The painful ordeal of India’s Democracy. The Indira Gandhi’s Emergency period (1975-77) and its influence for the Indian political system

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I. Introduction

The Indian Emergency in 1977-75 almost as suddenly as was declared it vanished. As though awakened from a night of troubled dreams, India democratic and political life returned to existence; indeed in the following years it becomes also more deepening. The emergency has been a much evoked but little studied episode, mainly by political science (Khilnani 2004 ; Oldenburg; Jaffrelot 2005; Tarlo 2003; Pedersen 2011; Klieman, 1981 Chandra, 2003). The most part of the literature which deals directly and indirectly with this issue treated the emergency within the debate concerning the question on democratic consolidation, and survival of Indian democracy – namely why the Indian democracy once established has persisted in India, unlike the situation of most other newly independent poor countries. Some scholars treated emergency as a political “freak” or as temporary slip from the Democratic routine, and on the whole, the most part of the studies on the Emergency have been mainly concerned with the explanation of emergency, focusing on its causes (Mayer 1984; Blair 1980; DasGupta 1978; Morris-Jones 1975, 1977; Hart 1976; Frankel, 2005). However rarely scholars chose to focus on the opposite trend, namely the examination of the effects of Emergency on subsequent political system and democratic regime.¹

These considerations leads to the questions that guide this project: what was the emergency? Which kind of phenomenon was it? What were its characteristics? And are there models that can grasp its nature? Furthermore, what short as well as long-term effects did it produce on the Indian political and democratic regime system? What effects did it produce on configuration and arrangement of institutional and constitutional system? What effects did it produce on configuration and

¹ A very recent work is that of Vernon Hewitt (2007). Another most recent work is that of Oldenburg (2010). Although the emergency is not the main topic of this work, Oldenburg tries to address the its consequences on the Indian political system in the next years. A recent work is that of Bipan Chandra (2003).
organization of party system and of political mobilization? What effects did it produce on configuration and organization of state-society relation? What effects did it produce on configuration and organization of military-politics relation?

Inspired and guided by two Philip Oldenburg’s (2010) insights, I suggest that the Emergency (1975-77) and its immediate aftermath can be considered as a case of *re-equilibration*, whereby the India’s democratic institutions continued their existence at the same or higher levels of democratic legitimacy, efficacy or effectiveness. Furthermore, I suggest that the emergency has influenced the context for and favored the arising of some transformations that on turn – and on the long run - have favored and “boosted” the deepening and consolidation of democratic regime.

The aim of this research project is the empirical understanding of Indira’s Emergency effects and consequences on the Indian political system and democratic regime. Moreover the importance of this research problem goes beyond the strict domain of the Indian political studies. The study of consequences of emergency on Indian political system and democratic regime can shed the light on issues and processes connected with the survival, consolidation and deepening of democratic regime after a crisis and breakdown. This is important because within the democratization literature there have been little efforts to study the factors and processes that enabled democracy to re-equilibrate and deepening after a crisis and/or breakdown. While the research has been vastly enriched on favorable and less favorable conditions or prerequisites for democratic establishment and democratic consolidation/survival, we still know very little about the specific factors and processes that trigger breakdown. In particular, there are very few works focused on “re-equilibrate” as outcome of a democratic crisis and/or breakdown.²

This paper is organized as follow: section II will describe in detail the inspiration sources as well as it will present some of the working hypotheses that I intend to explore and it will try to clarify some main concepts used in this project; then the final section will describe the possible research design and methodology.

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² In particular there have been few efforts to apply Linz’s democratic re-equilibration model to other states which also overcame an initial crisis of the democratic order (Kissane, 1999).
II. Working Hypotheses

My research-project approaches the research problem from two hunches comes out of two sources of inspiration. First source is the Phillip Oldenburg’s suggestion - presented by author in his comparative work on the different political trajectories of India and Pakistan - that Indian Emergency of 1975-77 can be considered as a case of democratic re-equilibration (Oldenburg, 2010: 138-39). Second source of inspiration is the Oldenburg’s “space metaphor”, by which author tried to explain what happened in 1975 through 1977 (and in the aftermath) in India: “When space probes are launched to the outer planets of the solar system, they are sent via one of inner planets, so that, passing close by, they will accelerate (owing to the gravitational pull of the planet) and be slung into the trajectory to their destination with added speed. India’s democratic system received just that sort of boost from its close encounter with the planed of autocracy in 1975-77, moving towards a consolidated and mature democracy different level and speed.” (Oldenburg, 2010: 142).

