Preliminary Thoughts onPolicy Styles:
A New Approach Based on Regime Characteristics

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Abstract

"Policy Styles in Western Europe", edited by Jeremy Richardson and his colleagues, was first published in 1982 and reprinted in the Routledge Classics series in 2016. That book sought to address whether distinct cultural and institutional features of modern states in the 1980s had implications for the making and implementation of public policy decisions within them. The original book looked at the similarities and differences that exist among the countries of Western Europe in terms of their propensity to take anticipatory or reactive decisions and, in either case, whether they tended to do so in a top-down state driven or bottom-up societally driven fashion. More precisely, the book looked at West Germany, Norway, United Kingdom, France, Sweden, and the Netherlands. This excellent and path-breaking study has remained up to the present day as an essential reading in many courses on public policy and as a foundation work in this area of policy studies. In light of the fundamental changes modern states have experienced since 1982, however, due to processes such as globalization and democratization, and given the interest in this issue outside of Western Europe, it is time to revisit the original concept and update and expand it to be applicable to states around the world and not just OECD or European ones.

Introduction: The Concept of a Policy Style

Numerous case studies over the last three decades have highlighted the manner in which ideological and institutional factors insulate policies from pressures for change. By the mid-1970s it was apparent to many observers that actors in the policy processes, as Simmons, Davis, Chapman, and Sager (1974: 461) put it, tended to 'take on, over a period of time, a distinctive style which affects . . . policy decisions, i.e. they develop tradition and history which constrains and refines their actions and concerns.' The concept of a *policy style* is useful not only for helping to describe typical policy processes and deliberations, but also for capturing an important aspect of policy dynamics, that is, the relatively enduring nature of these arrangements (Larsen et al., 2006).

This paper updates and expands the volume "Policy Styles in Western Europe", edited by Jeremy Richardson and his colleagues, which first addressed this concept. That work was first published in 1982 and then reprinted in the Routledge Classics series in 2016. It sought to address whether distinct cultural and institutional features of modern

states in the 1980s had implications for the making and implementation of public policy decisions within them and has not been updated since then.

The original book looked at the similarities and differences that exist among the countries of Western Europe in terms of their propensity to take anticipatory or reactive decisions and, in either case, whether they tended to do so in a top-down state driven or bottom-up societally driven fashion. More precisely, chapters looked at West Germany, Norway, United Kingdom, France, Sweden, and the Netherlands. This excellent and path-breaking study has remained up to the present day as an essential reading in many courses on public policy and as a foundation work in this area of policy studies. In light of the fundamental changes modern states have experienced since 1982, however, due to processes such as globalization and democratization, and given the interest in this issue outside of Western Europe, the goal of this paper is to revisit the original concept and update and expand it to be applicable to states around the world and not just OECD or European ones.

Definition

A policy style can be thought of as existing as part of a larger 'policy regime' that emerges over time as policy succession takes place and stabilizes many aspects of that policy. A policy regime can be thought of as integrating a common set of policy ideas (a policy paradigm), a long-lasting governance arrangement (or policy mix), a common or typical policy process (a policy style), and a more or less fixed set of policy actors (a policy subsystem or policy monopoly) which together combine to ensure policy outputs remain very much within a range of options compatible with the pillars of the regime. [1]

Although not inclusive of all aspects of a regime, the manner in which policy

deliberations take place and the kinds of actors and ideas present to do so constitute a policy style. This style is exercized within the constraints imposed by institutional arrangements which shape its contours – such as political and electoral conventions and institutions, as well as within a policy paradigm which shapes its content. However, a style is an important variable in such a regime and helps determine the range and type of alternatives, and final policy outputs, which occur as policy issues are processed within the regime.

As such, it is a useful term for describing long-term patterns found in both the substance and process of public policy-making in a particular sector. The general idea is that sectoral policy-making tends to develop in such a way that the same actors, institutions, instruments, and governing ideas tend to dominate sectoral policy-making for extended periods of time, infusing a policy sector with both a consistent content and a set of typical policy processes or procedures. Understanding how styles, paradigms, and regimes form, how they are maintained, and how they change, therefore, is an important aspect of the study of public policy (Kuks, 2004; de Vries, 2005).

The Need for a New Approach

As Guy Peters noted in his 1988 review of the field:

> Having recognized the importance of comparison for the development of our thinking about public administration, we now come to the awful truth that the comparative study of public administration is perhaps the least well developed aspect of the study of comparative politics and government despite the long and honorable history of the field (Peters 1988).

As Peters and others acknowledged, writings in the field in the 1960s and 1970s were sometimes excellent empirically, but were often idiosyncratic theoretically, failing to develop a set of systematically linked concepts generating a body of accepted principles of administrative behaviour. However, students of comparative public administration have generated a set of concepts which are of more use in analyzing larger scale policy phenomena such as persistence and convergence and instability and divergence. The concept of a *policy style* is one which is useful not only for helping to describe typical policy processes and deliberations, but also for capturing an important aspect of policy dynamics, that is, the relatively enduring nature of these arrangements (Larsen et al., 2006).

