

Sociology 924/Geography 918 WEEKLY READING INTERROGATIONS #1
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Peter Evans, *Embedded Autonomy*

Jamie Peck's comments in **red**
Erik Olin Wright's comments in **blue**

1. Adam Slez

In *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation*, Peter Evans concludes that the growth of the information technology (IT) sector in Korea, India, and Brazil “vindicated the idea that explicit efforts to change a country’s position in the international division of labor can bear fruit” (Evans, 1995: 216). Evans’ conclusion explicitly contradicts neo-utilitarian models of the state which hold that “competitive markets are sufficient to produce the kind of structural transformation that lies at the heart of development” (Evans, 1995: 25). While Evans’ analysis of the Korean, Indian, and Brazilian cases lends support to his claim that industrial transformation and development can be understood as a “joint project” between the state and society, there is an underemphasized strain of historical determinism in Evans’ argument which does not necessarily contradict the notion that states play an integral role in development, but it does suggest that conclusions regarding the importance of strategic action on the part of the state need to be carefully qualified. **[JP: I don’t know whether I would go as far as to call this historical determinism, but I see your point. In my view, Evans is strikingly non-deterministic about the consequences of state action (emphasizing unexpected outcomes, ambiguity, dynamic adjustment, etc.), since none of these (prior) state responses secure particular economic outcomes, but there is some having and eating of cake in that a given character (rather than quantitative “level”) of state capacity is required as a precondition for economic transformation. Where there is some posthoc economic determinism, I would say, is in the retrospective reading of state actions through the lens of relative economic development. In this sense, the fact of economic transformation, and the nature of this transformation, establishes the principles of theoretical pertinence through which state action is interpreted. So what difference would it have made, for example, is this book had been written in 2005 not 1995, given the divergent experiences of Brazil, India, and Korea since the mid-1990s? My hunch is that the Indian outsourcing boom, the Asian financial crisis, and the post-Lula economic record of Brazil would lead to rather different interpretations of the “same” histories. This does not negate Evans’ approach, as I am sure he has smart things to say about all these developments, and their precedents, but it arguably does beg the question of which state actions appear more/less pertinent in the light of a known (subsequent) economic trajectory].**

Evans suggests that in order for states to be successful in guiding industrial transformation, not only must they have an “effective,” well-developed bureaucracy, but they must also be sufficiently ‘embedded’ in society (Evans, 1995: 40-41). According to Evans, in “developmental states,” embeddedness has, somewhat problematically, “meant

ties with industrial elites” (Evans, 1995: 228). Evans argues that for “newly industrializing countries” (NICs) to be successful in positioning themselves in the information technology sector, states had to be able to shift roles, from “midwifery” to “husbandry,” so as to encourage and sustain the emergence of new social groups (Evans, 1995: 210, 224).

The problem with this argument is that states’ capacity to shift roles (e.g. from “demiurge” to midwife, or from midwifery to husbandry) is determined by the characteristics of existing social structures. **[JP: OK, I think this is sometimes the implication, but Evans also stresses the point that there is a deep dynamic between economic transformation and these shifting roles, such that state capacities and role selection partly reflect the co-evolution of the IT industry. True, without a base level of capacity, states don’t get to play this game, but the complex states that Evans is describing seem to be spawning new roles in tandem with, and sometimes in a reciprocal relation with, the “industry” that is the object of policy.]** Accounting for differences between the Korean, Indian, and Brazilian cases, Evans notes that, “Divergent information technology trajectories flowed first of all from the general differences in state structures and state-society relations” (Evans, 1995: 209). Korea outperformed both India and Brazil precisely because it *already possessed* the necessary state institutional structures and social ties. Conversely, India suffered because of “insufficient embeddedness,” while Brazil struggled because of state “fragmentation” (Evans, 1995: 209). The argument that the capacity for developmental states to act is a function of the extent to which they have both a developed bureaucracy and ties to local industrial elites appears to substantially constrain the assertion that state action can positively impact “a country’s position in the international division of labor” (Evans, 1995: 216), an otherwise strong and dynamic conclusion when offered in unqualified terms. **[EOW: I am not sure this is quite as rigidly deterministic as you suggest. First of all, in the 1950s and early 1960s Korea looked like it was moving down a path of clientelism with a non-developmental state. It was only a strategic intervention by the military that launched a new project, and this required quite concentrated strategy, including attacks on leading corrupt officials and economic elites. Second, the structural conditions create necessary but insufficient conditions; good strategy is still needed. Third, the structural conditions can themselves become the object of strategy – although this is more difficult. Arguably this is what the Indian State has done since the early 1990s.]**

While the examples of Korea, India, and Brazil do seem to suggest the possibility of repositioning within the international division of labor, it is not clear that this outcome is necessarily a result of embedded autonomy, which, as defined by Evans, essentially describes a type of state/society relationship *within a given country*. To draw conclusions about changes in the international division of labor would seem to require that some attention be paid to the ways in which either technological development or changes in the world-system provide opportunities for repositioning; at least some causal weight must be assigned to exogenous factors, existing outside of the boundaries of individual countries. In other words, while embedded autonomy may very well reflect states’ *capacity* to act, the *opportunity* to act is, in many ways, determined externally. The success of Korea, India, and Brazil in the information technology sector was clearly due, in part, to strategic actions on the part of their respective states; the emergence of the IT

sector, however, was the result of a process defined by international dynamics (this is not to say that the policies produced by Korea, India, and Brazil had no effect on the character of the IT sector; but rather, the point is that the emergence and development of any industrial sector cannot be understood solely in terms of the policies of a single state). One possible way of addressing these issues would be to outline the relationship between states' capacity to construct a "comparative advantage" and the emergence and development of industrial sectors across time. **[JP: I agree: I think there is a lot of nation-state centrism here, with the analysis building out of close readings of a series of national social, industrial, and state development. We also have a fairly typical trajectory from nation-centric economic development to globo-centric economic development, even though in so many respects these industries were born in contexts profoundly shaped by the international division of labor of the time. What difference would it make to conceive state capacity outside a restrictive national frame, e.g. to conceive states and local economies in relational terms from the outset?]** **[EOW: Excellent point. You focus on the opportunity created by the nature of market opportunities and technological development. There is also – as Chibber will argue in next week's readings – the issue of opportunities (and constraints) generated by multinational capital and geopolitics. The East Asian countries were in a very situation with respect to Global dynamics than India or Brazil.]**

2. JASON JACOB TUROWETZ

At several points in the text, Evans emphasizes the fact that the embedded alliances between state and society need not be focused on capital. In Chapter 10, he offers two alternative scenarios: the case of Kerala is problematic to the extent that it illustrates the pitfalls of aligning too closely with the interests of a single group, whatever that group might be; and the meager three pages he offers on Austria end with the caveat that the kind of tripartite corporatist bargaining once prevalent in some European states is being eroded by the advent of a unified European Union, which seems clearly to privilege the interests of capital over those of labor. Excepting Kerala, those states that chose to pursue economic growth in Evans' analysis seem ultimately to favor the interests of the capitalist class in the long-run, with global and regional integration further enervating the relative bargaining power of labor even where it was once vibrant. **[EOW: Evans view about the long-run is somewhat complex, and perhaps contradictory. In the Korean case he argues that in the long-run the pro-capital accumulation developmental state creates its own "gravediggers" that forced it to abandon such a one-dimensional procapitalist project. This seems to suggest that some kind of broader pluralist embeddedness may be a condition for legitimacy and stability once a developmental project is reached. In terms of the European cases – Austrian and others – while it may be that the specific form of corporatism that dominated these state-society relations in the 1950s-1980s may be eroding, I don't think he is really suggesting that these societies will move towards a simple capitalist-elite-embeddedness in the present period.]** I find it curious in this context that he omits entirely any discussion of the Scandinavian countries which, I would argue, have been far more successful in maintaining the tripartite alliance than their European counterparts. **[JP: Fair point.**

