenditure on social services such as health and education in Taiwan has increased in the last decade and it is higher than in Argentina, where it has decreased over time (Table 3).

Table 3 Health and education indicators, Taiwan and Argentina

	Taiwan	Argentina
infant Mortality (per 1000 births)	5.6 (1995)	23.6 (1993)
Hospital beds (per 10,000 people)	48.9 (1994)	21.7 (1995)
State expenditure on health (% of GDP)	18.0 (1995)	2.5 (1990)
Literacy rate (% total population)	94.0 (1995)	95.0 (1995)
Years of schooling (Avg. %)(*)	8.4 (1995)	7.2 (1995)
State expenditure on education (% of GDP)	19.4 (1995)	9.4 (1990)

(*). For Taiwan, average schooling is calculated on total labor force; for Argentina, over total population.

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Sources: INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos) (1995); The Economist (1996a: 19; 1996b: 22); Taiwan statistical yearbook (1996).

However, the contrasting situations of Argentina and Taiwan need to be understood critically and should not be seen as diametrically opposite ones. Although in the 1990s Taiwan enjoys a better situation in terms of the analyzed indicators of social welfare relative to Argentina and relative to Taiwan itself 30 years ago, many of the positive gains in standards of living ought to be considered in their larger welfare context. In Taiwan, wage improvement began from a very low base, labor legislation has been traditionally repressive, and relative income inequality may also reflect high levels of labor extraction among low-income workers (Deyo, 1989). Social welfare indicators in Taiwan also fail to capture the gender dimensions of a productive system that has heavily exploited gender inequality, because the small manufacturing system supported by the Taiwanese state relies upon women's productive and reproductive labor (Hsiung, 1996). In Taiwan, women have benefited much less than men from the gains that an improved economy has brought to the country.

This assertion is nonetheless controversial. The debate on gender gaps in Taiwan -- or more broadly in East Asia and the developing world in general -- is twofold, if not even more complex. One commonly accepted point in research about women and development is that the strength of patriarchy in different societies is such that it keeps women in lower level positions or status relative to men. However, in the general Asian context, some researchers (e.g. Lim, 1990), do not completely agree with the negative views on the effects of economic growth on gender inequality and view such claims as a widely exaggerated stereotype. On the contrary, Lim sees women's employment in export factories as a positive and beneficial circumstance that opens new opportunities for women. By contrast, in a time-series study that compared the evolution of economic growth and gender inequality in several Asian countries, Lantican et al., (1996) found that even though women in Asian societies have gained better status through education, gender inequalities in employment have not decreased. A similar point has been made about the differentials between women's access to higher education and their insertion in labor markets in Argentina (Isorni and Leiva, 1997), a country where gender differences are as much a feature of the larger picture of social inequality as they are in Taiwan. In Argentina, gender inequalities are particularly noticeable regarding occupational segregation (Jelin, 1996b; Bendini and Pescio, 1997) and lack of political representation in government, which translates into an absence of social policy that targets women's needs (Marx, 1992). Likewise, repressive government regimes have historically curtailed political and personal freedom and violated human rights in Taiwan and Argentina at different points in time. Even though changes began to occur under democratization (in Argentina since 1983, later in Taiwan in the 1990s), democratic institutions are weak and civil and political rights are often violated in both countries (Manzetti, 1994; Haggard and Kaufmann, 1995; Miguez, 1995; Sarlo, 1995).

It is true that gender inequality can be portrayed as a global phenomenon and that political and personal freedoms are not equally accessible for all people, even in so-called 'developed' countries. However, both the distinctive manifestation of gender inequality and the degree of availability of civil freedom in different contexts need to be understood at different scales, in relation to regional, national, and even local economic and social norms. These norms, in turn, are partly shaped by the pattern of interactions among institutions and social actors in each context. In Taiwan and Argentina, for example, the distinctive evolution of state-society relations in each place -- explored later in this paper -- has reinforced existing gender differences and even capitalized on them, in detriment of positive social change. Therefore, although at different levels and degrees, a divergence between economic growth and positive social change can be seen as a feature of both Argentina and Taiwan in the 1990s.

Exploring the dilemma

The current situation, which differs from historical patterns in both Argentina and Taiwan, prompts interesting questions. First, it draws attention to how the Argentine state, in the 1990s, can pursue a strategy to achieve economic growth that is detrimental to social welfare in the absence of opposition from the supposedly 'strong' popular sector. Second, it leads one to question the reasons why the state in Taiwan has increased expenditure on social welfare in a full employment environment in which the 'weak' popular sector supposedly does not have much access to political participation and offers no major resistance to the state's developmental strategies.