The Original Notion of a Policy Style

The general idea of polities developing a characteristic way of doing things, or a style of governing or ruling, of course, is not new. It has clear links to the ancient works of Plato and Aristotle and others, as well as to the foundational studies of bureaucracy and bureaucratization developed by Weber and others in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Weber 1978; Eisenstadt, 1963). It also was a major part of the first wave of comparative administrative studies carried out after the second world war which focused on the identification and elaboration of national administrative cultures (Waldo 1948; Barker, 1944). The concept of such styles re-emerged in the late 1990s in the works of, among others, as mentioned above, Knill (1998 and 1999; Heritier et al 1996) and Bekke, et al 1993;1996a, 1996b; 2000; 1999) interested in, among other things, the difficulties encountered in the coutries of the European Union adopting EU-wide administrative

initiatives. Both Knill and Bekke have suggested the critical importance of the concept of policy styles in assessing the role played by existing administrative systems in affecting public policy processes and outcomes; including efforts to reshape the administration itself.

The first modern studies of policy styles argued that public policy outcomes varied directly according to the nature of the political system found in each country (Peters et al 1978). Although some empirical evidence of substantial differences in *outcomes* was uncovered in empirical tests of this hypothesis (Castles 1998; Obinger and Wagschal 2001), it was soon suggested that the concept could be more fruitfully applied not to outcomes but to the policy *process* that obtained in a particular country. Each country or jurisdiction was said to have its own pattern of policy-making which characterized its policy processes and the resulting policies.

Several studies developed the concept of a national *policy style* and applied it to policy-making in various nations (Tuohy 1992; Vogel 1986). The most prominent studies of policy styles classified styles in terms of the twin dimensions of a government's typical problem-solving methodology and the pattern of its relationship with societal groups. Richardson, Gustafsson, and Jordan--who together did the most to develop the concept-- defined a policy style as `the interaction between (a) the government's approach to problem solving and (b) the relationship between government and other actors in the policy process' (Richardson et al 1982). They mentioned `anticipatory/active' and `reactive' as the two general approaches to problem-solving, while the relationships between governmental and non-governmental actors were similarly divided into two categories: `consensus' and `imposition' relationships (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. An Early Model of National Policy Styles

Dominant Approach to Problem-Solving

		Anticipatory	*Reactive*
Relationship Between Government and Society	*Consensus*	German `Rationalist Consensus' Style	British `Negotiation' Style
	Imposition	French `Concertation' Style	Dutch Negotiation and Conflict' Style

SOURCE: Jeremy Richardson et al 1982.

According to this model, for example, the German policy style was one which was anticipatory and based on consensus, whereas the British style was characterized by reactiveness, though also based on consensus. Similarly the French policy style was an example of one which was anticipatory, but effected through imposition rather than consensus. In contrast, Dutch policy style was both reactive and impositional.

Christoph Knill added some clarity to this issue, focussing on the existence of "national administrative traditions" which are of critical importance in understanding the development of a policy style (Knill 1999 and 1998; Zysman 1994; Van Waarden 1995). While useful, however, other researchers questioned aspects of the original Richardson et al formulation. They found that few governments were consistently active or reactive; nor did any government always work through either consensus or imposition. It was suggested that a better way to conceptualize such styles is to draw on the insights into the workings of each stage of the policy cycle rather than just decision-making or policy formulation (Howlett, Ramesh and Perl 2009).

In addition there is the question of how styles change and what are the factors responsible for those changes? Styles are expected to be long-lasting but to be susceptible to some internal and external change forces. An examination of the literature in these areas points to several key factors.

With respect to national structures, most of the literature points to the impact of large-scale geo-historical developments such as wars, conquests, and colonization which directly brought about changes in the institutional structures of administration in many countries, as well as the slower and less direct diffusion of administrative ideas from one tradition to another (Welch and Wong 2001; Farazmand 1999; Castles 2001). Such studies tend to see, for example, significant differences between continental European and "Anglo-American" administrative traditions and institutions, and focus on the processes of colonization and de-colonization which have seen these institutions disseminated through North America, Asia, Africa, Australia and Latin America (Hanson 1974; Burke 1969; Wunder 1995; Finer 1997; Subramaniam 1977; Hesse 1997; Gabrielian and Fischer 1996).

At the level of behaviour, authors point to the significance of factors such changes in the social composition of administrative elites, perceptions of the legitimacy of governments and states held by their populations, self-perceptions of professionalism and engagement held by civil servants themselves, and the constitutional structure of government. Key factors and processes affecting change, hence, include alterations in the secular or religious nature of the society in question, alteration in educational systems or political power underlying merit and patronage systems of appointment, alterations in levels of public sector unionism or professionalism, and any shift in fundamental

governing arrangements arising from foreign war, revolution, civil war or other means (Bekke 1999; Raadschelders and Rutgers 1996). Observers have also noted the manner in which adherence to new regional or trans-national governance arrangements – such as the European Union – can affect elements of these national traditions (Cowles et al 2001; Heritier et al 1996; Heritier 2001; Knill 1998) and the manner in which propensities and capacities for learning at the national level affect the disposition to alter structures and behaviour on the basis of lessons derived from other jurisdictions (Olsen and Peters 1996).

Developing a More Empirical, Operationalizable Notion of a Policy Style

Identifying and evaluating a national policy style and its dynamics thus requires some understanding of regime characteristics, including what kinds of institutions exist in a jurisdiction and how they structure policy-making activity in general, before the specifics of how they are managed and operated in practice throughout the policy-making process can be assessed.