What would have happened if these had been positioned as the “foil” for Evans’ analysis, instead of a rather stereotyped version of neoliberalism? In other words, what happens if he holds his case up to different mirrors? In some respects, the consideration of Scandinavia would have strengthened his argument about the importance of different forms of state capacity, but it would have also made life more complicated than invoking the neo-utilitarian canard of the absentee/minimalist state? The latter, straw-person argument allows Evans to sustain the position that of course states matter, but it also gets him off the hook of specifying more closely how. To a degree, his argument rests on the (reasonable) observation that because the state is all over the IT sector, then it must have had some effects, even if it is impossible to connect particular state actions with particular outcomes. He amasses a large amount of circumstantial evidence, but the recognition of high levels of indeterminacy and contingency means that the causal connections must remain rather weak.]

The Scandinavian countries provide an interesting and important counterpoint to the cases that Evans addresses, not only because of the somewhat different outcomes generated on their collective-bargaining terrains (indicating a different relative balance of power between labor and capital), but also because the values and social objectives reflected in their state institutions are different enough from those of the Anglo-American, European, and Asian countries to warrant a unique distinction (“social-democratic,” as opposed to “conservative-traditional”) in Esping-Andersen’s widely accepted (though by no means uncontested) typology of welfare regimes. **[JP: Does Evans use a parallel set of analytic procedures to define his ideal types? What are the principles of theoretical pertinence for Evans versus Esping-Andersen?]** These social objectives translate into different patterns of ties connecting actors to one another and to the state, and generate different kinds of commitments, incentives, and interests. For example, while transfer payments made to labor generally increase the material welfare of workers wherever they are made, the two-tier transfer regime in place in a country like Sweden (which makes a flat, baseline transfer to all citizens and an additional transfer indexed to income) includes capitalists as well as their employees in the re-distributive enterprise, rather than excluding the former and creating thereby an additional cleavage between the two groups. **[EOW: You are right about this, but I don’t think capitalists are actually taken in by the fact that they receive child allowances and other transfers – they are generally fairly hostile to the level of redistribution and taxation in Sweden. Also: the most crucial redistributive force in Sweden has been the solidarity wage deals rather than redistribution as such, since this considerably flattens the pre-tax earnings distribution.]** This is but one area, among others, where their interests might be more closely, or at least differently, aligned than they are elsewhere. I don’t mean to suggest that there aren’t considerable tensions between workers and capital in Sweden, or within its collective bargaining process more generally (which is certainly not as vibrant as it was in its heyday), but only that these tensions are configured in different ways, and with different results, than those present in the countries Evans considers. An examination of the class-character of state-society ties in the Scandinavian countries, along with a more lengthy investigation of state ties to multiple groups in general, would do much to clarify how the developmental state could

move beyond embedded alliances with a single group and incorporate a wider range of interests into its purview. This wider range of interests would, in turn, help to forge broad-based consensuses around core issues and stabilize the state's position over the long run. **[EOW: Very nice points about the need to examine in a more complex way the configuration of class compromises in countries and how these bear on the embeddedness problem. I think one also needs to clarify, in this context, what problems, precisely, embeddedness is supposed to solve, both for the state and for the class-participants as well. In Evans analysis of the DevState the crucial problem in the state-capital relation solved by embeddedness is information, and the closely related, problem-solving capacity. What is the potential problem solved by state-labor embeddedness?]**

3. Peter Brinson

Put simply, my concerns with Evans' book have only to do with the first half of the title, the part about embeddedness. His arguments about autonomy are clear, but his notion of embeddedness is vague and self-contradictory. In the end, it creates more questions than it solves.

In describing the two components of the developmental state, Evans asserts that both an autonomous bureaucracy a la Weber and a particular set of state-society relations are required. Throughout his case studies, Evans shows adequately that the state's ability to act autonomously to encourage industrial investment and entrepreneurship is crucial to the success of the IT industries in Korea, Brazil, and India. Evans cites well-known theorists such as Weber and Schumpeter in his arguments, which overall, confirm our sociological expectations that (surprise!) states are crucial actors in a nation's economic life. **[EOW: The claim is more than simply the bald claim that state's a "crucial actors", but that, through appropriate interventions against the autonomy of enterprises, they can increase the rate of economic growth, understood in conventional terms. That is a more contentious claim.]**

Evans' notion of state-society relations, however, is problematic. First, the concept is operationalized more as state-capital relations, since the only actors that seem to matter in the relationship are entrepreneurs and capitalists. **[JP: So, should we conclude that this represents more of a Granovetter style reading of embeddedness (embedded networks) than a Polanyian one (societal embeddedness)?]** Apparently, the state need only be embedded in a class of private industrial elites in order to achieve successful industrial growth. This notion runs roughshod over notions of democracy and legitimacy, in which one acknowledges the importance of ordinary citizens in the health of a state or economy. **[EOW: one can certainly acknowledge the importance of democracy and ordinary citizens for a normatively legitimate state and economy without also claiming that, for the specific problem at hand – explaining the possibility of accelerating economic growth rates in NICs – embeddedness in this broader sense is necessary. Evans is making an empirical claim that for this specific outcome, the pivotal problem is embeddedness with powerful actors in society whose actions**

determine the fate of economic growth.] This is a point that Evans acknowledges in the final chapter of the book; he should not be at all surprised by the Korean subway strike that he opens the chapter with, since the economic success of capitalists does not “trickle down” to the workers. However, his attempt to leave open the notion of embeddedness—that there may be other forms of state-society relations that encompass more diverse sets of people—seems to undermine his own analysis of his case studies. **[EOW: The analysis is only undermined if it could be shown that embeddedness with labor could be growth enhancing and solve the kinds of growth-obstructing problems Evans sees in less developed societies.]**

If his operationalization of embeddedness should be called into question, how adequate is it to explain the variation the successes of his case studies? One of the central claims of the book is that Korea achieved greater successes in the IT industry because its form of state-society relations allowed for a more effective transition from midwifery to husbandry than did Brazil’s or India’s. Evans’ questioning of the Korean form of embeddedness highlights the fact that Evans never addressed competing explanations for why Korea’s IT industry was more successful than Brazil’s or India’s. He never tries to explain the variation *without* talking about the state. Could an equally plausible account simply have to do with differences in the private sector (a business-centered explanation like Ch. 7)? **[JP: Absolutely, so does his analysis fully account for the Indian IT boom of the decade since the book was written? Or should we read this, instead, in terms of the geoeconomic position of India, the different pattern of economic connections with the United States, etc.?)**

If the form of embeddedness that consists only of state-capital relations is less than ideal, then it is no puzzle that the 1990s brought about new problems for the industry or the potential for dismantling of the state. But would any other form of embeddedness better yield industrial growth? This seems to remain an open question.