I suggest the answer to the questions above can best be given by focusing on an analysis of the processes that lead to changing state-society relations. A focus on these processes implies a view of state and society as changing arenas shaped by particular institutional arrangements, instead of a view of the two as static and rigidly defined categories. Social

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formation analysis provides a method for exploring these processes. Traditional social formation analysis is an intermediate level of inquiry emerging out of marxian class analysis that lies between the more abstract level of analyses of modes of production and the more factual level of political conjunctures (Corradi, 1974). The focus in this type of analysis is the articulation of different class coalitions in the social formation at different places and points in time. Analyses of dynamic social formations go beyond 'static structural taxonomies which can be superimposed on any society' (Silver, 1993). Since this paper intends to uncover and identify changes in the composition of social coalitions (e.g. the societal base of the state), the analysis focuses on explaining the processes of variation in the institutions that form the coalitions with sensitivity to national context and history.

An issue in the analysis is also a more critical depiction of the social coalitions' constituencies. For example, what is meant by 'popular sector' needs to be critically reevaluated according to contextual and temporal conditions. The literature has traditionally defined the popular sector as antagonistic to elite groups and internally cohesive, although composed of several different sub-groups (Deyo 1989; 1990). More accurate conceptualizations of coalitions such as the 'popular sector' require acknowledgment of the fact that even though these groups may act together and share similar needs or concerns, their needs and concerns may also differ, creating conflicting allegiances. Conflicting allegiances can diminish the effectiveness of the group's interactions with other coalitions or institutions (such as the state), although some goals may be more readily realized than others.

Previous comparative studies on the political economy of development have indicated that contrasting developmental choices across countries can be explained by interregional differences in the relation between the state and social actors (Kaufman, 1990). Following in the vein of a more critical investigation of national development, I expand this notion and add that it is contrasting economic strategies and decisions towards social welfare and citizenship rights that can be explained by changing relations between the state and society. To better understand the intrinsically political aspects of processes of national development, these elements should be compared not only across countries but also within countries over time.

National development and state-society relations in Argentina

Redefining the societal base of the state

The composition of the societal coalitions in Argentina (at least since the 1950s) has usually been termed complex and, in many ways, unique in Latin America. Class alliances in Argentina have traditionally been characterized by a 'dominant group' on one side and the 'popular sector' on the other (Corradi, 1974; Peralta Ramos, 1974). The 'dominant group' has been historically composed of local monopoly capital, the agrarian bourgeoisie and international capital (e.g. foreign banks and transnational corporations); the 'popular sector' has traditionally included the industrial working class, a dispersed rural proletariat, self-employed urban workers, the lower end of the salaried middle class and minifundistas (Corradi, 1974). The middle class often has been characterized as being politically pendular between the two main poles (Corradi, 1974) and comprised of heterogeneous groups, including state employees, professional and student sectors, and salaried and white collar urban workers. Even considering some historical variation, the Argentine state has historically obtained much of its support (as well as much of its pressure) from popular sectors, under both democratic and military regimes (Figure 1).

[Figure 1 ILLUSTRATION OMITTED]

In 1983, Argentina saw the return to democracy after years of military rule.(2) The elections marked the climb to power of the Union Civica Radical (UCR), a party mostly representing the middle class. The UCR's victory also marked the defeat of the Partido Justicialista (PJ), also known as the Peronist movement, which enjoyed almost absolute support from organized labor but was unable to gain sufficient support from the middle class, let alone the agrarian or industrial elite. However, the UCR administration was incapable of satisfying pressures from all the different sectors of society that had helped the party achieve power.

By 1988, ambivalent economic policies applied since the mid-1980s failed to satisfy the middle class or organized labor or the agrarian-industrialist elite. These policies resulted in increased poverty, especially in urban zones of the country, and a vast, new, marginalized sector (Peralta Ramos, 1992). This new 'underclass' was represented neither by the unions nor

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by political leaders, but rather by diverse groups.(3) The composition of this new Argentinian underclass was heterogeneous because it encompassed a range of historically neglected and marginal people. Recent rural to urban migrants, landless peasants, the native population and illegal workers from bordering countries joined newcomers from the lower strata of the rapidly dissolving middle class -- such as unemployed industrial and construction workers, domestic labor and other downwardly mobile workers -- to form a large excluded sector.