The Oldenburg’s hunch will act as both the starting point and guidance for the development of my tentative answers to research questions. The study is so far guided by two preliminary propositions, introduced below, which depart from previously referred sources of inspiration. On turn, from each of these two propositions it is possible to draw some tentative working hypotheses.

Proposition one: Emergency and early post-emergency period (1975-80) can be interpreted as a process of crisis and temporary breakdown followed by Re-equilibration of democratic regime.

Two descriptive (or interpretative) working hypotheses follow from the first proposition:

I-WHy.1: As a crisis process, Emergency period (1975-77) was characterized by unsolvable problems, inappropriate and ineffective use of military, party fragmentation, “disloyal opposition”, low level of – and loss of - legitimacy, effectiveness, efficacy, and legitimacy, some conditions of “environmental” crisis (e.g. economic depression, military defeat).

I-WHy.2: As a Re-equilibration process early Post-emergency period (1977-80) was characterized by “uncompromised leadership”- political leadership that has been hitherto untainted by the major crisis and the resulting loss of legitimacy of the regime; acceptation of this leadership by both supporters and opponents of previous regime; confidence in the new

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3 On similar idea see B. Chakrabarty (2008), p. 9.
5 Van Evera p. 9. See also Halperin, and Heath (2012) p. 134
democratic leadership; the leadership of the previous regime must be able to accept that fact and facilitate rather than oppose the transfer of power; and closely related, is the willingness of the former leadership to subordinate the realization of its policy goals in order to save the substance of democracy; indifference of the bulk of the population to “the final dénouement”; the semi-loyal opposition is capable of controlling the disloyal opposition that is hostile

Proposition two: Emergency (1975-77) paradoxically and indirectly has contributed to boosting the movement of India's political system towards a democratic deepening

Five working hypotheses follow from the second proposition:

II-WHy.1: Indira Gandhi’s populism, and direct connection with the people, together with social reforms and development policies during Emergency (1975-77), have indirectly influenced the subsequent phenomenon of increasing involvement in politics of excluded and disadvantaged social groups.

Because during Emergency (1975-77) the populism, and direct connection with the people, together with social reforms and development policies have accelerated the collapse of the congress system, weakening and breaking the links and dominant patronage and the control ties between notables, local chiefs, upper castes and lower social strata, resulting in a more favorable environment suitable for post-emergency policies of positive reserve and on turn affecting the subsequent phenomenon of increasing involvement in politics of social groups from the lower castes and disadvantaged levels of society.

II-WHy.2: the Indira Gandhi’s government efforts for centralization and corporatism as well as the shift from state-led development to market-oriented model during emergency (1975-77), indirectly affected the subsequent phenomenon of the new wave of associationism and rise of social movements.

Because during emergency (1975-77), the centralization and corporatists efforts as well as the shift from state-led development to market-oriented model yielded disillusionment with state and will of reaction, resulting in a more favorable environment for the post-emergency
government’s policies of decentralization and association which influenced the rise of new social movements, associations, and unions.

II-Why:3: Gandhi’s development programs and policies as well as the shift from state-led development to market-oriented model during emergency (1975-77), indirectly influenced the subsequent phenomenon of the rise and strengthening of the Indian middle class.

Because, Gandhi’s development programs and policies addressed to specific social groups strengthened and supported the development of urban middle class, moreover the shift from state-led development to market-oriented model promoted by Gandhi’s government during emergency (1975-77) gave to middle class a leading and pivotal role in the new model of economic growth, resulting in a strengthening of the middle class’ self-conscience.

II-Why:4: Indira Gandhi’s government economic measures and development program affected the subsequent process of economic liberalizations

Because Indira Gandhi’s government economic measures and development program yielded the early efforts of process of Indian economic liberalizations

II.1. Concepts
A reexamination of the central concepts involved in my propositions and hypotheses seems to be necessary.

Democratic crisis
Undoubtedly the concept of “crisis” is rather vague (Svenson, 1986). It is becoming a sort of a “catch-phrase”, implying many meanings: uncertainty, precarious situation, aggravation, decision and turning point, it has spread to almost all economic, social, political, and personal aspects of life (Merkel 2014). Here I adopt the Svensson’s (1986) perspective that concept crisis has to be clarified along two dimensions: which kind of object has to come to a crisis and how the political object has been challenged (Svensson, 1986:134). Concerning the first dimension, it seems reasonable to distinguish governmental crisis, party system crisis, democratic political regime, and so forth (Svensson, 1986:134). Concerning the second dimension it should be made clear, as Svensson
highlights, that: “[…] it is not reasonable to speak of a crisis whenever a political object faces problems, new problems or even severe problems. Is it reasonable to speak of a crisis whenever a political object undergoes sudden changes or even extensive changes. Only the combination of challenges that could lead to the breakdown of the object or to structural changes of a fundamental character constitutes a crisis.” (Svensson, 1986: 134). Thus political crisis has to be outlined as the combination of challenges which could potentially lead to the breakdown of a political object or structural changes of a “fundamental character” (Svensson, 1986: 135).