The working assumption is that there are similarities between styles and that specific kinds of regimes develop similar styles. Two of the most important questions in classifying styles and moving this discssion forward are discussed below. These are:

1. The relationship between structure and behaviour in an administrative style, or the question of the appropriate *unit of analysis* to use in developing and applying the concepts (Heady 1996) and;

2. The question of the appropriate *level of analysis* to which these concepts can be applied (Peters 1996).

Units of Analysis: Institutional Arrangements and Their Effects on Administrative Behaviour

The concept of a policy style needs to be unpacked in order to be of use. This is because the term refers to two separate but intertwined units of analysis, one structural and the other behavioural. That is, while the concept of a policy style refers to the behaviour of policy agents, it has a heavily structural or institutional component as it is assumed that these agents are not free-floating and unencumbered, but rather operate within an institutional context that at least in part determines their behaviour.

In this sense, the notion of a policy style can be situated within the neo-institutional approach to the study of social and political life. The exact contours of neo-institutionalism are an item of some disagreement across disciplines, with different variations existing within political science, economics and (historical) sociology (Kato 1996; Hall and Taylor 1996). However, these approaches share the common idea that rules, norms, and symbols affect political behaviour; and that the organization of governmental institutions affect what the state does; and that unique patterns of historical development constrain future choices (Ostrom 1999; Williamson, 1996). Institutions, hence, are defined to include not only formal organizations such as bureaucratic hierarchies and market-like exchange networks but also legal and cultural codes and rules which affect the calculations by individuals and groups of their optimal strategies and courses of action.[2]

These assumptions focus this approach on the effects of structure on social actors and, as James March and Johan Olsen put it:

> They deemphasize the dependence of the polity on society in favor of an
>
> interdependence between relatively autonomous social and political

institutions; they deemphasize the simple primacy of micro processes and efficient histories in favor of relatively complex processes and historical inefficiency; they deemphasize metaphors of choice and allocate outcomes in favor of other logics of action and the centrality of meaning and symbolic action (March and Olson 1984).

Hence the neo-institutional argument is not that institutions cause an action, but rather that they affect actions by shaping actors' interpretation of problems and possible solutions, by both constraining and facilitating the choice of solutions and by affecting the way and extent to which they can be implemented (Clemons and Cook 1999). In the political and policy realms, institutions are significant because they 'constitute and legitimize individual and collective political actors and provide them with consistent behavioural rules, conceptions of reality, standards of assessment, affective ties, and endowments, and thereby with a capacity for purposeful action' (March and Olson 1994). In an administrative context, for example, as Morten Egeberg has noted:

Formal organization provides an administrative milieu that focuses a decision-maker's attention on certain problems and solutions, while others are excluded from consideration. The structure thus constrains choices, but at the same time create and increases action capacity in certain directions. The organizational context surrounding individuals thus serves to simplify decisions that might otherwise have been complex and incomprehensible (Egeberg 1999:159.

Thus, as many observers have noted, the structure of administrative organizations affects politico-administrative decision-making by facilitating the interpretation and re-construction of diverse situations into existing "frames", making them amenable to standardized decision-making processes such as the establishment of standard operating procedures, bureaucratic routines, or operational codes (Allison and Halperin 1972; Egeberg 1999; George 1969). And the existence of institutionalized rules of behaviour affect calculations of actor's interests and self-interests by defining the nature of the "win-sets" which exist in given decisional circumstances, as well as the "action channels" these decisions will follow (Hammond and Knott 1999; Hammond 1986; Scharpf 1990 and 1991).

Ultimately, structure and behaviour are joined together in a distinct poliitico-administrative or "policy style"; a typical way of doing business which is both institutionally and psychologically rooted (Pierre 1995; Peters 1990). Together, these have an impact on the ideas that actors hold, as well as their assessments of what is feasible in a given situation (Campbell 1998; Huitt 1968; Majone 1975.

The link between structure and behaviour means, among other things, that such styles will be relatively long-lasting, quasi-permanent arrangements establishing a trajectory of activity which is very difficult to change; an inference which is congruent with the neo-institutional idea of *path dependency*, whereby decisions are seen as layered upon each other, so that earlier decisions affect later ones and act as a further constraint on decision-makers' freedom of action (Pierson 2000; Zysman 1994; Raadschelders and Rutgers 1996).

Levels of Analysis: National, Sectoral, and Departmental Administrative Styles

From this perspective, an policy style is best thought of as a set of political and administrative routines and behaviours heavily influenced by the rules and structures of the civil service and political system in which it is located. Very significant sets of rules and structures include macro-level ones such as the constitutional order establishing and empowering administrators, as well as more meso and micro-level ones affecting the patterns and methods of recruiting civil servants and the nature of their interactions with eachother and with members of the public. That is, not only are factors such as the nature of the political regime in which a system is located crucial to understanding an administrative style but so too, as Weber noted, are more mundane items such as the open or closed nature of recruitment, the basis of selection as a career or program orientation, the nature of job evaluations and rank and pay considerations, as well as the presence or absence of opportunities for training and development (Bekke et all 1993).

This analysis relies on rule-based behaviour and thus implies the existence of multiple types of policy styles. That is, because a style is linked to (a) the different types of recruitment and management practices found in different systems and (b) the different levels or orders of government involved such systems, it will vary across jurisdictions (Zysman 1994).

What are these levels? A brief summary of the literature suggests three critical ones: the macro or national; the meso or sectoral; and the micro or agency level.

The literature on the macro or national level is the most well known.[3] Vogel and others have argued that policy-makers work within specific national policy or regulatory contexts. Many policy studies suggest that distinct contexts can be discerned at the sectoral level, and are linked to common approaches taken towards problems such as

health, education, forestry, and others (Lowi 1972; Salamon 1981; Freeman 1985; Burstein 1991; Howlett, 2001). Freeman (1985) has observed that "each sector poses its own problems, sets its own constraints, and generates its own brand of conflict." Moreover, the authorities and capabilities for making and influencing policy may vary considerably across sectors.