Economic crisis, resulting in hyperinflation episodes by 1989, caused tremendous social upheaval, and presidential elections were anticipated. Carlos Menem (candidate for the PJ), won these elections in part due to support from the popular sector, which by this point included organized labor, the new underclass and a large percentage of the middle class who felt disappointed by the performance of the UCR administration (Catterberg, 1991). Menem's campaign indeed targeted all these groups through populist, redistributive policies similar to those that helped Peron reach his first presidency. The Menem administration's policies effectively resumed economic growth. The means to this end, however, were detrimental to the popular sector that supported the new regime in the elections. In fact, the state formed an alliance with the representatives of Argentine capitalism, including some of the country's most important distributional coalitions (Figure 2) (Manzetti, 1994). Menem's strategy to solve the economic crisis was to give even greater shares of the national income to the producers of the agrarian elite and to the entrepreneurial groups represented by the largest domestic conglomerates through privatization and deregulation (Manzetti, 1994). Economic power became even more concentrated in the hands of some foreign corporations and the largest domestic conglomerates. Responding to the demands of now influential capitalist groups, the government introduced a labor 'flexibility' law, which extended the trial period of new workers, modified working hours and vacation periods, and permitted firms to pay the workers' annual bonuses in installments (Gonzales, 1995a).

[Figure 2 ILLUSTRATION OMITTED]

The diverse underclass, which became a constituency of the popular sector, faced increasing difficulty in maintaining a consistent allegiance because their different political affiliations resulted in conflicting goals. Leftist groups, some dissident Peronists, intellectuals and parts of the middle class formed the Frente Grande (Broad Front), in an attempt to draw together diverse constituencies who lacked representation. However, the Frente lacked organizational cohesion, and its initial strength soon diminished (Richards, 1995). At the same time, workers in Argentina faced the dilemma of either opposing the migration of new workers from bordering countries (to maintain control of the supply of labor and wage levels) or normalizing the status of illegal workers (to stop the exploitation of this source of labor, which ultimately would benefit the popular sector as a whole) (Richards, 1995). Since illegal workers are more vulnerable to employers' threats, achieving labor solidarity became increasingly difficult. In general, economic survival overtook issues of political participation and group action began to lose ground to individual concerns.

Organized labor was one of the powerful coalitions that suffered the most under Menem's reform. Internal political divisions within the unions in a context of accelerated impoverishment of the population led to a union rift (Peralta Ramos, 1992). The Federacion General de Trabajadores (CGT) -- the unions' main body of representation -- was unable to influence a government which it largely helped to create. Accordingly, the CGT candidates on the PJ lists' diminished from 33% to 10% (Gonzales, 1995b). Other unions that attempted to combat Menem's neoliberal agenda emerged (e.g. the Congreso de Trabajadores Argentinos (CTA), and the Asociacion de Trabajadores del Estado (ATE)) (Richards, 1995). The unions themselves also failed to recognize the changes occurring in the new context of the 'global economy' and were caught by surprise events such as globalization, economic integration in the Southern Cone, technological change, and by changes in the organization of work.

The unions failed to rebuild their support teams of economists and lawyers because they were still caught up in the idea of the Peronist welfare state of the middle of the century. Their failure was even more detrimental under a state unfriendly to organized labor and a system in which the downsizing of firms became the norm and worker benefits the exception. The economic crisis and post-crisis reforms also weakened labor when many unionized jobs were lost. As a result, the Argentine labor movement is in a weaker position in the 1990s than it was under the former authoritarian regimes of the 1950s and 1970s (Manzetti, 1994).

This brief analysis makes evident that the 'traditional' view of Argentine society and of the state's societal base (Figure 1) can only broadly describe the situation in the 1990s, because increasingly diverse constituencies have formed both the

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popular and dominant sectors, and shifting coalitions have supported the state (Figure 2). As this paper argues, it is the dynamic interplay of diverse social actors that leads to changing state-society relations and coalitions, and that contributes to a divergence between economic growth and positive social change in Argentina in the 1990s.(4)

State-society relations and national development: the case of Taiwan

The KMT and democratization

The Kuomintang (KMT) has been Taiwan's dominant political force since it took control of the nation in 1947. The KMT has effectively centralized state power and reassured its domination over society ever since, while eliminating the previously existing capitalist class. The KMT used mass organizations that enabled it to gather support from large segments of the population (Cheng and Haggard, 1992). The result of the KMT regime's activities is a society characterized by fluid social classes and an important small to medium-sized business sector (Cheng, 1990). Land reform contributed to the destruction of the landowning class and to the creation of a large population of small farmers, thereby increasing agricultural productivity with state support (Castells, 1992). The overall conditions of social welfare increased together with continued economic growth (Gereffi, 1990).