Moreover, two kind of “crisis” can be conceptualized: latent and acute crisis (Merkel, 2014). Latent crisis entails limited threats to correct working of regime institution (criminal violence, contestations, ongoing internal conflicts, and so forth) in general these limited threats are long-turn processes and events that may or may not potentially participate to the undermining a specific political regime. On the contrary the acute crisis entails events that directly threaten the political institutional order. These events are clearly distinct, and they happen over a limited time span. Thus an acute crisis of political regime happens when the endurance of the regime itself is threatened.\(^6\)

In particular, it assumes that regime is facing a grave paralysis and loss of legitimacy which led to a temporary breakdown of the authority of the regime.\(^7\)

According to the first dimension, thus the object that is considered in crisis in this study is the democratic regime. A democratic crisis entails challenges for democratic institutions and the democratic institutional order. The concept of democratic crisis is distinct from other similar concepts such as democratic regression, democratic rollback, loss in democratic quality or authoritarian backsliding. Concerning the second dimension, this study conceptualizes democratic crises as acute crises.

Re-equilibration

As I pointed before one of the possible outcomes of crisis is that the democratic regime weathers the storm unharmed. Political regime might well be able to avoid a forced change of identifying characteristics (Svensson, 1986). However, it can happen that democratic regime continue its existence at the same of higher levels of efficacy and legitimation. This is the so-called “democratic re-equilibration” (Linz, 1978). It can be understood using the same Linz’s words:

“Re-equilibration of a democracy is a political process that, after a crisis that has seriously threatened the continuity and stability of the basic democratic political mechanisms, results in their continued existence at the same or higher levels of democratic legitimacy, efficacy, and


\(^{7}\) Linz (1978) p. 87, see also Siaroff (2013)
effectiveness. It assumes a severe jolting of these institutions, a loss of either effectiveness or efficacy, and probably legitimacy that produces a temporary breakdown of the authority of the regime.... Breakdown followed by re-equilibration of democracy can be effected by anti- or aconstitutional means, by the interference in the normal democratic processes of a political actor (like a charismatic leader) whose initial legitimation is ademocratic, or by the use of force, as in a military putsch.... The new regime might be established illegally, but it must be legitimated by the democratic process afterward, and above all, it must operate thereafter according to the democratic rules.”

Linz identifies six basic conditions or requisite which enable a re-equilibration process to take place. First, existence of a political leadership uncompromised by the major crisis and the resulting loss of legitimacy and efficacy of the regime. Second, the ability of this leadership to be accepted by both supporters and opponents of the old regime. Third, the will of the leadership of the regime that has lost power, efficacy and legitimacy to accept and facilitate the transfer of power, rather than oppose to this transfer. Fourth, the willingness of the former leadership to subordinate the realization of its policy, in order to save the substance of democracy. Fifth, the existence of a certain level of indifference and passivity of the bulk of the population in the final denouement of the crisis. Finally, re-equilibration is only possible when the semi-loyal opposition is able to control the disloyal opposition that is hostile to democracy itself.

Efficacy

Efficacy concerns the capacity of a regime to find solutions to the basic problems facing any political system that are perceived as more satisfactory than unsatisfactory by aware citizens.

Legitimacy

A legitimate government is one considered to be the least evil of the forms of government. Democratic legitimacy is based on the belief that for that particular country at that particular historical juncture, no other type of regime could assure a more successful pursuit of collective goals: “the legitimacy of a democratic regime rests on the belief in the right of those legally elevated to authority to issue certain types of commands, to expect obedience, and to enforce them, if necessary, by the use of force”

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8 Linz (1978) p. 87
9 Linz (1978: 88)
10 Linz (1978)
11 Linz (1978), p. 17
Democratic Deepening

In presenting the definition of "democratic deepening" it is worth to get two points clear. First one, this study adopts a “procedural” or “minimalist” conception of democracy. Second one the concept of democratic deepening is closely related to concept of “democratic consolidation”. The reference to the concept of democratic consolidation calls into question the process of rooting and resilience. The essence of this concept implies a general agreement on the fact that the core rules of a democratic regime are defined and fixed; in other words, on the fact that the democratic institutions are transformed into regular, acceptable and predictable patterns.