Like Allison (1971), Smith, Marsh and Richards (1993) have argued that the "central state is not a unified actor but a range of institutions and actors with disparate interests and varying resources", and therefore not only may there be different degrees of coherence within the state but also different cultures of decision-making and inclusion of outside actors with respect to policy development (collaboration, unilateral, reactive).

However this study focusses on the national level. As Francis Castles has observed, distinct national administrative cultures have an impact on national policy outcomes and nations tend to follow the precepts of the administrative models from which they emerged (Castles 1998). As Franz van Waarden has put it:

> National regulatory styles are formally rooted in nationally specific legal, political and administrative institutions and cultures. This foundation in a variety of state institutions should make regulatory styles resistant to change, and hence, from this perspective ones would expect differences in regulatory styles to persist, possibly even under the impact of economic and political internationalization (van Waardem 1995: 334).

As Rutgers has argued, however, this is a complex relationship since "it is important in this context that the concept of the state should not be equated simply with

the nation state", but rather with a set of epistemologies and ontologies related to notions of what constitutes good and effective government, and which effect all levels of administration in a national system (Rutgers 2001).

With respect to structure, the key dimensions of state structure relevant to an administrative style identified by students of comparative public administration are the size and pervasiveness of the administration, and the means by which it is politically controlled and held accountable (Heady 1996). One of the chief determinants of administrative size, of course, is related to the extent to which the administration is involved in economic affairs, as opposed to more traditional social, military or legal ones (Considine and Lewis 2003). As for political control of the administration, only two principle means have ever been used for this: the traditional legislative-executive means and that of single-party partisan or judicial control (Evangelista 1995). National styles develop through the interaction of these macro-level structural and behavioural characteristics (Eisner 1993 and 1994; Harris and Milkis 1989; Kagan 1991 and 1996; Vogel 1986)

A General Model of Policy Styles

In a broad sense, we can interpret policy-making as a strategy for resolving societal problems by using institutions. From a rationalist perspective, institutions can structure the interaction of actors and avoid the suboptimal solutions they are given by the prisoner's dilemma. From a sociological point of view, institutions can support cooperation through the provision of moral or cognitive templates (Hall and Taylor 1996).

The fundamental idea of policy styles is to establish similarities between different types of policy-making and the ways in which they are made. With regard to public policies, the concept of policy styles refers to the 'standard operating procedures' of governments in the making and implementing of public policies (Richardson *et al.* 1982: 2). Put differently, policy styles relate to durable and systematic approaches to policy problems (Freeman 1985: 474). Such persistent forms of interaction and behavioural patterns should be observed during the formulation and implementation of a policy.

Ultimately in assessing regulatory behaviour at the sectoral level in Europe, Christoph Knill focussed on similar criteria to those put forward by Richardson et al in their work on national styles. As he argues:

> The dimension of regulatory styles is defined by two related aspects: the mode of state intervention and administrative interest intermediation; i.e. patterns of interaction between administrative and societal actors. (These include) dimensions (such as) hierarchical versus self-regulation, as well as uniform and detailed requirements versus open regulation allowing for administrative flexibility and discretion. In the same way different patterns of interest intermediation can be identified, such as formal versus informal, legalistic versus pragmatic, and open versus closed relationships (Knill 1998).

In other words, policy styles are intimately linked with its governance context (Howlett 2002c). National policy systems, for example, can be seen as the offshoots of larger national governance and administrative traditions or cultures (Dwivedi and Gow 1999; Bevir and Rhodes 2001) such as parliamentary or republican forms of government, and federal or unitary states. This leads to different concentrations of power in the central institutions of government, degrees of openness and access to information, and reliance on certain governing instruments. A parallel argument can be found in the field of regulation. Civil service organizations have rules and structures affecting policy and

administrative behaviour such as the constitutional order establishing and empowering administrators, and affecting patterns and methods of recruiting civil servants and how they interact with each other and the public (Bekke, Perry and Toonen 1993).

As policy interventions in democratic systems originate in electoral systems, it is the most essential formal institution when scrutinizing polkcy styles. Electoral competition is largely party competition, turning political parties into important actors. One of their main functions is to structure and articulate public opinion. Most frequently, political parties are described by a left-right dichotomy, implying that they have diametrically opposed policy preferences. In fact, various studies—based on expert judgements as well as content analysis of party manifestoes—found a level of consistency with this dichotomy (Laver and Hunt 1992; Budge and Klingemann 2001; Laver *et al.* 2003; Debus 2007). Strongly related to this is the relevance of the voting systems.

The relationship between legislative and executive is also of crucial importance. In parliamentary models, the executive is a group of ministers elected from the very parliament, while in pure presidential systems the two branches of government are separate. In this context, Lijphart (1999) claims that, despite strong variations among countries, democratic systems tend to fall into two categories: majoritarian and consensus democracies. The majoritarian system—which is generally associated with the UK, and hence is also known as the 'Westminster model'—concentrates power and fuses executive and legislative powers in the classic parliamentary manner (e.g. Colombia, Costa Rica, France, Greece, New Zealand (before 1996)). By contrast, the consensus model focuses on sharing power by separating and balancing executive and legislative

power (e.g. Austria, Germany, India, Japan, the Netherlands, and Switzerland). Remarkably, consensus democracies score higher in terms of democratic quality as well as the state's generosity in social welfare, environmental policy, criminal justice, and foreign aid than majoritarian democracies.