4. Daniel Warshowsky

Peter Evans presents a powerful way of exploring state formation. In his *Embedded Autonomy*, Evans describes how bureaucratic autonomy and societal embeddedness are both crucial to state development. Evans describes the four main roles of states. As a custodian state, it provides protection, policing, and regulation of infant industries, while as a midwife state, it attracts private enterprises into new sectors by subsidies, tax breaks, and other devices. As a husband state, it teaches, cultivates, nurtures, and prods entrepreneurial forces that have been activated, while as a demiurge state, it becomes directly involved in productive activities that complement private investment, only to denationalize later when industries are established. Evans’ comparative institutional approach is presented as a more thoroughly developed version of Weber’s work on bureaucracy and state formation. Evans’ work adds societal embeddedness to Weber’s notion of bureaucratic autonomy. **[JP: OK, is it fair, or an oversimplification, to say that this analysis boils down to Weberian bureaucracy + elite networks =**

transformative economic capacity. Is it fair, or an oversimplification, to say that this analysis boils down to Weberian bureaucracy + elite networks = transformative economic development. Or Weberian bureaucracy + elite networks = necessary but not sufficient conditions for transformative economic development.]

Although generally quite incisive and interesting to read, there are a few central questions to ask.

In this academic circle of sociologists and geographers, there is probably little support for neo-utilitarian theory, so there is little need to discuss it. **[JP: That need not stop us! Evans seems to use a strong version of neo-utilitarian theory (a.k.a. the what-it-say-on-the-bottle version of neoliberalism) as a foil for many of his arguments. This is a common strategy, and it makes it relatively easy to sustain a “state matter” position if one only holds it against a utopian or stereotypical reading of neo-utilitarianism. But what happens if we hold this analysis against a more complex reading of actually existing neoliberalization? Can his theory explain the parallel drift of multiple states, and their policies across multiple sectors, to various forms of “late neoliberal” policy formation? Is this (a) no longer really neoliberalism, as Evans’ suggests, since he believes this hit its limits in the late 1980s (i.e. there is still lots of path-dependent policy making going on and it is a misreading to see this as generically neoliberal or neo-utilitarian) or (b) a very large coincidence, since under so many conditions there has been recourse to a rather limited (and flawed) set of policy prescriptions/state roles?]** However, I am not completely convinced that Evans’s framework is the best to understand various developmental states. Evans does provide various important insights into state formation, such as his notions of custodian, midwife, husbandry, and demiurge; however, some of his general insights, such as state intervention as a given, is not a new concept. **[EOW: What does “state intervention as a given” mean? I thought the whole point of Evan’s argument was that there is nothing automatically “given” about state intervention: it is highly variable, contextually determined, structurally shaped. I am not sure what you mean here.]** Thus, my first question: Is Evans’s “embedded autonomy” theory the best way to understand state formation? If so, is it well developed enough to stand as a distinct theory, or should it be best thought of as a complementary theory or just an interesting insight on state formation. **[EOW: I think this is really too vague a question: “best” for what purposes? It could be best for explaining variability in economic development without being best for explaining legitimacy, or ethnic conflict, or a host of other things.]**

Clearly, his choice to use Brazil, India, and Korea provided him with specific results that fit well into his broader theory. However, I am not completely convinced that Evans’s theory of “embedded autonomy” is well supported by all evidence. **[EOW: If you believe this you should cite some evidence that contradicts his claim. This is an easy accusation to make of any explanation; the trick is to present evidence that goes against it.]** Maybe his methodology is more process driven than focused on typicality or

replicability. **[EOW: the approach focuses on specific causal mechanisms, and therefore is inherently oriented towards replicability in the sense of applicability to a broader range of cases, so long as these mechanisms are relevant to their functioning.]** This is a central issue which anchors on not only methodology, but also the evidence used to support his broader theoretical framework. What is the best methodology for Evans's basic question, and did Evans's work utilize a methodology that was both fundamentally sound and executed well.

In all, I think my concerns revolve around three broader issues. First, I question Evans's general theoretical framework: Is his "embedded autonomy" theory the best way to understand state formation. Second, I am unsure of the best methodology: Is his process-oriented methodology the best method for his broader theoretical project. Lastly, I am interested in interrogating his evidence/support used: Is there enough evidence to support his broader theoretical framework. My general opinion about Evans's work is positive; however, I believe it is necessary to discuss these broader theoretical, epistemological, and methodological issues. **[EOW: general point: When you raise these kinds of issues you need to give more substance to your concerns. Otherwise it is quite hard to know exactly why you think, for example, the theory may not be satisfactory.]**

5. Sarah D Warren

In reading *Embedded Autonomy*, I was struck by how Evans defines, both implicitly and explicitly, state actions and state-society relations. Evans **assumes** that the effectiveness of the bureaucracy of the state hinges on its role as an elite institution with ties to elite industrialists. **[EOW: Is this really an assumption, in the sense of a repmise, or is it a substantive theoretical claim, a hypothesis about what sorts of variability in fact is explanatory of variability in the outcome in question (developmental success)? I am not sure this should be treated as an assumption.]** The state can in then promote development for the benefit of elite enterprises. Evans' notion of development, while never explicitly defined, is closely linked to his emphasis on elite actors. Tellingly, he uses Japan as his archetype of a developmental state. While Japan irrefutably achieved an impressive level of economic vitality post-World War II, this classification does not take into account development on a broader scale: social welfare for all citizens based on a certain level of a standard of living. From this point on Evans defines society, to which the state is inextricably linked through mutual influence and which serves as a source of legitimacy through social embeddedness, as industrial elites. Throughout his analysis, it is the entrepreneurial class, the "best and brightest" from the top universities, with whom the state must network, yet from whom it must maintain its autonomy. While this definition certainly stems from Evans' analytical focus on industrial growth, I find its equation with development to be problematic. **[JP: The persistent emphasis on the character of elite networks, patterns of recruitment to same, etc. grated with me somewhat too. Again, I would say that the "functionality" of these networks is being implicitly read through the lens of subsequent economic development: so, it seems to make sense to recruit "the best and the brightest" from elite universities when positive economic transformation follows, but how do we explain situations in**

which the same patterns of elite recruitment are associated with economic decline (as in the British civil service)? The conventional analysis of the latter (e.g. from Will Hutton) is that Oxbridge recruitment patterns produce social and economic isolation in the British civil service, and so is part of the explanation for economic decline in this case. By the way, they say that liberals always want clever people to run the state, while conservatives prefer leaders with the right instincts. If this is only half true, I think we know where Evans' sympathies lie!]

It is not until the final chapter that Evans acknowledges that society, a crucial element in his definition of an effective developmental state, encompasses more than just entrepreneurial elites. In his final description of the workers' strikes in Korea and the unique style of embeddedness in Kerala, he raises questions of class and the ways in which the state enforces, and often creates, new classes or categories of class. What he ultimately misses, however, is that he has created a paradigm throughout the bulk of the book in which it is entirely possible for the state to have embedded autonomy (with industrial elites) without creating any real developmental strategies for the working class and the poor. Evans is convincing in his arguments that through their midwifery and husbandry practices, Brazil, India and Korea have been integral to the transformation of the economy, and I appreciate Evans' insistence that the actions of the state create unanticipated consequences for further state-society relations and social classes. However, I am not entirely convinced that the elite ties between state and industry ultimately create an economy that is developmental on more than just the entrepreneurial high-tech industrial level. **[EOW: You are right that in most of the book Evans simply adopts uncritically the standard definition of economic development as growth in productivity and GDP/capita. In the discussion of Kerela he acknowledges that embeddedness with labor promotes human welfare even if it fails to produce conventional economic development. However, I am not sure that a great deal rides on this terminological issue, since variations the economic development of productivity and production is something important to explain even if it is only one of the dimensions of overall social development one might care about. If Evans is correct in his diagnosis of the Kerela case, then this would be very worrisome to progressive activists there who are not satisfied with the low-income high-human welfare condition of Kerela believing – perhaps correctly – that in the long run, without conventional economic development, the high welfare will be unsustainable.] [JP: In this respect, is this a network-centric analysis? Would, say, a class analysis of the same cases (or one that focused more on institutional capacities) lead to different conclusions?]**

6. Amy Quark: Response to Evans' *Embedded Autonomy*

Evans' argument is intriguing on its own terms. That is, within the theoretical and methodological parameters it sets for itself, he offers a cogent argument for the importance of particular state structures in creating the "multidimensional conspiracy in

favor of development” (7) that allows a state to capture a more profitable niche in the international division of labor.