12 The “procedural” or “minimalist” conception of democracy is probably the one most used in the literature, according to which (and relying heavily on Schumpeter’s ideas) democracy is a system of government in which citizens choose their political leaders in periodic elections, thereby giving their leaders the right to rule after the elections (Schmitter and Karl (1991); Shin 1994; Collier and Levitzky, 1997; Bratton and Van de Walle, 1997; Morlino, 1998; Scheider 2009; Dirk Berg-Schlosser, 2007; Sorensen, 2008). This minimal definition has been revised by Robert Dahl, who regards government responsiveness to the preference of its citizens as a key feature of democracy. This requires that citizens be able to formulate preferences (by individual and collective action) and that these preferences be able to weigh equally in the conduct of government (weighted without discrimination because of the content of the sources of preference). Moreover, Dahl considers democracy to have two main theoretical dimensions: competition, and the extent of the different forms of participation (inclusive suffrage). (See the long debate between the “minimal” and “thickened” definitions of democracy. Dahl ; Schneider, 2009; Berg-Schlosser, 2009: p. 3; Sorensen, 2008:12; Schedler, 1997; Collier and Levitzky, 1997: 433; Coppedge, 2005).

In common with many other studies of democratization, this study opts for a minimal definition of democracy based upon Dahl’s re-formulation (capturing the basic elements as the most useful for distinguishing the political regime. See Berg-Schlosser, 2007; Sorensen, 2008). Thus, democracy is a type of political regime in which there exists: a) Competition: “Meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and organized groups (especially political parties) for all effective positions of government power, at regular intervals and excluding the use of force.” And b) Inclusive suffrage: “A highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least through regular and fair elections, such that no major (adult) social group is excluded.” (Sorensen, 2008:14).

In contrast, non-democratic regimes are defined as political regimes that fail to meet either the first requirement of competition or the second requirement of inclusiveness. Clearly, the minimal or electoral notion of democracy may be deepened into a democratic regime which is not only competitive and inclusive, but also displays no major violations of civil and political liberties and ensures the rule of law for all citizens. Minimal or electoral democracy can overcome some of the deficiencies that frequently plague states and may eventually develop into fully-fledged liberal democracies. It is no coincidence that Dahl’s notion of democracy makes reference to an implicit third (normative) dimension that concerns basic civil and political liberties (Berg-Schlosser, 2007:31-32; Sorensen, 2008:13-14; Bratton and van de Walle, 1997:13). A further aspect can be added to this, the most used definition of democracy. As emphasized by Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl (1991: 81), no other power (such as the military, for example) can constrain or veto decisions made by elected rulers.

practice, these processes may be partly overlapping). However, an assessment of when a democratic regime can be said to be fully-consolidated remains a complex issue.\textsuperscript{14}

This study agrees with Andreas Schedler that democratic consolidation should not be defined with excessive expectations.\textsuperscript{15} Instead, the term “consolidation” should be restricted in order to avoid democratic breakdown and erosion. Thus, democratic consolidation should denote a process, “[...] by which the time horizon of its [the new democratic regime’s] expected existence is extended”.\textsuperscript{16} However, it is important to recall that consolidation does not guarantee that a democracy will be or remain immune to political challenges (political crises, ethnic tensions, and other sorts of potentially de-stabilizing events).

Moreover, following Diamond (1999), this study considers that democratic consolidation process entails three main challenges.\textsuperscript{17} The first task is political institutionalization, so political institutions can work with greater coherence, effectiveness, autonomy and adaptability.\textsuperscript{18} It entails the moving toward routinized, recurrent, and predictable pattern of political behavior: “[...] the settled convergence around (and internalization of) common rules and procedures of political competition and action. And this, broadly, is what political institutionalization is all about: strengthening the formal representative and governmental structures of democracy so that they become more coherent, complex autonomous and adaptable and thus more capable, effective valued and binding.”\textsuperscript{19} This process entails the definition of clear workable rule of game as well as the establishing of more authoritative, proficient and dependable structures for mediating political conflicts among political actors. On turn, this process results in: “[...] reliable boundaries around the uncertainty of politics and [...] political trust, tolerance, moderation, civility, and loyalty to the democratic system.”\textsuperscript{20} This it is thus essential for building a democratic political culture and enhancing the legitimacy of democratic system. Political institutionalization is also key requisite for the second task. The second task is the deepening of democracy to wit a process of improving democracy so that it becomes more comprehensive, accountable, and fair, in other words: “[...] liberal, accountable, representatives, and accessible [...]” (Diamond,1999:73). Moreover Diamond (1999:75) identifies some requisites for democratic institutions to become deeper: “[...]