The concept of policy styles thus refers to the routines and choices of actors involved in policy-making and implementation. To a certain extent, this concept takes up the discussion about institutional characteristics (Lijphart 1999) as well as Dyson's (1980) elaboration on 'strong' and 'weak' states. Further, it is related to the ideas of 'policy communities' and 'administrative culture' (van Thiel 2006: 118).

Van Waarden's (1995) typology of regulatory styles, which comprises six sub-dimensions that refer to the 'what', 'how', and 'who' questions of policy-making is a useful first start in developing a new approach to the issue of national policy styles. Here he has examined:

1. Liberal-pluralist versus étatist versus corporatist style: the first style prefers 'market' solutions to policy problems, while étatism implies a preference for 'state solutions'. **Corporatism**, by contrast, favours 'associational' solutions to policy problems.

2. Active versus reactive styles: active styles are higher in their degree of intensity, radicalism, and innovation as compared to reactive ones.

3. Comprehensive versus fragmented or incremental styles: comprehensive policies are integrated into larger plans, while the latter are not.

4. Adversarial versus consensual paternalistic styles: the first type strongly relies on

coercion and imposition, while the latter is based on consultation.

5. Legalistic versus pragmatic styles: legalistic styles are characterized by formalism, detailed regulation, and rigid rule application. The pragmatic style, on the other hand, is informal and flexible in both policy formulation and implementation.

6. Formal versus informal network relations between state agencies and organizations of state agencies.

van Waarden (1992: 133) suggested variation in styles is based on the degree to which interactions between public and private actors are formalized and whether societal interest groups participate in the formulation and implementation of public policies. The combination of high formalization (i.e. strong state) and low participation (i.e. weak strength of societal interests) yields an étatist policy style (i.e. a state-centred model with top-down policy making and implementation), as could be observed in France. Low formalization and low participation opportunities, by contrast, result in a pluralist policy style, such as is associated with the United States. High formalization and high participation options – as provided in Austria, the Netherlands and Sweden – favour social corporatist or meso-corporatist policy patterns, while low formalization and high participation opportunities correspond to clientelism or liberal corporatism – as can be found in Switzerland.

The empirical testing of the concept of national policy styles, however, has not provided much support. For example, the comparative volume edited by Richardson (1982) revealed that there is much more similarity in policy-making styles than anticipated. This induced him to conclude that there is indeed a common (west) European

policy style. More precisely, the case studies showed that there was a common demise of anticipatory problem solving and a trend towards more consensus-oriented policy-making. The rise of a less hierarchical and consensual style of policy-making was also confirmed by the comparative volume edited by Bovens *et al*. (2001a). Furthermore, this compilation underscores variations in policy styles within countries, which also concurs with more recent empirical studies. Cairney's (2009: 671) analysis of the policy style regarding mental health policy in the United Kingdom suggests that there is 'more than one picture of British styles'.

To advance the conceptual debate, we suggest that a promising approach would lie in a more theoretically grounded empirical analysis of potential determinants of policy styles based on a comparative analysis of several countries. Based on such a differentiated approach, we would be able to account for the variation and change of policy styles across countries and time.

With regard to national factors, the socio-economic development of a country might influence patterns of policy-making. We can expect more conflictive and adversarial patterns, the less developed a country is. This mainly stems from the restrictions in the resources that can be (re)distributed by means of public policy. The extent to which this structural factor affects patterns of policy-making might at the same time be influenced by the current economic situation. In addition, dominant cultural orientations (e.g. with regard to accepted patterns of governmental intervention and relationships between state and society) might exert an influence on policy styles. These orientations are typically closely linked to the state and legal tradition of a country (Dyson 1980; Knill 2001), but can also be affected by current developments in public

attitudes and opinions. Patterns of national policy-making are moreover strongly affected by institutional arrangements which define the strategic opportunities and constraints that public and private actors face during the formulation and implementation of public policies.

These structures, for instance, strongly affect the extent to which policy styles reflect more consensual or more adversarial patterns (Lijphart 1994, 1999). Notwithstanding the stability of these structural aspects, short-term developments, in particular changes in government, might bring about changes in the strategic opportunities of the involved actors. Finally, institutionally entrenched patterns of state–society relationships, such as more corporatist or pluralist patterns, leave their mark on national policy styles (van Waarden 1992, 1995). Again, the effects of these structures might vary as a result of context-specific interactions between public and private actors.

The "Concept of National Policy Styles" can thus be updated and expanded to reach beyond Western Europe in this way. The following typology of key policy actors and the staffing of the decision-making institutions is used to organize the discussion in the book. This model differentiates between democracies that are representative or consultative (Altman 2010; Alonso et al 2011). as well as between closed-centralist systems and competitive authoritarian ones (Diamond 2002).

Staffing of Decision-Making Institutions

		Democratic	*Authoritarian*
Key Policy Actors	*Bureaucrats & Experts*	Type 1 – "Closed" Bureaucratic-Democratic Regimes e.g. Germany, UK, S. Korea, Mexico	Type 3 – "Closed" One-Party Authoritarian Regimes e.g. Kazakhstan, Viet Nam, China, UAE
	Politicians & Public	Type 2 – "Open" Democratic-Popular Participatory or Consultative Democratic Regimes e.g. Canada, Switzerland, United States, Brazil	Type 4 – "Open" Electorally Competitive authoritarian regimes e.g. Russia, Togo, Singapore, Turkey

Preliminary Observations of Each Cell

Applying such an analysis to any country is, of course, a nuanced and complex task (Barzelay and Fuchtner 2003). Disaggregating the concept of an administrative style and undertaking analysis in this comparative vein, however, provides a useful methodology for updating and furthering existing work on policy styles. Careful case studies and empirical evaluations such as those provided in the book can allow specific conclusions to be drawn about the nature of these styles in different circumstances and the manner in which existing styles change over time (Borins, 2001; Lindquist 2000; Peled 2002).