In Taiwan, it makes sense to assume the existence of a 'popular sector' as a group only in terms of the lack of political freedom experienced by a variety of people. The exclusion of the 'popular sectors' (in this case, anybody who opposed the KMT regime regardless of class or social status) from political life has been characteristic of Taiwan. Political opposition to the dominant party doctrine was usually proscribed, strikes were not allowed, and censorship of the media occurred frequently (Deyo, 1990). Nevertheless, a process of slow political liberalization began about two decades ago, leading to what today is referred to as the 'democratization' of Taiwanese society (Chu, 1996). This process can help explain changing state-society relations in Taiwan.

The democratization and liberalization of Taiwan's political system have been understood from two different perspectives: democratization 'from above' and 'from below'. The argument for democratization 'from above' consists of assuming that the KMT pursued political liberalization because of external factors, such as the increasing diplomatic isolation of Taiwan in the international community and the shift in the United States' diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the People's Republic of China (PRC). The fact that the United States pressured Taiwan to fix a bad image in terms of human rights violations (Dean, 1991; Cheng and Haggard, 1992) should also be considered an important external factor in the argument for democratization 'from above'. Interestingly, the opposition to the KMT maintains close ties to the liberal political establishment of the United States (Lasater, 1991).

By contrast, arguments for democratization 'from below' indicate that democratization in Taiwan comes as the result of the rise of the middle class, which has increasingly demanded more political participation. The middle class is seen as the key actor producing political change in Taiwan because it is formed mostly by intellectuals who are connected to small and medium-sized firms by different social ties (such as school, workplace affiliation and location in a particular region) (Cheng and Haggard, 1992). From this vantage point, democratization in Taiwan is explained by the capacity of the middle class to set an agenda, to use extralegal methods, and to challenge the KMT elite to establish new political rules (Cheng and Haggard, 1992).

In reality, Taiwan's democratization needs to be understood as a response to a series of both external and internal pressures. The focus for analysis should be on the reasons why democratic forces are emerging and why new institutional configurations are being formed. Cheng and Haggard (1992) have suggested that an understanding of democratization in Taiwan should involve not only identification of the agents that cause political change, but also recognition of the reasons why these agents seek democratic politics. The latter involves analyzing the relations between the state and those social actors who seek political change as well as investigating the possibilities for the formation of new social and political coalitions.

Sustaining the societal base of the Taiwanese state

The leadership of President Chiang-Ching Kuo made possible many of Taiwan's political reforms. First, the growing discontent of rural workers led the dominant party to open up some political space, and as Cheng (1992) remarks, the

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opening of political space' was not just a response to societal demands but also an opportunity to revitalize the aging representatives of the KMT. Some of the most evident changes in the country were the legalization of opposition political parties and a decrease in the level of censorship of the media (Dean, 1991).

Real political competition to the KMT began in 1977, when, still under martial law, several opposition groups started organizing at the grass-roots level to form the 'tangwai', an underground coalition of different factions. The tangwai formalized its organization into the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in 1986, which increasingly gained political power by drawing a distinction between the 'oppressed' (the Taiwanese and Hakka ethnicities) and the 'oppressors' (Mainlanders). Although the formation of the DPP was illegal, the Taiwanese government did not intervene (Lasater, 1991). In 1987, martial law was formally lifted, and the laws governing the formation of new political parties were revised. At that point, Taiwan had evolved from an authoritarian system controlled by the KMT to a multiparty system dominated by the KMT.

Today, both parties in Taiwan -- the KMT and DPP -- portray themselves as 'catchall' parties, and in practice, no party makes any attempt to orient itself towards any particular class or social stratum. In fact, the DPP is a coalition united by opposition to the ruling party rather than a centralized organization led by an ideologically defined elite (Wu, 1995). No social group is really committed to supporting either party and no clear form of 'class' politics can be identified (Wu, 1995; Hood, 1997). Present collective action in Taiwan is not based according to defined class lines. Rather, the common referent of collective claims is the state: current social movements in Taiwan contest state-society relations in an attempt to gain more autonomy from an authoritarian state (Hsiao, 1992). Therefore, to understand changing state-society relations it is more useful to look at changes that occur at a different scale than class. In Taiwan, the key issue is to observe the differences and changes that take place between rural and urban populations over time. As Winckler (1992) discovered, what is most notable in Taiwan are the differences between the rural and urban systems rather than the divisions within them.