\textsuperscript{14} Indeed, this has not only created a huge debate, but has also yielded some conceptual confusion. Consolidation has been often considered as a sort of “garbage can concept lacking of core meaning” (Doorenspleet and Kopecky, 2008:702).

\textsuperscript{15} On this point, see Schedler, (1998), (2001) and (2001a); see, also, Schedler (2001b).

\textsuperscript{16} Schneider (2009), p. 12.

\textsuperscript{17} Diamond (1999), p.73 ;

\textsuperscript{18} Diamond (1999), p. 75

\textsuperscript{19} Diamond 1999, p. 75

\textsuperscript{20} Diamond 1999, p. 75
a) greater executive (and military) accountability to the law, to the other branches of the government and to public;
b) a reduction in the barriers to political participation and mobilization by marginal groups;
c) decentralization of power to facilitate broader political access and accountability;
d) more space, energy, and autonomy for independent action by civil society;
e) More effective protection for the political and civil rights of all citizens and law-abiding groups.”

In other words, democratic deepening means: “[the] placing a procedural democracy on broad social and economic foundations” (Oldenburg 2010:192). Finally the third task is to achieve successful regime performance in terms of public policy outcomes (both economic and political performances) so that it can produce a sort of “virtuous circle”.21 This study focuses mainly on the “democratic deepening”.

**Autocracy**

For the purpose of the study, in defining the autocracy I'll keep to a general level. I consider autocracy as the opposite of a democracy according to the definition above considered.22 In this sense, bearing the definition of democracy in terms of its basic criteria (holding of periodic, free and fair and effective elections to the legislative and /or chief executives offices of state, responsible government, full and equal rights of political participation) in mind, by implication, autocracy (or authoritarianism) means the absence of these basic features (Teorell, 2010; Hadenius 1992; Siarof 2013). In particular, it is worth to note two key featuring elements of autocracy: the lack of competition as well as the lack of true accountability (Siarof, 2013).23

**Populism**

Populism remained a contested concept. It has been an "elusive concept and evolving", often used lax or controversy (Ionescu and Gellner; Canovan 1999; Taggart, 2000 ). The use of populism causes confusion and debate about the definition of the concept has not yet been settled (Canovan, 1981; Weyland, 2001; Mudde, 2004; Collier 2001). Nevertheless it seems there are evidences in favor of an academic consensus on two core points or definitional elements of populism. First is the

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21 Siaroff, 2013, p.269
22 See footnote 10
23 Siaorf, (2013), p. 79
focus on “people” – understood as ordinary or common people, the majority or the masses as opposed to elites or special groups - and its sovereignty. Populism, therefore, appeals to and identifies with the People, and pretends to speak in their name. The will of the people, as such, is proclaimed as superior to any other criteria – superior to the traditional institutions, to the autonomy of the institutions and to the willingness of other social strata. The will of the people is equated for justice and morality. Politics should be an expression of the general will of the people. The second core aspect the antagonism between people and the others – understood as elites, foreign, privileged or special groups, the establishment, or power blocs. if the term “people” can sometime appear unclear and vague, it is often clearer who and what populist are against: individual government representatives, political elite, high finance, big business, political parties and so on. The playing up of the contrast between the ‘people’ and its ‘other’, Populism uses anti-elite feelings. Populists (claim to) speak in the name of the ‘oppressed people’, and they want to defend it against internal and external enemies. The use of a conspiracy theory is often used in this goal.

In this study I opt to define populism in the tradition of Canovan’s (1999) “politicians’ populism”, rather than an ideology: “Populism in modern democratic societies is best seen as an appeal to 'the people' against both the established structure of power and the dominant ideas and values of the society.” This definition points out four key features: power structure, an appeal to the “people”, political style and characteristic mood. First, in the name of people, populism claims the revolt against the established structures of power. Second, “Populism is not just a reaction against power structures but an appeal to a recognized authority. Populists claim legitimacy on the grounds that they speak for the people: that is to say, they claim to represent the democratic sovereign, not a sectional interest such as an economic class.” Third populism implies a use of a direct and simple style aimed at ordinary people. Fourth populism has a characteristic mood: “Populist politics is not ordinary, routine politics. It has the revivalist flavour of a movement, powered by the enthusiasm that draws normally unpolitical people into the political arena.” Furthermore, following Collier (2001), it is possible to identify a set of general traits that can be present or not in populism in general: “[…] (a) Mobilization or collective action from below, with deep roots in local communities. (b) A reform or anti-status quo movement. (c) A support base