That said, I believe that the theoretical and methodological parameters that Evans sets are inherently problematic. A central goal of Evans’ work is to consider different “successful responses to the new global context” (205) and to prescribe state strategies that are most likely to achieve industrial transformation. He appears to consider the industrial transformation of India, Brazil and Korea to be “a giant step forward” (244) based on their ability to capture a more advantageous position in the international division of labour. This definition of “success”, however, is problematic on a number of levels, the most serious of which stem from Evans’ focus on the nation-state as his central unit of analysis, despite his recognition of the global context of economic transformation and the international division of labour. This focus on the nation-state—rather than a multi-level world system of states—creates serious blindspots in his theoretical framework, constrains his explanatory power and unnecessarily limits the scope of political options he leaves open for states. These problems in turn raise questions regarding the political agenda of his work.

Evans’ argument assumes that, to some extent, everyone wins as a result of industrial transformation—that industrial transformation is a desirable end. **[EOW: I don’t think he really says this, or at least he does not believe that everyone automatically wins from industrial development. He does believe, as his analysis of the Korea case shows, that industrial development creates a context in which workers are more likely to be able to effectively struggle since distributive conflicts occur in a less zero-sum context, but this still requires struggle rather than the sheer effects of industrialization.]** This is problematic even within the parameters he sets for himself—within the nation-state. However, it is a supposition that becomes even more historically, socially and ecologically questionable when one expands the unit of analysis to a world system of states. With this broader approach, we would see that industrial transformation in one state often means externalizing the social, economic and ecological consequences of this development to other states (or to certain internal regions—rural vs. urban being one of the most obvious examples). Evans recognizes this peripherally at best. For example, as Evans’ notes, Korea’s economic transformation brought about exploitative social relations that resulted in militant labour organizing internally; outside this national perspective, we must ask, who else experienced the costs of Korea’s industrial transformation based on computer chips? Did the key ingredient to computer chips—coltan—come from the conflict-ridden Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly known as Zaire), where the Rwandan army is known to fund itself by controlling and exporting DRC coltan? (Bunker and Ciccantell (forthcoming) offer Japan as another excellent example of the socially and ecologically exploitative inter-state relations characteristic of “development miracles” that we could discuss in class). **[JP: Yes, and it follows that the “nation state” may not be associated with determinant capacities by virtue of its nation-state-ness, i.e. are Rwanda and the United States meaningfully conceptualized as members of the same causatively-significant group of nation-states, or does the power and capacity of different nation states partly also derive from their position with the international state system and international economy?]**

Looking beyond nation-state “development” strategies in this way (recognizing that commodity chains do not now and often have not throughout history been confined to nation-state boundaries) raises questions for Evans’ framework more generally. How are the state structures and roles in one country—like Korea—related to those in another country—like the DRC? Do the social and environmental consequences of Korea’s industrial transformation in fact worsen the predatory nature of state structures in the DRC (Zaire), the empirical reflection of Evans’ ideal type? **[JP: Plus: what are the implications of building ideal types from (a) national cases, while (b) arranging these cases along a single dimension from predatory to embedded autonomy? Does not this imply, for all the complexity of Evans’ analysis a unidirectional preferred development path, toward embedded autonomy and away from systems that are branded as deficient in these attributes? Additionally, was the apparent attractiveness of this path contingent on the historical conditions of the time? Does it still make sense to pursue this, in the context of deepened neoliberalization/global economic interpenetration?]** Do we need to think of these state structures and strategies less as alternative models of “development” and more as parts of a dynamic, interconnected system in which state structures and actions in one place affect state actions and structures in another? When one seriously considers industrial transformation as a process not confined to the boundaries of the nation-state, defining the “success” of industrial transformation becomes not only more complicated but also a question of environmental and social justice. **[EOW: This is a bold point you are making and certainly calls into question the whole concept of economic development, not simply because it is incomplete – as in discussions which emphasize the problem that human welfare may not automatically improve with development in the standard sense – but that development per se may inherently be so damaging as to not be a worthy goal. This said, it could still be the case that Evans is completely correct in his diagnosis of what mechanisms explain variability among less developed countries in the rates at which they are able to develop industrially. You could believe that such development is a bad thing for the reasons you outline and still believe that he has identified the causal processes that generate this undesirable development. It would be another thing if you also claim that the causal explanations he proposes are unsatisfactory for this particular object of explanation.]**

The limitations of Evans’ argument, based on its nation-state-centered analysis, raise further questions regarding possibilities both for nation-state-level “development” and, more broadly, for emancipatory social change. By ignoring the socially and ecologically exploitative relations both within and between states that characterize capitalist development, Evans appears to be suggesting that, while it is difficult, less “developed” states can and should try to “catch up”. **[JP: The Kerala case is germane here: is industrialization the only way to sustain growth in welfare?]** On the other hand, it is possible that he realizes the exploitation that this entails and that he is advocating the industrial transformation of some “less developed” countries through the exploitation of others. Moreover, it appears that Evans’ focus on the nation-state as a unit

of analysis excludes the possibility of “development” alternatives that require action beyond the boundaries of the nation-state. Thus, my question is, does his narrow focus on state structures, unless reframed in a much more world-systemic analysis, automatically exclude alternative state roles and state alliances that might cross national boundaries—such as OPEC organizing or the potential to organize redistributive agendas across national boundaries? **[EOW: I don’t see why this is excluded. What you would need to show are instances where these structures and processes help explain variations better than his proposal. You need to be clearer here about the distinction between (a) arguing that we should explain something other than what Evans is explaining, and (b) his explanations are themselves faulty.]**

7. Brent Kaup

Peter Evans, in his work *Embedded Autonomy*, advances a theory of the organizational foundations of the developmental state that focuses on the internal corporate and ideological cohesion of the state bureaucracy. Evans believes that organizationally coherent states are capable of building the linkages with key social actors that are required to support developmental projects while avoiding the problems of capture and rent-seeking. **[EOW: I am not sure that he says organizational coherence implies capacity to build linkages. The linkage problem and the coherence/capacity problem are relatively independent, or at least they can vary fairly independently. The Indian state was about as coherent as the Korean one, but lacked the linkages for various reasons other than coherence.]** While Evans shows how the different states’ relationships with private industry (the key social actor in this context) led to different levels of economic success, his analysis largely ignores the historical influence of geopolitical alignments and the presence (or lack) of natural resource bases upon the state formations and state-society relations, particularly in regard to his three primary case studies of Brazil, India, and Korea.