Democratic regimes that assign a role to bureaucrats and experts. In Germany the policy styles can be seen to vary along two dimensions. The first dimension is about how policymakers respond to the issues on the policy agenda. Do decision-makers anticipate societal problems, or do they react to them? The second dimension is about the relative

autonomy of the state vis-à-vis other actors involved in policy-making and implementation. Do decision-makers seek to ensure consensus among the parties involved, or do they impose their decisions on the executing actors? Drawing on these two categories, in the original version of the volume edited by Jeremy Richardson (1982), Kenneth Dyson's chapter on German policy styles claimed that decision-makers there would react to societal problems and seek to attain a rationalist consensus among all actors involved in policy-making and implementation. Considering the drastic modifications to the German political system since the time when *Policy Styles in Western Europe* was published that include, most importantly, the re-unification of the country and changes to the dynamics of party competition and new coalition-formation patterns as well as increasing Europeanization and globalization, the notion of the rationalist consensus for describing policy styles in Germany may no longer be accurate.

One aim of Richardson's *Policy Styles in Western Europe* was to show the difference between country level reputations and actual policymaking practices. For example, the UK is often presented as the archetypal majoritarian system with a top-down governing style, but its consultation practices and incrementalism resembled those of consensus democracies. This argument became more difficult to maintain after a period of 'Thatcherism' reinforced the UK's majoritarian image and, since 1999, devolved governments have developed a reputation for relatively consensual policymaking. Yet, if we look 'beyond the headlines' we find the same kinds of drivers for pragmatic policymaking styles. Or, the UK and devolved government differences are often a function of their size and capacity rather than their 'new politics' rhetoric. Consequently, we need to *demonstrate* the nature of these policy styles rather than base

policymaking reputations on face-value and anecdotal analysis. The UK government *often* lives up to its majoritarian reputation, but there is a great difference between its high profile image and behind the scenes work.

It has often been assumed that there are both similarities and differences in policy styles among countries. Policy styles of a country basically reflect the nature of policy consultation among different political actors who participate in initiating, moderating, and shaping out policies. Under the influence of Confucian culture, South Korea has developed a unique policy style which is characterized as collaborative policy style between civil officials and scholars. "Scholars" or "learned men" are key players in the Confucian society where scholars and public officials build a strong nexus and they often transpose each other. In fact, as an extension of the Confucian tradition, South Korea's policy styles continue to evolve into a Confucian policy nexus between public officials and scholars in the policy-making processes though the role of scholars and academic communities change. The extent to which scholars involve in the policy-making processes in both formal (holding administrative and political positions, participating in policy committees, etc.) and informal (conducting government-contracted policy research, raising voices for policy-related issues via mass media, etc.) is a central feature of the Korean style.

While there has been much discussion on whether Mexico has successfully transitioned to a democracy given its history of authoritarian, single-party ruling government, very little has been said about whether there is an actual Mexican national policy style and what this policy style would look like in a more democratic regime. The last 30 years of history of Mexican policy making shows how the centralized government

approach taken by the Mexican ruling party until 2000, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional, PRI) changed the way in which policies were designed and implemented in Mexico after the 2000 victory of the National Action Party (Partido Accion Nacional, PAN). Given the widely assumed and highly touted transition to democracy that occurred with Vicente Fox's win, one would possibly assume that a defined Mexican policy style has finally emerged, and that it would look like an empowered, highly-participatory style. But despite increasing empowerment of civil society groups in the last 30 years, policy decision-making and implementation in Mexico remain highly centralized and authority is only delegated through a very cumbersome system of intergovernmental coordination accords. Given this institutional architecture, a very uneven model of authority delegation in policy design and implementation exists and that subnational governments make powerful decisions in certain policy areas whereas the Federal Government retains decision-making authority in many others. While in some issue areas Mexican policy makers may be very forward-thinking and pro-active, there are others where they remain reactive and (at times) lack any degree of innovation. The country is still muddling through the transition to a real democracy, a process that is moreover challenged by the 2012 return of the PRI to power.

More open democratic regimes that assign a major role to politicians and the public. Canada is one such complex polity with a very de-centralized federal structure, meaning it potentially has 14 'styles' rather than a single one. However, when it comes to the federal government of Canada, responsible for a broad range of competences from defence to fisheries, it is possible to discern a general policy style: one of periodic re-inventions of structures and processes as electoral and other pressures promote a process

of slow policy innovation and re-invention. This process has several fad-like characteristics in that innovations are highly promoted, spread relatively quickly and then are abandoned after a short period of time. This process of "over-promising and under-delivering" is common across the federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions and the reasons why it occurs and why it is difficult to change are set out in this chapter.

In Switzerland the defining features of the contemporary policy process are the following. On the one hand, we witness a growing importance of the parliamentary phase and a concomitant polarization of political parties in a context of increasing mediatization and internationalisation of public policies. This produces a more adversarial policy process than in the past. On the other hand, the enduring centrality of direct democracy procedures continues to open up the policy process, to create uncertainty with respect to policy outputs, and to trigger anticipation effects on policy makers which are (still) committed to a consensual decision making style.