The KMT originally drew its support from farmers, state employees, labor and small businesses (Figure 3). The diversity of all these actors determined the existence of a broad distributional coalition. Since land reform, farmers have constituted a key support group for the KMT. However, due to increased economic growth and industrialization, today only 18% of the labor force remains in the agricultural sector, and many of the remaining farmers are engaged in part-time farming activities (Tien, 1992). Therefore, since most of the population and economic activity has shifted from rural to urban sectors, the KMT has lost most of the support from one of the original key constituencies of the coalitional base. Furthermore, farmers have traditionally been seen as the most exploited sector (Cheng, 1992). For example, up to the early 1990s, the average income for farmers was only three-quarters of the national average (Wu, 1995).

[Figure 3 ILLUSTRATION OMITTED]

As a result of their inferior conditions relative to other groups in society, farmers have organized several demonstrations and protests in the 1990s, demanding commodity reform and more autonomy for their organizations from KMT domination (Hsiao, 1992). Currently, the KMT has no choice but to take the farmers' demands seriously if it is to retain the support of the small remaining rural population. Similarly, the KMT is allowing unions and labor in general to take a more adversarial role (Winckler, 1992) because, due to the increase of urban population and manufacturing, labor has become a fundamental actor in Taiwan's distributional coalition. As a result, the state in Taiwan has also increased its spending on social welfare and is requesting business to contribute to insurance and pension funds. The introduction of 'National Health Care Insurance' in 1995 is a rather interesting case, in particular because the DPP's 1986 platform included clauses calling for a national health insurance plan and comprehensive unemployment benefits. This is a clear example of the way the state in Taiwan is attempting to satisfy the demands of important groups from which it draws support, in particular because the stronger opposition to the state party lies in urban areas.

However, opposition to the state remains fragmented and disorganized. Most protests occur when there is some combination of social concentrations (such as factories in urban areas) and a particular grievance (such as layoffs or censorship) (Winckler, 1992). This is in part due to the fact that the opposition to the state contains two diverse groups of people whose interests are not congruent. The DPP is mostly supported by young intellectuals and professionals and by a vast number of the poorer urban population (Ya-Li-Lu, 1992). While the intellectuals and professionals share a common hostility towards the state party, mostly at the ideological level (e.g., they oppose the state stance on human rights and

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ensorship), the claims of the urban supporters are more related to economic issues and to an improvement of their standards of living. This divergence in terms of interests is detrimental to the formation of a larger coalition capable of effectively challenging the state on all fronts and demanding broader positive social change in the country.

The moves for increased social policy and spending on social welfare, for which the KMT has taken political credit, have also caused displeasure in the business sector and are one of the clear consequences of political reforms in Taiwan. Although the business sector seems reluctant to accept the costs of the new social policies of the Taiwanese state, it still acts as a key supporter in the coalitional base of society (Figure 4). This is in part because the capitalist sector still sees the action of the state party as more moderate than that of the opposition in supporting social demands, and because it acknowledges that the KMT has more experience than the DPP in running a successful economy that has largely benefited capitalists or businesses. The ability of the KMT to maintain the original coalitional base of society from which it draws support depends now on the party's willingness to accommodate the demands of all sectors. This has become particularly noticeable since the onset of democratization, as opposition political forces have gained considerable influence over policy issues in the parliament. In the 1990s the challenge for the KMT lies in maintaining the coalition that legitimized its regime under changing conditions.

[Figure 4 ILLUSTRATION OMITTED]

State-society coalitions: comparing Argentina and Taiwan

The social processes described above help in part to explain why economic growth has occurred without an equivalent enhancement of social welfare and/or citizenship in Argentina and Taiwan, respectively. In Argentina, as the power of organized labor was curtailed, in many cases as a result of the unions' inability to reorganize under new conditions, the popular sector lost its dominant position in the societal base of the state. That power had been guaranteed to the popular sector mostly by the political leverage acquired by the unions through political support of the state's party. At the same time, the state had previously enabled the unions to influence state policy towards social welfare in a way favorable to the popular sector as a whole. The rift in the Argentine unions and the lack of political cohesion of the new underclass exemplified the divisive forces affecting the popular sector. Its increased diversity resulted in a lack of cooperative action (e.g., division within the Frente Grande) and uncoordinated pressure in the demands on the state for more social policy.