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24 Shils (1956) in Jaffrelot (2005) p.6
25 Mudde 2004,
26 Mudde 2004, p. 546
27 Canovan 1999, p. 3.
28 Canovan 1999, p. 3.
29 Canovan 1999, p. 4.
31 As Mudde pointed out it is worth to note that these additional traits facilitate rather than define populism. Thus they are not definition elements. Often some features could be common among populists, however some populism may not have all the traits. Mudde (2004), p. 545
constructed by a discourse that attempts to promote an identity as the ‘people’ rather than a class, and sometimes aimed at neutralizing class identities. The political group constructed in this way is embedded in a particular adversarial juxtaposition to a vague ‘other’: elite (economic and/or political), alien, special interest, or minority group, often corrupt or conspiratorial. At the same time that a mass discourse seeks to construct an inclusionary base, populist movements in fact may be quite specifically supported by a particular class or classes. (d) A multiclass or nonclass-based coalition. (e) A heteronomous or politically subordinated, mass support base, lacking autonomous power and subordinated to the leader and/or the interests of another class in the coalition. (f) A particular leadership style, specifically strong, personalized, sometimes charismatic leadership. (g) A leader–mass linkage that is direct, rather than mediated through organizations. (h) Use of rhetoric and oratory that is anti-theoretical and anti-intellectual rather than coolly analytic, expository, explanatory, or abstractly elaborated in theory or ideology. (i) An ‘irrational’ form of politics in the sense that it attracts support on an emotive or moralistic rather than an interest or programmatic basis: sometimes identified as a politics of status-anxiety rather than economic demands. (j) A set of economic policies or an economic model that emphasizes growth, distribution, and demand side stimulation, and deemphasizes fiscal and market constraints. In this way it is seen as an economic policy that is undisciplined, inefficient, and distorted or contaminated by the goal of winning political support.”

**Middle classes**

The popular conceptualizations of class are often covered with multiple ideological and political connotations. For this reason it is necessary to define the meaning of “middle class”.

This research project adopts a weberian definition of social class: these are not objective communities, but as representations of possible and frequent bases for common action. This conceptualization assumes class as social grouping based on a common position in the market. Therefore a class is composed of people who have similar life-chances, and the income they can obtain in the market; common condition known as “class situation”. Furthermore this “class situation” is the result of ownership of the means of production, but also of the wealth, education and professional skills. Moreover this conceptualization distinguishes class from both the consciousness of a shared class position as well as from interests-based organized actions.

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32 Collier 2001, p11814
Finally, since that Weber’s class definition assumes that class situations are determined by economic markets and by status markers - and these markers are socially constructed - this definition is not strictly structural-functional. This is particularly significant in the developing countries context where: “typically, markets are poorly developed and social relations are regulated by traditional hierarchies.” (Tudor 2014:9).

Following this class conceptualization, it is possible to identify the ideal-type of middle class (at the most extreme level of generalization). Middle class refers to those: “[…] occupying the middle ground between the utterly powerless – those with no economic foothold and no strength even in numbers – and those whose power derives from disproportionate wealth in land that enables them to employ people or develop a set of clients to use force rather numbers to prevail.” (Oldenburg, 2010: 193-194). Moreover, combining two other criteria, to wit the income levels (and its correlates; identified by durable goods it own mainly a variety of branded private consumer goods) as well as the non-manual occupational status, it is possible to generally define the members of middle class (Sridharan, 2004). 35

In India, in urban areas this typically includes what has always been described as the ‘petty bourgeoisie’ – small industrialists, businessmen and traders – as well as employees in the corporate sector, and the middle ranks of the professions and the civil service. 36 In the rural areas, it typically includes large numbers of rich peasants or farmers and commercial peasant, 37 as well as those belong to the “small scale self-employed farmers”. 38

Rise of Middle Class

The rise of middle class is a socio political phenomenon connected with the middle class. It refers to a phenomenon of growth in numbers and in influence of middle class in the countryside and as well as in urban areas. It took place in India around about 1980s and 1990s, as result of wider changes which have taken place in Indian society and economy. Following this phenomenon, the middle class gained a growing and effective role and influence in politics (see inter alia Attwood, 1992; Dubey, 1992; Sheth, 1999; Palshikar, 2004; Sridharan, 2004; Oldenburg, 2010).

35 D. L. Sheth, (1999) in a recent article, shows survey results which show that the self-definition of the middle class’ includes the following four characteristics: (1) ten years of schooling or more; (2) ownership of at least three of these four assets: motor vehicle, television set, electric pumpset, non-agricultural land; (3) residence in a pucca (brick built) house; (4) white-collar occupation (Sheth 1999).