In Evans discussion of natural resource and mineral extraction, his search for ideal types draws his analysis away from his three state case-studies. Instead of showing how mineral extraction influenced and interacted with the state in Brazil, India, and Korea, Evans shows how mineral extraction influenced and interacted with the state in Chile, Peru, Zaire, and Zambia. He classifies all of these as ‘third-world’ states and expects the reader to merely apply this analysis to all ‘third-world’ states, thus ignoring the place-based differences that mineral extraction entails. Another problem with Evans’ discussion of the role and influence of mineral extraction upon the state is that he only discusses states that have rich natural resource bases. How does the lack of a rich natural resource base (such as in Korea) affect state society relations? Evans also fails to see the structural influences of rich natural resource bases. He sights the construction of infrastructure by both the Brazilian and Indian states as positive contributions to their own economic transformation. but in doing so he does not ask why such infrastructure was constructed and/or what such infrastructure was needed for. **[EOW: I can see that the issue of natural resources could be another theme in discussing variability across countries in developmental success, but I am not sure why the lack of a systematic discussion of this necessarily shows that Evans own account is flawed. He uses the mineral extraction story in a very specific way – to show that the possible role for**

the state is different in these cases from the more complex ones like automobile production or IT. Direct state ownership works pretty well for extraction but not for complex technical production – he claims. As a result a strictly demiurge solution is not available if you want to really industrialize, Do you disagree with that part of his argument?]

Looking at the geopolitical context of Evans' three major case studies, Evans drastically overlooks the key role that South Korea played to the U.S. in its post-WWII East Asian interventions to stop the spread of communism. After WWII and the Korean War, the U.S. was providing large-scale bilateral loans and grants to South Korea in order to insure the success of capitalist endeavors in an area dominated by communist countries (USSR, North Korea, China). With communist concerns not arising in Latin America until the late 1950s, the US saw less of a need to extend bilateral aid to Brazil. The result was that Brazil received the majority of its foreign capital through direct foreign investment, with private lenders seeing the possibility for returns from Brazil's large natural resource base (see Stallings 1992). As a result, Evans failure to place each of his case studies in the geopolitical context causes him to ignore the influence of different forms of foreign capital that could be attributed to the promotion of a states level of embedded autonomy. **[EOW: I agree with you that Evans does not give much wait to geopolitical context, but you should note that in the 1950s and 60s in spite of the tremendous military spending in Korea, it was a clientelistic, nondevelopment state – more like the Philippines in many ways. So I am not sure that this inherently undermines Evans claims.] [JP: Fair enough: can we imagine a set of conceptual criteria that would define (nation) states in terms of their orientation to “foreign” capital? Would this be more or less adequate than Evans' formulation? Or would world-systems categories work better? Alternatively, would such “jumbo” categories do violence to the subtle, “mid-level” processes that Evans' is tracing (i.e. consequences of state action for a single industry)? Is it that problems arise from his attempt to “scale up” from such mid-level constructions to the form and function of the state/national economic trajectories, when these are more properly understood as conjunctural outcomes of multiple phenomena?]**

Overall, Evans' lack of focus upon natural resources and geopolitical circumstances causes him to overlook several factors that could have contributed to each of his case-studies' variances in embedded autonomy. In many ways, Evans problems arise from his search for ideal types and his lack of a long-term historical analysis.

[JP: So what are the consequences of Evans' historical framing of these questions? I would say that he makes a smart choice in selecting IT as one of the propulsive industries of these after-Fordist times, in that this allows him specifically to problematize the question of economic transformation. It's also an industry that is practically saturated with state involvement. So he selects his cases according to the processes in question, which makes sense. But does it also lead him toward some conclusions and away from others? What are the implications of there being no counterfactual—a thriving IT sector alongside an ineffective state structure? Could he have sustained similar arguments through an analysis of the fast-food industry or coalmining?]

8. Joseph Harris

Sociologist Alejandro Portes contends that Peter Evans' typology of states in the 1995 work *Embedded Autonomy* remains "state of the art" among work examining state variation. However, one might argue that the human face Evans puts on states actually confuses the issue more than clarifying it, since the characterizations he uses, such as "predatory" and "developmental," normally would apply to single actors, rather than a collection of actors. Given that state actions and policies represent the *collective*, concerted action of a multitude of actors, is such a characterization fair and/or useful? Does it lead the reader away from a more thorough examination of the kind of collective action problems that plague what he calls "predatory" states? **[I am not sure why the use of aggregate labels inherently obscures collective action problems. The labels simply mean that states vary along various dimensions and that some are fairly extreme in ways that can be called "types". Zaire/DRC is a predatory state because of the predominant way state power is used over the people and activities in that country – to extract rents and repress civil society. There may be all sorts of collective action problems within such states and still this could be a correct characterization of how state power is used there.]**

The line of reasoning for Evans' labels is worth further examination still. "Predatory" and "developmental" describe states which have produced quite different development strategies and outcomes. But is Evans' argument a cultural one? **[EOW: Why do you think it is culture? He never really invokes cultural explanations for these forms of variation, although one might.]** And to what degree is it tautological? **[EOW: The analysis is not tautological because the two pivotal explanatory mechanisms – bureaucratic coherence and embedded-linkages – can be defined without any knowledge about predation or development. You don't need to know that the state actually extracts rents to observe the lack of internal coherence or meritocratic recruitment, etc.]** Such labels make fine descriptors for the countries he chooses, but lead us back to the conditions which created them, which lead us to the descriptions and back again. Are such labels adequate for describing states whose particular experiences do not follow those of Japan, Korea, Zaire, or Brazil? Or is his ideal typology insufficient at best and woefully incomplete at worst? Would broader or more nuanced categories add anything useful to our analysis of state variation, or simply succeed in building an endless line of meaningless categories? **[EOW: Evans actually suggests that these "ideal types" be treated as continua, as dimensions-of-variation rather than literal binary forms. One can talk about the degree of predation of a state, the degree of developmentalism, and so on. This is where the India and Brazil cases are important as "intermediaries" whose specific dilemmas are illuminated by the ideal types.]** **[JP: Good, probing questions. Can we move towards answers to these, and related others like ... Are the categories of Evans' analysis derived through abstraction or generalization? Is it adequate to locate cases in "intermediate"**

positions in a one-dimensional analytical space (defined as the zone between an ideal type based on Zaire and one based on Korea/Japan)? At what level of abstraction are his categories of husbandry etc.? Are these mid-level concepts, or are they generalizations based on observed state roles under specific conditions?]

Finally, seizing on the potentially cultural elements of Evans' arguments, I quote Cameroonian development "expert" Daniel Etounga-Manguelle who stated, "Culture is the mother; institutions are the children" in the tome *Culture Matters*, edited by Samuel Huntington, in 2000. Keeping Evans in mind here, do you think Etounga-Manguelle got it right? Or was his reasoning backwards: Institutions are the mother, and it is actually culture that is the child? The answer has direct relevance on the Evans reading, since it begs the following question: Is it the state or society that we should be examining for answers to predatory syndromes in places like Zaire? Has Evans chosen the right piece to examine in his book? **[EOW: Evans does not actually do much to explain why it is that one state has a coherent bureaucracy and another not, why one has robust linkages and another not. These are his "independent variables" and there could be multiple possible explanations. There may be many paths to the same configuration. His claim is that if you get a particular configuration, then a particular developmental outcome becomes more or less likely.] [JP: And does his "culturalist" reading of, say, Japan stand the test of time? Is there a risk of interpreting cultures/institutions positively when they happen to coexist with robust economic development (e.g. Japan in the 80s, the US in the 90s), but negatively when they coexist with decline (Japan or Germany today)? Or should we place more emphasis on geoeconomic position? Can the "states matter" stance of Evans be reconciled with an approach that takes more seriously the relative location of countries/regions/economies within transnational networks or the global economy? I suspect that his relative neglect of the latter, more "structural" features of these development models, and his substitution of thick description of high level state-industry relations within national frames, may lead him to exaggerate the salience of institutions or culcha.]**

9. Shawn Cassiman

The Comparative Institutional Approach

Let me preface this paper by stating that I have been preoccupied with the events in New Orleans, particularly the state response before, during and following the hurricane.