The decay of the Argentine unions' political leverage and, consequently, of the popular sector, was accompanied by the acquisition of more power by the agrarian-landowner-exporter elite and local industrialists. State policy became captive to pressures of such groups and favored their interests. These powerful groups, in return, guaranteed their support of the state's economic plan by investing rather than speculating, as they had done previously (e.g. during the UCR government from 1983 to 1989). The returns on their investments, in turn, were guaranteed by the state. For example, the profitable yet corrupt state-owned utilities and telecommunications enterprise, which had a captive market, were sold to the now powerful capitalist elite that today dominates the societal base of the state.

In Taiwan, increasing state expenditure on social welfare in a situation of continuous economic growth has not addressed pre-existing gender inequalities, but rather worked its way around them, failing to fully minimize the divergence between economic growth and positive social change. In reality, Taiwan was able to achieve more egalitarian class relations through a productive system that capitalizes on gender inequalities. At the same time, the creation of social welfare programs together with increasing efforts towards the democratization of society are explained by the state's need to maintain the coalition which has effectively contributed to the country's impressive economic growth. The state contributed to shaping the coalition, but the very same coalition has evolved over time as economic growth has taken place. The sustainability of an equivalent coalition today depends on the state's ability to accommodate and satisfy the coalition's new demands.

Argentina and Taiwan in the 1990s share a striking similarity, represented by the strong role that the state still plays, despite the fact that both countries are operating in democratic or quasi-democratic regimes. In Taiwan, the KMT remains the dominant party. Although the state in Taiwan is being challenged in many different forms with the arrival of democratization and will probably not regain the level of autonomy it enjoyed during past decades, its power remains strong. In any case, the power of the Taiwanese state has been challenged, because political changes and democratization were conducive to the political participation of sectors of society previously ignored. Still, in the 1990s

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political opposition in Taiwan is not extremely cohesive, and this appears as an obstacle to future challenges to the KMT's rule in Taiwan. Nevertheless, excluded groups share a common feeling of antipathy towards the KMT because the state party has traditionally oppressed -- though in different ways -- all these groups. This collective feeling of oppression (manifested originally in the formation of the tangwai and of the DPP later) acted as a catalyst for a base of collective action that has brought some positive changes for these groups.

The state also still plays a strong role in Argentina. Its legitimacy is supported by its allies -- some of the most powerful capitalist groups in the country -- which collaborate with the state to carry out a developmental strategy with negative prospects for positive social change. In present day Argentina, the divisiveness of excluded groups is even more profound than in Taiwan. Because the heterogeneous 'underclass' and other excluded groups such as the middle class have failed to achieve a minimum level of cohesion, they have fallen short of recovering the active role in the societal base of the state that they had previously occupied. The state has also played a role in affecting the situations of the excluded groups in both the Argentine and Taiwanese cases. In Taiwan, farmers, workers and other excluded groups have been able to influence state policy not only because of a higher level of cohesiveness but also because their claims were somehow related to a particular state imperative: sustaining a societal base that has brought economic success to the country for the past three decades. In Argentina, not only has cohesiveness among excluded sectors not been achieved, but also the state's strategy of accumulation at this point in time does not rely on any sort of compromise with these excluded groups. Rather, it depends almost exclusively on a successful alliance with different capitalist groups that has induced both foreign and local capital investment and resulted in economic growth. In sum, statements characterizing Argentina as a country represented by a 'strong society' and a 'weak state' no longer portray the Argentine reality in the 1990s. Similarly, the experiences of Taiwan in the 1990s show that it is not enough to focus on the capacity of a 'strong' developmental state to explain the country's development strategies. The cases of Argentina and Taiwan are clear examples of the dynamism of state-society-relations.

Lessons from Argentina and Taiwan: summary and conclusion

Understanding national development from an economic perspective alone misconstrues the results of the supposedly 'successful' stories of some developing countries and NICs. Only when economic growth and social change are analyzed together can one provide a more accurate picture of the results of developmental strategies. Economic growth can and does occur without positive social change, and the degree to which this occurs can in part be understood with reference to the evolution of state-society relations and changes in the composition of societal actors. This instructs us that neither social actors nor the societal base of the state are immutable. Thus, comparative, cross-regional studies of countries' developmental strategies need to pay more attention to changes within particular contexts, recognizing at the same time the effects that changing situations over time have in those specific places.