37 Corbridge and Harriss 2006, p. 123;

38 As Oldenburg (2010:193) pointed out the Lloyd I. and Susanne H. Rudolphs (1987) coined the term “bullock capitalists” for these classes to highlight the changed feature of this category of framers as part of ascendant agrarian political class. their “status aspect” is the “backward castes” (yadav [ahir], Kumis, Koeris, Vokkaligas, for example). They go before of the “most backward castes” which consist among aother the dalit and other marginalized social groups.
Marginalized social groups

Marginalized social groups refer to specific weaker section of society. They are socially and educationally deprived social groups which have always been on the margins of power and relatively powerless. In particular I refer to women, religious minorities, the weaker and lowest castes and tribal people (in particular those that are identified with the Backward Castes and Other Backward Castes or Classes – OBCs 39; Scheduled castes – SCs 40; Scheduled tribes - STs 41).

Rise of marginalized social groups

Rise of marginalized social groups refers to the socio-political phenomenon, also scholarly recognized as “upsurge of the bahujan samaj (the common folk)”. It has been a phenomenon of growing and increasing of political weight by social groups heretofore on the margins of power, and it took place in India between late-70s and 90s. It has been characterized by their increasing political, electoral and voting participation, as well as a growing awareness on the effectiveness of their vote (Yadav, 2000; Jaffrelot, 2003), as well as a growing presence of these kind of social groups in elected bodies (Jaffrelot and Kumar, 2008).

Social movements

In this study I consider the social movement as: “(a) mostly informal networks of interaction, based on (b) shared beliefs and solidarity, mobilized around (c) contentious themes through (d) the frequent use of various forms of protest.” 42 Furthermore, following Mary Katzenstein et al. (2001), I add a further conceptualization of social movements as: “collective action to effect change”. 43 This further specification is useful because allow me to include: “[…] activism that may prioritize a protest agenda or may emphasize, as does much of the NGO sector, development work informed by a deep commitment to grassroots social change.” 44

This broad definition intentionally incorporates groups with stark ideological and strategic differences. Moreover this allow me to define social movements inclusively, considering not only

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39 Backward Castes – low (mainly Shudra) caste, but not including Scheduled Castes or Untouchables. Other Backward Classes (or Castes) (OBCs) – socially and educationally deprived communities (not including the Scheduled Castes or Tribes) for whom remedial actions are authorized by the Constitution
40 Scheduled Castes (SCs) – in effect, the official term for Untouchable castes or Dalit; those castes recognized by the Constitution as deserving special assistance in respect of education, employment and political representation (other than the OBCs)
41 Scheduled Tribes (STs) – in effect, the official term for India’s ‘tribal’ or adivasi populations; those communities recognized by the Constitution as deserving special assistance in respect of education, employment and political representation (other than the SCs and OBCs)
42 Della Porta and Diani (2006), Cap. 1
43 Katzenstein, Khotari and Metha (2001), p.246
44 Katzenstein, Khotari and Metha 2001, p.246
the unions, and civil-society associations, but also the burgeoning NGO sector, but also many service-delivery organizations (shelters, counseling centers, cooperatives, some rural developmentalist organizations) as endeavoring to foster political consciousness and participation even as they may eschew protest activities. In addiction this understanding of social movements also comprises organizations: “[…] whose mobilization targets state institutions as well as those that engage with the state.” Furthermore this study accept the view that social movements are broadly salutary to democracy rather than to undermine democracy by stirring sentiments and frustrations.

**Rise of social movements in India**

Rise of social movement refers to a phenomenon concerns the emergence of a fresh wave of associational development that “[…] drew upon new sources of leadership and recruitment, raised by new types of issue drew upon new sources of leadership and recruitment, raised new types of issues, and demanded a greater voice in development and the political process. Postemergency India saw the creation of a new array of social movements and associations, as well as a renewal and reform of older associations. Emerging among the new forms of associations were environmental groups, civil liberties groups, human rights organizations, anticalcaste movements, religious groups, and other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Older associations such as farmers’ organizations, trade unions, women’s groups, and business associations were reorganized, renewed, and transformed.” as it was highlighted by Krochanek and Hardgrave (2007: 196). This phenomenon took place in India around about the late 1970s and 1980s.

