

the problems discussed is concerned; it is lucid in its scientific approach, and finally, it is practical in so far as the political and ideological barriers to the basic-needs approach are not allowed to be suppressed.

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DIETER OBERNDÖRFER (Hrsg.): *Verwaltung und Politik in der Dritten Welt. Problemskizze, Fallstudien, Bibliographie.* (Ordo Politicus, Bd. 20). Berlin/München: Duncker und Humblot, 1981. 459 pages, DM 148.-.

This substantial volume is a presentation of the recent work of one of the very few West German academic institutions, the Arnold-Bergstraesser-Institut, Freiburg i. Br., dealing with, among other things, administration and politics in the Third World. For the most part this is a collection of case studies from Latin America, Africa and Asia.

The bibliography which seems to be more than a compilation of the sources quoted in the various studies, reflects the state of the art of what used to be called "Development Administration" at the end of the seventies. Running through the entries one realises how little change there has been in its theoretical assumptions for more than a decade. Of the altogether 800 titles about 220 are more or less general, either the classics of Braibanti, La Palombara, Riggs and others, or the academic response to them. Most reflect the hopeful mood of the sixties, with a more or less sceptical overtone. Nobody was and could be expected to be certain about the result of any intervention in administrative structures and procedures, especially in the fast-changing conditions of the so-called "developing countries". The other entries of the bibliography are mainly more recent case studies grouped under Latin America/West Indies (170), Asia (150), Sub-Saharan Africa (150) and North Africa/Middle East (80).

Of the nine cases studies of this volume, four tackle administration sectors like budgeting in Columbia or auditing in Guatemala and Costa Rica. A comparative approach is chosen for regional planning in Sub-Saharan Africa and the (non-)management of urbanization in South East Asia. The structure of public administration and its style of action is discussed in the chapters on Lima (city level), India (national level) and the West Indies (regional level).

Since few findings of the studies are cross-culturally transferable, I shall concentrate here on the three Asian cases. Hermann Avenarius analyses tax collection in Indonesia. He identifies the main reasons for its poor performance, mainly due to inadequate procedures which lead to a sort of bargaining between the collectors and the debtors. This procedure, in which the debtor is bound to gain in proportion to his status, wealth and debts, fits well into the general socio-political system by petrifying the 'status quo'. Hence, it comes

as a surprise when the author expresses in his conclusion the hope that a stricter and, necessarily, more formalized style of administration would convince the public (which part, though?) and alter its value system; this in turn would support rational administration. The reasons for such a hope deserve serious discussion.

Clemens Jürgenmeyer and Ekkehard Kulke explain the structure and the style of the Indian public service, its origins in the British colonial system and its embeddedness in the present political order. After this very readable summary the authors go on to ask about the consequences of economic development, especially in view of government involvement under the label of a 'mixed economy' in a 'socialist state'. The authors feel that the various public and semi-public enterprises are not hampering (as is sometimes alleged) but rather boosting the private sector. Consequently, the powerful have a vested interest in preserving this state of affairs. According to the authors, this particular symbiosis of government and business elites, despite its inherent high-level corruption, leads to a modification of Myrdal's concept of the 'soft state'. The system seems to be able to control and limit the petty corruption, thus stabilizing itself again at the expense of the people, especially the poor. The authors see no chance of a change, except through increased democratic control, i.e. bottom-up, a conclusion which contradicts that learnt from looking at Indonesia.

In a further study Jürgen Rüländ tackles urbanization in South and South East Asia and the different governments' responses to it. The study is a broad summary based on data from the United Nations, the World Bank and many other sources and offers little new insights. The notoriously low level of accuracy and comparability of the data allows only a rather general argument in favour of strengthening participation, urban management (and local government?), postulating that this should (and could?) be achieved by top-down decisions. Although it is restricted to one case, the author has expressed his argument much clearer in his fine study on squatter re-location which is reviewed below.

The section dealing with case studies is preceded by a kind of review essay on the current teaching in Development Administration. The author, Hans-Georg Steiffert, distinguishes four basic approaches in research and intervention that have already been elaborated more or less by the 'Grand Old Men' of the discipline. The concept of the 'balanced social system' looks at society and administration as an inter-acting entity, leaving little room for intervention. The concept of the 'unbalanced social system' postulates that changes in one part, e.g. in the civil service, are possible and may even lead to general development. Whilst the concept of the 'balanced administrative system' considers the form of government to be the basic entity, of which development-oriented sections are only integrated parts, the concept of the 'unbalanced administration system' emphasizes the possibility of Development Administration to initiate and guide change. Unfortunately, the essay does not tie up with the case studies of the volume. They would have given ample scope to discuss

the internal mechanics of public administration, its impact on society and the chances of any intervention.

The introductory remarks by the head of the Institute, Professor Oberndörfer, are also in keeping with the general caution of statements. He argues - again without reference to his co-authors - that research and advice in public administration, especially in Third World countries, is not only helpful but even necessary for development projects, particularly in the context of international co-operation. While it is evident from the case studies that more information and better understanding of Third World social and administrative systems could explain many past failures in development and help avoid further ones, the essential problem of how this could be brought about is not touched.

The whole volume is modestly intended to present some preliminary results of current research, thereby illustrating a broad variety of prevailing conditions. The necessary inference to the theoretical background seems to be left for a future publication. This reserve is not unjustified, as the case with the related discipline of economics demonstrates. Is it not true that many economic interventions, initiated with premature confidence in theoretical assumptions, have resulted in failures and even human disaster; Chile and Tanzania are just two examples. In contrast to so many interventions in economic and other fields, competent advice with regard to public administration (provided it was accepted despite its inherent scepticism and presuming it had any effect at all) did not increase, but rather decreased social inequality and injustice. In my view this is a very strong argument in favour of studying public administration. The whole book could be read as an illustration of this point.

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RAINER TETZLAFF: Die Weltbank: Machtinstrument der USA oder Hilfe für die Entwicklungsländer? Zur Geschichte und Struktur der modernen Weltgesellschaft. (Weltwirtschaft und internationale Beziehungen, Bd. 19). München/London: Weltforum-Verlag, 1980. 570 pages, DM 26.-.

Studies on the World Bank and other international development agencies can usually be classified in two categories. On the one hand empirical (Insider) compilations that describe in minute detail, frequently with a positive bias, the structure and functioning of these agencies, but without any theoretical perspective so that the facts so assiduously accumulated are of little general significance.

The second category contains theoretically pretentious analyses that generally classify their subject matter in a centre-periphery model or according to dependency theories but fail to bring empirical evidence for their hypotheses.