The most fundamental question about a policy style is whether one style can be said to capture the variety of ways in which policy is made. Placing the United States with a group of countries in which citizens are meant to have a great deal of influence over policy would be suitable if we were to focus on state and local governments, but even then there are marked differences in the capacity of citizens to have any direct influence. And at the federal level there are few if any opportunities for direct participation in policymaking. That said, at the federal level, and indeed at all levels, there are multiple points of access for citizens. In particular, the role that the courts play in making policy can provide opportunities for influencing policy that may not be available in many countries. Classifying the United States in terms of the two dimensions developed by

Richardson in 1982, it is clear that policymaking is reactive, and perhaps increasingly so, as gridlock and extreme partisanship prevents action on all but the most pressing policy issues. The majoritarian/consensus dimension is a bit more problematic for the United States. The Constitution is written assuming a consensus style of governing, largely among a consensus among a small group of economic and political elites. The democratization of the system, and the increased polarization of politics is making the policymaking style more one of imposition. But even then the checks and balances built into the political system makes majoritarian policymaking difficult. Thus, gridlock, conflict and blockage may be the best ways of describing policymaking at the federal level.

Policy styles in Brazil are better understood after the promulgation of the new Federal Constitution in 1988 because it consolidated the political transition from military regime to democracy. In these this thirty years were developed different paths for policymaking practices in a federalist country. The decentralization of public policies, especially in national policy systems of welfare state, was organized with strong role of national government in formulation and financial inducement. The subnational level became more responsible for the implementation. Some policies are organized in intergovernmental committees in national, state and local level to establish consensual decisions. But this isn't a standard arrangement because in other policy arenas the institutional design is more influenced by their different institutional trajectories. Thus, distinct policy styles exist in different sectors characterized by different levels of centralization/decentralization in intergovernmental relations, and organized by more formal/informal institutionalized federative arrangements. But both in consensual (focus

on cooperation) or majoritarian (more restricted to the federative coordination) kind of policy styles still remain spaces for bureaucratic and insulated decisions without any societal or intergovernmental consultation. There isn't a single coherent policy style because federative decentralization survives together with centralized decisions and different institutional paths in policies.

As for closed centralist authoritarian regimes, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 was widely perceived as a victory of the Western-style democratic governance and hopes were expressed that the new post-Soviet countries would soon embrace a new type of governance and policy-making, more open, transparent and de-centralized. As a part of the general excitement surrounding the collapse of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and FSU countries, the rejection of the Soviet system of rule in favor of Western-style political and economic institutions was expected and by many perceived as certain. Yet, however, almost three decades after the Soviet Union's collapse, the transitions across its successor states seem to have failed to produce institutional structures that would match these expectations. Except for the Baltic states, throughout the former Soviet Union policy styles widely remind of Soviet practices. These countries have centralized systems with little controls over the executive, privatized enterprises that continue to receive state subsidies together with directives, and a plethora of state policy initiatives and programs implemented without proper consideration and evaluation. The scholarship debated whether the newly independent Central Asian states – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan – were to make a decisive break with the Soviet past in terms of culture of governance and policy styles. Many scholars and policy-makers projected a rupture with the Soviet political and societal institutions

throughout Central Asia, either through the reemergence of pre-Soviet identities, networks and practices, the violent outbreak of nationalism or the adoption of market economic reforms. The establishment of formally Western-style modern government systems, technocrat cabinets and market institutions during the first few years of independence was considered as a break with the Soviet policy styles. A closer examination, however, suggests that despite these efforts, many of these countries represent a much greater degree of continuity with the Soviet past than it was expected.

In China, since 1978, there have been continuous efforts to institutionalize the policy process. In this context, policy styles in contemporary China can be understood by examining two features. First, all major decisions must be approved by top leaders and top leaders can have a substantial discretion to shape the policy process. In this case, whether policymakers anticipate or react to social issues, to a large degree, is conditional on the preference of top leaders. Second, while the policy targets may be set in a top-down style, consensus building is highly relevant in the policy making and implementation process in China. Several institutions such as performance evaluation system for officials, small leading groups among ministries, etc have been widely applied in the policy process in China. In contrast to many western countries, many policies have been made in very general terms in China and a significant portion of policy making and implementation is specified by the bureaucracy. In this case, while bargaining and negotiations in the policy process take place in the legislature in western countries, bargaining and negotiation in the bureaucracy are much more significant in China.

In Viet Nam, since the start of Doi Moi (Renovation) in 1986, the country has sought to transform itself from the central planning regime towards a market economy.

Policy changes in the country have then been induced by both market-oriented reforms and progressive economic integration. Two aspects in the policy-making process are key here: namely the engagement of stakeholders and the degree of foresight/anticipation. *First*, the policy-making process in Vietnam still follows closely the top-down approach, though engagement of people's participation has been increasing. Decentralization helped increase autonomy of only local authority, not the people, in the policymaking process. Internalization of international regulatory practices, especially regulatory impact assessment and public consultation, is still in early stage to facilitate participation at the grassroot level. *Second*, the approach to identifying and formulating policy changes remains largely passive, focusing more on enforceable measures to solve short-term problems. The presence of long-term strategies, meanwhile, fails to guarantee consistent path of policy changes due to: (i) inadequate capacity to foresee short-term issues that arise in the context of deeper integration; and (ii) poorly designed mechanisms to ensure enforceability of strategic measures.

