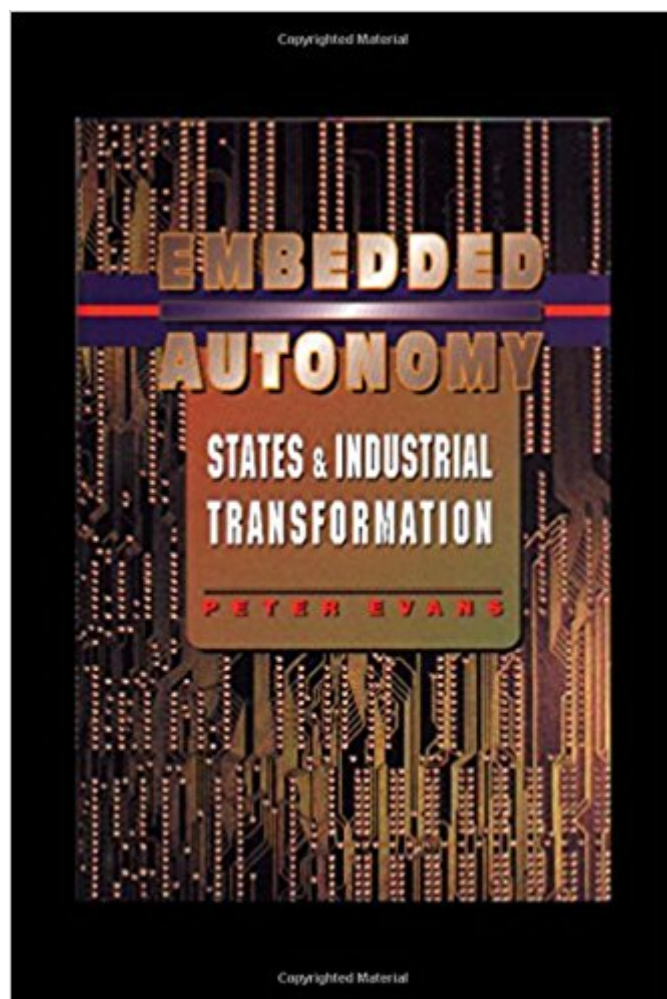


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# Embedded Autonomy



## Synopsis

In recent years, debate on the state's economic role has too often devolved into diatribes against intervention. Peter Evans questions such simplistic views, offering a new vision of why state involvement works in some cases and produces disasters in others. To illustrate, he looks at how state agencies, local entrepreneurs, and transnational corporations shaped the emergence of computer industries in Brazil, India, and Korea during the seventies and eighties. Evans starts with the idea that states vary in the way they are organized and tied to society. In some nations, like Zaire, the state is predatory, ruthlessly extracting and providing nothing of value in return. In others, like Korea, it is developmental, promoting industrial transformation. In still others, like Brazil and India, it is in between, sometimes helping, sometimes hindering. Evans's years of comparative research on the successes and failures of state involvement in the process of industrialization have here been crafted into a persuasive and entertaining work, which demonstrates that successful state action requires an understanding of its own limits, a realistic relationship to the global economy, and the combination of coherent internal organization and close links to society that Evans called "embedded autonomy."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is regarded as de facto classic in the tradition of developmental state. The strategy of

developmental state is the denial of extant hierarchy of comparative advantage. To achieve high growth rate, there should be high return sectors. But such sectors, in general, have no relation with developing countries. Then, should developing countries rest with agriculture or labor-intensive industries? Not necessarily. Such sectors tend to be low value-added, in other words, with low growth prospect. If you don't have it, then make it! It is the strategy of developmental state. But it is no more than what to do. There was not satisfactory conceptualization on how East Asian developmental state put that strategy into practice. Amsden is Asia's Next Giant (reciprocity) and Evans this book marked some conceptual leapfrogging. In the tradition of developmental state, state intervention is pinpointed as a necessary factor to rapid industrialization in East Asian countries. This book elaborates what states did to promote the industrial transformation (or, in Porter's word, achieve competitive advantage). Evans argues that embedded autonomy (networking between bureaucrats and business) was the key to the developmental state's effectiveness. What define the developmental state are the state autonomy (or strong state in the jargon of political science) and the state capacity. The state autonomy refers to the insulation of the bureaucracy from particularistic interests of, for example, the labor, the landlord, civil society, or the business. But a state that was only autonomous would lack both sources of intelligence and the ability to implement its strategy.

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