**Dissatisfaction with political system**

In order to identify the concept of dissatisfaction with political system, I use the Mariano Torcal’s (2011) definition of political dissatisfaction as: “[…] the attitudinal expression of unhappiness or lack of satisfaction based on the belief that the government or incumbent policies and their

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45 Katzenstein, Khotari and Metha 2001, p.247
46 Katzenstein, Khotari and Metha 2001, p.247
47 the literature on social movements and democracy that has grown from the 60s and 70s and that pictures social movements as enhancing democratic processes by providing unrepresented sectors of populations with alternative ways of participations (see Tarrow 1994; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996). This view contrasts with the earliest set of discussion (post WWII) on social movements which pointed out the negative influence of social movements on democratic regimes.
outcomes are falling short of the citizen’s preferences or expectations, resulting in a negative feeling toward the government and the incumbents.”

From a theoretical point of view, this definition is useful because mainly it is general and it is not related to a specific type of political regime. Moreover following again Torcal’s definition, it means (1) that this is an attitude related mostly with the evaluation of policies and their outcomes; (2) it implies the citizens are able to distinguish and identity those policies and their consequences, evaluate them and compare them with their given preferences; (3) definition also signifies that citizens attribute these policy decisions to specific political authorities who are responsible for selecting and implementing them; (4) it means that citizens think that there are alternatives policies that better suit their problems and expectations, opening the possibility of giving the support to the other contenders.

**Corporatism**

In order to identify the concept of corporatism, I decided to combine two definitions of corporatism: the Philippe C. Schmitter’s (1974) and the Howard J. Wiarda’s (1997) definition. Thus I consider the corporatism as: “[…] as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, noncompetitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and support.” (Schmitter, 1974: 93-4). At the same time these constituent units are: “[…] integrated into the governmental system, often on a monopolistic basis or under state guidance, tutelage and control, to achieve coordinated national development.” (Wiarda, 1997:ix).

I opted to combine these two definitions of corporatism for three reasons. First, the definition by Philippe C. Schmitter (1974), is the most common and used definition of corporatism. Second the two definitions complete well each other. Third It is enough general to cover a variety of different institutional arrangements. Fourth the Wiarda’s part is useful from theoretical point of view, because it is able also to capture a mood a style a whole way of thinking and operating a political culture beside an institutional organization.

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49 Torcal (2011)
50 Torcal (2011)
III. Design and Research Method

The single-case study methodology will be used in this work. Since the research design is to be matched with the type of empirical framed questions (Halperin and Heath 2012), I consider the case study a suitable methodology for this research. Although some criticism about this methodology, the case study is a strong method to answer descriptive questions as well as testing hypotheses (Van Evera, 1997, p. 54-55; George and Bennett, 2005).

Following the general organization of this project, I will distinguish the research design in two different designs. To answer the first descriptive question, I will do an in-depth analysis of the Emergency (1975-77) as case study. In this sense it takes shape of a “crucial” case (Eckstein 1975:79-138; Lijpart, 1971, p. 692; Gerring, 2007) and it works as a “crucial experiment” (Isernia, 1997, p. 157). Eckstein (1975) describes the crucial case as one “that must closely fit a theory if one is to have confidence in the theory’s validity, or, conversely, must not fit equally well any rule contrary to that proposed” (p. 118). A case is crucial if the facts of that case are central to the confirmation or disconfirmation of a theory. I choice this crucial event to check the validity of the first proposition, following the example of the Allison’s study on international crisis research design. In particular, Indian emergency is a case that should represent an “easy test” of the theory of crisis and collapse of the democratic regime: it should closely fit for and confirm the predictions and characteristics of this theory (Isernia, 1997, p. 157).

To answer the second explicative question, I will do also a second in-depth case study analysis. In this second part the study treats the “autocracy” as independent variable and democratic deepening as dependent variable. Again the Emergency 1975-77 will be my case study. This time the case selection has been done according to the rule of selecting cases on the characteristics of the independent variable (King et al, 1994; Geddes, 2003). In particular this case takes shape of “extreme case”, because it scores an extreme high value on the independent variable. This seems to be an useful strategy of case selection, if the explanatory ability of the study variable (causes or effects) to be assessed (Isernia, 2001,p.158; Van Evera 1997, 52-53).

The process-tracing can be considered as an appropriate format for the analysis and for the testing of hypotheses/proposition in the second case study (Van Evera, 1997, p. 56). It delineates in detail the historical course of events, the chain of events or the decision making process within a single case, in order to determine whether causation can be imputed to and all the intervening variables are consistent with the path posited by causal model (George and McKeown, 1985; King et al. 1994, p.226-228). It is important to note that many of dimensions or phenomena connected with the democratic deepening are treated as processes. Therefore, in the study, beforehand formulated criteria will be defined to identify phases and periods of shifts in these processes. That beforehand
formulated indicators for each processes are searched for empirically and, hence, functions as conditions of inference.

This study relies on a broad range of secondary sources. Where possible, I will use primary material.

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