Interestingly, reading Evans' text allowed for an opportunity to use the response to Katrina as a sort of case study of the properties of predatory and developing states, of the embeddedness or autonomy of this state. Evans' makes the point that the relevance of bureaucracy is not its breadth but its quality. The relationship to FEMA and Homeland Security in the disaster of New Orleans would be hard to miss with senior appointments

made based on a social network that was not preconditioned on merit, as in the examples of Japan, Korea and Taiwan. **[JP: Aren't these FEMA mostly well-networked lawyers from elite universities, however? Doesn't Evans' tend to read "merit" through these very same affiliations?!]** **[EOW: I am not sure how applicable the specific concepts proposed by Evans are for the FEMA case. While FEMA failed miserably in the immediate crisis, it nevertheless still pretty much conforms to a coherent rational-legal bureaucracy administering its programs: people do not have to bribe officials to get aid; the recovery funds will be distributed in a fairly legal manner; what corruption occurs will be marginal by historical standards; the director is not skimming the funds for personal use; etc. This is a dreadful political failing, and the employment of cronies in high places is a move away from a professional bureaucratic civil service, but in broad comparative terms this is still a pretty coherent bureaucratic-administrative apparatus. The real issues here are political more than administrative – what the party in power wants the state to do and not do.]**

Also of relevance is Barrow's (page 108, CTS) description of the roles of state administrative agencies as competing between functional effectiveness and formal bureaucratic procedure. Will the state/institutional response to Katrina lead to a legitimation deficit of lasting import? If so, will it be a result of a focus on accumulation combined with a weak bureaucratic infrastructure? How might we use such knowledge to facilitate social change?

Finally, rather than struggle to make either/or arguments about embeddedness and autonomy, Evans locates the institutional characteristics within context and place while further demonstrating the dynamic nature of the state. **[JP: Isn't this one of Evans' achievements: to think about the state in much more dynamic terms? In contrast, the analysis of bureaucratic capacity alone might seem rather static. Evans shows us how such capacities tend to develop through interpenetration with the "world outside." This produces a high level of contingency in his analysis (hence the detailed case-study narratives). While we might argue that his analysis of both the state and the IT sector is rather narrowly circumscribed (elite-elite relations being the main focus), on the other hand he does focus attention on the state/economy interface, and the mutual adjustment of both "sides" of this relation, which in my view is a step forward.]** This dynamism is evidence of the potential or even inevitability of change, particularly in response to crisis. It also seems that, according to Evans, the state as an instrument of social transformation, is contingent upon progressive participants within the bureaucracy. Perhaps the evidence provided by the State response in New Orleans will instigate a surge in dedication to service and social welfare that is so desperately needed in this state.

10. Oriol Miroso

I found Peter Evans' *Embedded Autonomy* an excellent analytical work for the analysis of the developmental state and for the refutation of **neo-institutional** **[EOW: Do you mean**

neo-utilitarian here?] claims about the detrimental role that states play for development. However, I am interested in the application of the argument to other cases, and particularly in the types of policy implications that can be derived from his analysis, and in this sense the book seems to me to be more wanting. Evans acknowledges the particularities of the cases he studies, and he warns us about the difficulties of replication of the experiences he reviews. His recommendations, therefore, are generic, and can be summarized as: “try to establish embedded autonomy”. As for the 'autonomy' part, his recommendation of building a meritocratic, strong and capable bureaucracy is pretty straight forward. The 'embedded' part of the equation seems to me much more complex and interesting to think about. **[JP: Yes, and do you think he/we can only really establish this retrospectively? In real time, aren't state actors proliferating experiments, emulating apparently successful strategies, hoping for the best? Or do the creative technocrats really know something that the others don't?]** Evans' analysis of Kerala and Austria shows other ways in which embeddedness can be achieved, thus making the point that possibilities are open and that the East Asian developmental state route is not the only way. Yet beyond the importance of political parties Evans offers no other clues as to how such embeddedness can be achieved. In the context of developing countries, in which political parties are usually weak and clientelistic, it is hard to see how, unless specific (and fairly contingent) circumstances as those described in the book emerge, states that are based on those weak parties can bring about the necessary changes to promote embeddedness. Things in this case are not as simple as establishing exams to access bureaucratic posts.

This is even more complicated by the inherent contradictory nature of the concept of 'embedded autonomy'. **[JP: Is not this analysis “contradiction lite” in key respects, however? Yes, Evans' makes a great deal of the awkwardness of state/industry relations, their ambiguity, etc., but does he identify any kind of deep patterning to the contradictions? He seems to highlight instances where the tensions are managed effectively, while also drawing attention to a great deal of redundant state activity.]** How much embeddedness and autonomy is necessary, and even more important, how can that be determined beforehand? When first referring to Korea, Evans argues that the Korean state had few ties with society, and that these were at the limit before falling into particularistic predation. How can these sort of insights help us build a theory of the state that is actually useful and clear in its policy implications, and not only in *a posteriori* analytical terms? **[EOW: You are right that Evans has very little to say about how to engineer the right kind of embeddedness. This is a bit like social capital arguments: if you are lucky to be born in a place with lots of social capital, your life will go well, but it is hard to know how to create it in a world of atomized mistrust. This does not mean that his arguments are wrong, but it may mean that it is more a matter of luck than design whether or not you get the right kind of embeddedness – “right” in the sense of being able to solve the problems for which linkages are needed.]**

Finally, I would like to raise the issue of internationalization and neoliberalism and how it relates to the state and its embeddedness. Evans mainly talks about the links between the private sector and international actors, but in the context of neoliberalism it is important to acknowledge the links to these actors from within the state. In a recent book,

William Robinson raises attention to the fact that with neoliberalism a group of what he calls 'tecnopols' have colonized the key positions of the state bureaucracy, and that these tecnopols are somehow 'embedded' in transnational networks more than in national societies, occasioning the break up of the link between accumulation and reproduction.

[JP: Dezalay and Garth also make this point about Latin America and the Chicago Boys, as does Glassman in his analysis of Thailand: increasingly, it would seem that transnational connections to business schools and economics programs, especially in the US, are playing a crucial role in the “training” and socialization of elite cadres within the state. Is Evans’ analysis both nation-centric and rather dated, in this respect? Is he guilty, as George Busg might put it, of misunderestimating neoliberalism?]