In Argentina, economic growth with a worsening of the standards of living of the population and a deterioration of democratic institutions is in part due to the loss of power of organized labor and the capitalist elite's gain of influence over the state. The situation in Argentina in the 1990s is similar to that 100 years ago, when elites sustained a monopolist hold on land and capital and governed the economy (Kaufman, 1990; Johns, 1992). Similarly, in Taiwan, the state has formed a partnership with the patriarchal-capitalist sector in its pursuit of a developmental strategy. On many occasions, this strategy is based on a system of production that relies on inexpensive female labor. These factors can explain part of the existing divergence between economic growth and positive social change in present-day Argentina and Taiwan.

In conclusion, the comparison of the cases of Argentina and Taiwan has implications that can be extrapolated to principles that explain how state-society relations impact national development in other spatio-temporal contexts. The comparison illustrates that explanations of cross-national variation in national development require not only attention to economic policy and developmental strategies or to the external conditions that affect them, but also analysis of dynamic institutional arrangements that unfold in different places over time.

This research began with the premise that national development is an economic and social objective which, among other things, should include improvements in the arenas of 'social welfare' and 'citizenship'. Improvements in the 'citizenship' arena should not be narrowly understood as the acquisition of adult citizenship rights, such as the right to cast a vote to elect government officials. Instead, these improvements should also encompass the gradual political inclusion of different groups and categories of people (from factory workers or farmers to ethnic or sexual minorities) as well as attention to

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their needs.(5)

At issue in this paper, then, was an explanation of the conditions under which different groups -- including those groups that are socially and politically excluded -- can influence state policy to achieve improvements in the two aforementioned arenas of a project of national development. The experiences of Argentina and Taiwan show that the extent to which excluded or oppressed groups can influence the state is likely to be greater when a need of the state can lead it to assimilate some of the claims being made by the excluded/oppressed groups (Dryzek, 1996). This claim is illustrated, for example, by the different degrees of success that two different groups -- unionized workers and farmers -- have obtained in Argentina and Taiwan, respectively, in the 1990s. Excluded groups can effectively influence state policy towards social welfare and citizenship -- as has been the case with the Taiwanese farmers -- although this is not inevitable, as the Argentine unions in the 1990s illustrate. Prospects for such influence seem to be better on the condition that groups excluded from the attention of the state or oppressed by the state form cohesive alliances among themselves, and that their interests are also related to a state need. This concluding remark leads us to recognize that development is a broad and highly complex concept embodying a political side that should not be disregarded. A more in-depth understanding of the political aspects of development requires more comparative explorations that recognize the dynamic character of state-society relations and that further investigate the way in which the activities of the state and social groups mutually affect and condition each other.

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(1) Ettliger (1994) notes that this form of institutionalism (one which allows for alternative pathways and explanations that are contingent on context-specific processes) is widely followed in several comparative studies, but does not represent the 'new institutionalism' approach which focuses on transaction cost analysis (e.g. Scott, 1988).

(2) The military was an important social actor in Argentina during the time frame of this analysis because it paved the way for the changing state-society relations of the 1990s (Brodsky, 1996). The state's coalition with business groups in the 1990s has taken place irrespective of the military, in fact, recent research (Manzetti, 1994) portrays the military as a 'victim' of the state's new alliances with capitalist groups.

(3) I use the term 'underclass' with some reservations and because of lack of a better one to describe this particular formation. As Morris (1993) has noted, the term carries different connotations in different contexts and it is problematic because it has been oversimplified in its use as political rhetoric and too readily applied to complex social phenomena.

(4) External forces also play a role in deepening the differences between economic growth and positive social change in Argentina. For example, external pressure from organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have been and continue to be active forces which influence many of the decisions adopted by the Argentine state (Peralta Ramos, 1992; Knippers Black, 1995). However, this research purposely focuses on endogenous dynamics because these external factors cannot account for the adoption of particular policies or courses of actions (Haggard and Kaufman, 1995).

(5) Dryzek (1996) provides insight into an approach to democratization as political inclusion. His research clearly explains how formal political equality of different groups under democratic conditions can hide exclusion or oppression.

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