The United Arab Emirates, meanwhile, has a federal system of government composed of a federal government and seven states (emirates) with the later possessing strong constitutional power in their local jurisdictions. The social fabric of the country shapes to some extent the national policy style in the country. Therefore, the question of how the traditional tribal legacy in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is incorporated into the modern institutions of policy making and how this incorporation of historical legacy interacts with these modern institutions to produce a unique national style of policy making. The historical tribal governance or legacy was based on networks of patron-client reciprocal relationships between tribal sheikhs and their tribesmen and underpins

the legitimacy of the current system of government and influences the national style of policy making.

"Open" or electorally competitive authoritarian regimes exhibit a fourth style. In russia the dominant policy style is reactive, short-term, top-down state driven because of strong legacy of authoritarianism as a stable component of political regime in Russian empire, USSR and Russian Federation. But deeper reason behind these is 'riven' or 'divided' character of policy-making in Russia: split between 'universalities' or 'ideology' that any policy decision should have as a foundation for its legitimacy and real policy implementation. Therefore there is an extreme gap between declared policy goals and ideas, planned policy strategies and formulations, on the one hand, and policy implementation, on the over. 'Manual government', corruption, imposition are the crucial for policy implementation in Russia. Due to the strength of imperial legacy and 'empire syndrome' ideology-driven policy style is permanently reproduced by bureaucrats, experts, political elites and the public despite widening gap between declarations and policy outcomes. Simulations and imitations of strategic and anticipative policy-making, especially at policy formulation stage, characterize behavior of the key policy actors. In this manner policy-making not alien to policy planning. Nevertheless, in some sectors such as education, policy style can differ from dominant one in a more anticipative and inclusive, long-term character, because of active position of policy communities such as citizens' groups and associations or epistemic communities.

Singapore's policy processes are also strongly tied to its identity as an archetypal developmental state. Yet at the same time, its strong rule of law and zero tolerance for corruption has minimized the formation of political patronage and cronyism. As a

consequence, the city-state's policy style features a unique blend of state-centrism and transparency. This is evident in the continued dominance of state agencies, including both the civil service and semi-autonomous 'statutory boards', amidst ongoing New Public Management (NPM) reforms that aim to introduce greater efficiency and transparency into the policy process through the adoption of private sector styled management practices and market incentives. This Janus-faced aspect of Singapore's policy style, addressing both the synergies and contradictions that have arisen at this intersection of state and market.

In Togo, the literature on electoral authoritarianism has only recently begun to discuss the determinants of policy making: to what extent can these regimes be representative or responsive to their citizens or pursue redistributive policies. Under Gnassingbé Eyadema, Togo used to be one of Africa's most oppressive dictatorship. Policies were mainly directed towards the aim of regime stability. This included the channelling of patronage to selected pro-regime groupings like the president's ethnic group, the military, or fractions of the business and administrative elite, but also strong elements of personalist rule. A limited opening in the 1990s re-introduced multiparty elections, but the power remained in the hands of the incumbent party. After the death of Eyadema in 2005, the army installed his son Faure as the president of the republic. Since charisma cannot be inherited, Faure had to adapt his policy making styles to guarantee the survival of the regime. There are many long-term regime continuities. At the same time however, the ruling elites is becoming slightly more inclusive, and the distribution of patronage is affected by electoral politics and election outcomes.

Turkey is another example of this type and has had a relatively stable traditional style of policymaking typical of those in Southern Europe based on Napoleonic administrative traditions. The year 1980 marked the transition to a period of flux with shifting policy style features representing each decade since then. The enduring features of the Turkish poicy style have been hierarchical, imposing and reactionary, where the government takes the driving seat distributing costs and benefits. Alongside these relatively stable features, the role of bureaucracy changed from one of shaping the policy agenda towards one of implementing an increasingly politicized agenda. The recent styles left increasingly larger room for the involvement of various stakeholders in the policy process, albeit only for consultation purposes. These changing features co-vary with the changing characteristics of the political regime and the shifting nature of the polity in time. They are also increasingly shaped by mechanisms of 'governance transfer' in the EU pre-accession process especially in the last two decades.

Endnotes

[1] In his work on social policy, for example, Gosta Esping-Andersen found 'specific institutional arrangements adopted by societies in the pursuit of work and welfare. A given organization of state–economy relations is associated with a particular social policy logic' (Rein et al., 1987). Similarly, in their work on US policy-making, Harris and Milkis (1989: 25) found regimes developed as a 'constellation' of (1) ideas justifying governmental activity, (2) institutions that structure policy-making, and (3) a set of policies. Eisner, similarly, defined a regime as a 'historically specific configuration of policies and institutions which establishes certain broad goals that transcend the problems' specific to particular sectors (Eisner, 1993: xv; see also Eisner, 1994a).

[2] A useful definition of institutions used in this approach was put forward by Robert Keohane who described them as `persistent and connected sets of rules (formal or informal) that prescribe behavioural roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations'. (Keohane 1989).

[3] Another literature locates administrative styles at the sub-national level. Many policy studies, for example, have argued that if styles exist at all it is at the sectoral level, linked to common approaches used to address common problems such as health, education, and

others. See Lowi 1972; Salamon 1981; Freeman 1985 and Burstein 1991. Other studies have identified distinct implementation patterns - "regulatory regimes"- at this level as well, but have liked these more to structural than behavioural characteristics (see Harris and Milkis 1989; Howlett 2000; Eisner 1994). Finally, there is also a large literature which locates styles at the departmental or agency level (see Richardson et all 1978; Hawkins and Thomas 1989; Scholz 1984 and 1991; Smith et al 1993).

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