How does this fact affect our understanding of state theory and the position that the concept of embedded autonomy occupies within it? Is any common project between the state and other actors positive in itself, or are there other criteria that we should be taking into account? What about those groups in which the state is not embedded? **[EOW: I think the way to approach these issues is to focus on the nature of the problem which embeddedness is supposed to solve. For the task of sustaining a project of economic development, the key issues are – I think – information, trust, a consensus formation over the jointness of a joint project. So, if there are linkages to actors outside of the national-accumulation process, the issue becomes: what sorts of information problems and coordination problems are facilitated by such linkages?]**

11. Lena Etuk

One of the main points Evans raises is the presence of a feedback loop in the state that is embedded and autonomous. The feedback process between the state and social actors implies that the state is not a static structure and may, as Evans points out, facilitate the creation of opposing social actors which can change the actions of the state again. If I understand Evans’ examples of Austria and Kerala as well as the main three countries correctly, then the nature of the state is governed by the nature of the embedded relationships. Clearly India, Korea, and Brazil were classic examples of the capitalist state promoting capital accumulation in different ways, but they seem to have had that capitalist nature because they saw “development” as intrinsically linked to capital accumulation. If social actors in a capitalist state promote the association of development with, say, equity, health, or social justice then would the nature of the state change from a capitalist one to perhaps a “justice state,” “healthy population state,” etc.? Probably not, because if we follow Evans’ logic, the accumulation aspect is vital to the “successful” development of the nation/area. **[EOW: I think Evans would say that a state that robustly had embedded linkages with Labor and social movements, but not with capital, would in fact become a noncapitalist state. Or at least, it would in this regard cease to be capitalist in character – it is the linkages which infuse the state with its class character, in his analysis. The problem would be, then, that this would be a noncapitalist state in what remains a capitalist world economy, and this would pose serious challenges for the state, especially if it then attempts a development**

project in addition to its social justice project.] The state would remain inherently capitalist in nature but there would be additional features of state action to address the equity, justice, or health demands of the social actors, like in the Austrian case. This idea seems to fit well with Claus Offe’s work on the capitalist state and policy formation. If the state exists within capitalism then the state’s role is first to preserve the accumulation of capital and then second to address political demands made by social actors. Is it possible, however, to imagine a fundamental shift away from the support of capital accumulation toward social equity via the embedded autonomous state? **[EOW: This is how the Kerela state is described – it sacrifices capital accumulation for equality and wellbeing. The issue is whether or not this is sustainable.]**

I also found the role of education in forming developmental states, particularly those attempting to be embedded and autonomous states, intriguing. For states that are intending to increase their capital accumulation, and develop economically, having bureaucratic actors who are well-educated seems to be pretty important. Subsequently, it is also important for the educated to have an incentive to remain in their respective country of origin. The brain-drain presents itself as quite a conundrum for many countries, especially if the citizens tend to leave their countries to get an education. Somehow there needs to be an infrastructure already in place to facilitate the formation of an educated bureaucracy that can handle facilitating the accumulation of capital by private capitalists. The question is, how does that infrastructure come into being without some initial attempts by the state to “develop” in a non-, explicitly, economic way, i.e. by establishing high-quality universities? **[EOW: Kerela is in fact a case with very high quality education, including higher education, and little economic development, so this is possible.]**

12. Jae-Youl Lee

In this book, ‘embedded autonomy’ is to capture the dynamic between internal structure of state and its relations to society in industrial transformation for continuous economic growth on which the legitimacy of developmental state usually is predicated. Meanwhile, it is also my understanding that the ultimate purpose of this conceptualization is to instigate for states to conjure up inclusive and historically contingent state-society relations on the basis of Weberian bureaucracy in opposition to neo-utilitarian unceasing attempts to demolish them, as he says “used imaginatively, they [state bureaucracies] can spark new sources of social energy”(p.250). I agree with Evan’s argument that neoliberal conception of the state as well as bureaucracy as a collection of individual interest maximizers in their efforts to seek rents is misleading in many ways, but I am skeptical about (re)constructing elite-dominating bureaucracy through selective process (e.g. meritocratic recruitment). For, as long as intellectuals are organic in Gramsci’s term, such (re)construction of internal coherence in bureaucracy might be in conflict with building up inclusive state-society connectedness. **[JP: What would we learn from comparing Evans’ creative technocrats with Gramsci’s organic intellectuals? If the latter work to provide direction and shape to class projects, “routinely” during periods of relative stability and very actively during times of crisis, are Evans’ technocrats**

instead inhabiting a “normally unpredictable” world, making informed bets on appropriate policy directions in situations of inadequate knowledge, and learning on the hoof? Industry strategies of the kind that Evans’ describes seem to be rather less grand and visionary, rather more mundane and experimental. And it is only in retrospect, of course, that we can anoint some as “successful”—those that accompany economic growth. Can we use his kind of analysis predictively? Could he tell us, for example, which among the plethora of biotech policies at the present time will “work?” If 100 states pursue these policies and only 5 “succeed” in terms of economic growth, did it mean that this 5% were right-minded and appropriately “capacitated” while the others were not? Or were these the structurally favored locations anyway?] [EOW: Is your objective here normative in the sense that you feel it violates some value to build up state coherence in this way, or are you saying that an elite based bureaucratic coherence will not accomplish what Evans says it will accomplish? Is you claim explanatory or normative here?] In addition, he does little, if any, mention other state-society networks beyond state-entrepreneur relationship at least until the chapter 9. If all encompassing state-society relationship is his alternative, he also should have shown how other social groups (e.g., workers, women and ethnic groups) have been excluded and considered just as the instrument for capital accumulation in many cases, while the developmental states have prioritized their connection with capitalists over them. Actually, it was not until I read the final chapter that I can change my first understanding that Evans equates society with the group of capitalists and justifies what authoritarian regimes (e.g., pre-1990s South Korean governments) did on the pretext of economic development. By the same token, it is worth thinking over other sources of developmental state’s legitimacy other than growth which the author seems to accept uncritically to suggest alternative state-society relation.

To Peter Evans, “state involvement is given” (p.10) at least in capitalism, as Lenin envisioned ‘withering away’ state would be the subsequent gradual process after completely smashing bourgeoisie state. Accordingly, he witnesses, state interventions for capital accumulation have become sophisticated and complicated, instead of degenerated, in all the three developmental states even in the era of ‘new internationalization’ when TNCs have exploited an unprecedented mobility compared to its old version. Developmental states have had to create ideal formula of state interventions by choosing possible options (i.e., demiurge, custodian, midwifery and husbandry roles in this book) according to sectoral specifications in the global market. This responsive state’s transformative role not only gives efficiency to domestic firms in newly emerging sectors like information technology, but also provides the reasons for TNC’s changing ways of business (i.e., from direct subsidiary to licensing agreement, joint venture, etc.). But, it is problematic that such conception of institutional endowment easily loses sights of capturing internal mechanisms which are also interrelated with state policy formation and implementations, even though *raison d’etat* which presides over the activities of private firms generates its own economic efficiency for industrial transformation. For example, in explaining success story of steel industry of South Korea in the world market, this book can say about Japanese government war reparation which should be paid to individuals such as forcefully conscripted soldiers and female prostitutes instead of building the iron mill in Pohang, from whose neighboring areas many politicians and bureaucrats occupied government important positions. [JP: If the analysis had been

based on steel, rather than IT, would the conclusions concerning state capacities have been the same/similar?] In sum, institutional approach should see how state policies are formed not only by considering the bureaucracy and its relation to society at national scale which often appears as outcome, but also by showing internal processes through which state policies are coming to being. **[EOW: I am afraid that I had a very hard time figuring out what you were saying here, what the central point was, so I cannot really comment on this.]**

[JP: Would you, instead, advocate a more “structural” take on the determination of state policies and roles? Is your concern here that Evans’ approach is elite-centric, while framed almost exclusively in terms of state-capital relations?]

13. Brett Burkhardt

The main point of *Embedded Autonomy* is that industrial transformation depends on the institutional structure of a state and the types of links that connect the state to society. When a cohesive and well-ordered state apparatus retains ties to private economic actors (industrial capitalists, in the case of the IT sector), a situation of embedded autonomy is present. These conditions are ideal for generating industrial transformation.

One component of successful industrial transformation is the creation or the strengthening of entrepreneurship in some new sector. Evans is right to highlight the dynamic and somewhat unstable process of creation. Entrepreneurial capitalists in a new sector may owe their success or existence to the midwifery or husbandry of state agencies. This, however, does not mean that these capitalists will passively accept continued state intervention. **[JP: In fairness, doesn’t Evans point to this quite common contradiction, as maturing industries grow to reject or deny the hands that have fed them? His point, however, seems to be that even the internationalized IT sector is not naïve enough to embrace simple neoliberal “openness.”]** Indigenous capitalists will tend to shift their alliances to international capital and to become critical of state intervention. The state, then, is often left with the role of mediator between local capital and international capital.

A danger involved in local capital allying with international capital is that local entrepreneurship will degenerate into simple and stagnant commodity production, which has the potential to halt further industrial transformation. If state intervention can bring about a politically and economically powerful group of local capitalists, would it be desirable for state bureaucrats to attempt to strengthen local labor (leaving aside the question of whether this is feasible)? What role might a powerful working class (or labor-oriented political party) play in stopping the potential stagnation in simple commodity production? **[EOW: I assume that by “simple commodity production” you mean “the production of simple – i.e. standardized, non-innovative – commodities”. Why do you feel that an alliance between international capitalists and the kinds of local capitalists generated by a successful developmental state will**

lead the local capitalists to degenerate into standardized commodity producers? This does not seem to be what has happened in Taiwan and Korea, but I am also not sure why one would expect this.]

On the one hand, an empowered group of local workers might be able to form coalitions with local capital against international capital. The local coalition would have extra leverage in persuading international firms to invest in high value-added, technologically advanced activities in the local economy. After all, this is in the interest of both local capital and labor. **[EOW: Why, precisely, is this facilitated by a local cross-class coalition? I would think that the local cross-class coalition would make the local economy less attractive for FDI altogether, all other things being equal.]** On the other hand, an empowered local labor movement may counteract other incentives (for example, the possibility of exploiting an economic “greenhouse”) that might draw international capital to a local economy. International firms will generally want to retain as much control over production as possible without ceding it to a strong labor movement.

The question of the possible effects of an empowered labor movement combined with an empowered group of capitalists probably must be answered on a case-by-case basis. But there remains the question of whether state intervention is capable of producing a significant and coherent working *class* (as opposed to industrial workers being “an inadvertent byproduct of the state’s transformative project” [229]). Evans discusses Kerala and Austria as examples of states that have forged links with parts of society other than or in addition to industrial capital. These states empowered (and were empowered by) subordinate groups, including workers. But in both of these cases there were histories of mobilization and organization among the subordinate groups.

Evans (239-40) suggests that it is easier for a state to pursue a redistributive agenda (with links between state and labor) after an agenda of accumulation than it is to pursue an accumulation agenda after a redistributive agenda. This is because a redistribution agenda without an accumulation agenda can wipe out potential entrepreneurs. This may be true, but it is not clear that it would be any easier for a state to create a strong working class where there is no history of labor organization. If a history of labor organization is a precondition for a state to be embedded in links to labor, then states lacking such a history will indeed be quite powerless to regain the influence they may have previously held over international and local capital. **[JP: In this respect, is Evans’ analysis a prisoner to the particular historical conditions that framed his case studies? How successful is he in abstracting from these historically unique conditions? Do these conditions lead him systematically to underestimate the role of working class movements, by virtue of a general shortage of compelling recent cases?]**

[EOW: You are correctly identifying a problem, but I think the answer is really that the effective organization of workers requires struggle by workers. It is hard to imagine the situation in which an elite-dominated developmental state would set about deliberately creating an organized empowered working class unless forced to do so by workers. Capitalists will always resist this, and a developmental state with strong ties to capital would not have an incentive to risk alienating capital. In any case, this would not facilitate FDI if that is the motive here.]

14. Kevin Walsh

Relative to the dominant neo-utilitarian discourse that dominated current political, and in certain circles, academic landscapes and the time of its writing, Evans' treatment of a positive and necessary role of politics in determining economic outcome comes off as a hope-filled proclamation that "another world is possible".

Via his thorough examination of the various combinations of state technocrats, private sector elites, and political agents, Evans' not only provides useful distinctions between types of states and state/society relations, but also the remarkable achievements that such combinations can produce. His combination of historical and institutional comparative methodology allows for a high level of abstraction that actually works at identifying structure and agency. **[JP: How does Evans move from his detailed case studies to conclusions about the structure and orientation of the state in toto? Is he generalizing from a narrow set of foundations, or limited set of cases? Where do his intermediate concepts come from?]**

But for an audience other than one steeped in early-90s neoliberal ideology, what purpose does his well-argued and supported case serve? I would say that the conclusions we can carry away from are severely limited by the narrowness of Evans' overall goals. Agency (or, development), in Evans' view, is limited in ambition to forming a "multidimensional conspiracy" by states and their members to climb into a better position in the international division of labour (page 8).

There are several major problems with this, two of which i want to touch on here. First is its total neglect for the role of international politics in the path dependency of states. Without recognizing the importance of say, the Cold War, in determining the structure and thus agency of development, he is left with a severely constrained scope of analyzing attempts up the ladder in the globally leading sectors. This leads to bizarre sentences, such as in his review of failure of British IT sector, when he regrets, "Unfortunately, postwar British defense expenditures were not of the same overwhelming magnitude as those provided by the U.S. state" (page 100). Where do multi-lateral, solidaristic, regional and trade-bloc initiatives such as the NEIO, Mercosur, OPEC, fit into the picture? Can Evans' embedded autonomy go it alone? **[EOW: I think Evans somewhat ironic statement about defense spending was meant to be conditional upon the liberal-capitalist state in the UK – i.e. that the state in the UK, like in the US, did not embrace a more activist developmentalist project in the manner of France or Sweden or various other states. In the liberal-democratic capitalist states the one vehicle for the state directing surplus towards R&D is militarism.] [JP: In this respect, is he looking at an internationalizing industry from the state "out," or rather from certain state/industry elite relations out? Can his analysis complement**

more structural treatments, for instance that begin with the world system or global economy?]

Second is the lack of recognition that development is at least in part a zero-sum game, in the sense that many of the resources that fueled the NIC boom are limited. This oversight is, ironically, captured in his choice of the mythical figure of “demiurge” to represent the role of the state as producer, and then recognized that this is often its role in extractive industries. But he missed the point that often its most important role is as landlord. In other words, the state is not the producer, but has the appearance of producing via its role in providing access to the raw materials at the basis of industry. What this picture leaves out is the recognition of the state as a spatial and territorial entity, not just political one. **[EOW: I am not sure of your point here, since his two champion cases – Taiwan and Korea – did not launch their developmental projects on the basis of “resources”, or at least these were of secondary importance. To be sure, there are problems of replicating the NIC strategy in the 21st century since there may be ecological limits to the proportion of the world that can industrialize. The rapid industrialization of China and now India since the book was written, however, certainly goes beyond the limits people would have anticipated 20 years ago.]**
