

approach's methods. We argue that the case-oriented method is suited for a lesser number of phenomena of interest to the policy planners for they only uncover patterns of invariance when the latter is interested primarily in the direction of changes of both interdependency or fragmentation phenomena. That is not to suggest that case-oriented studies are a waste of tax-payers' money, for they are still widely used for non-theoretical purposes in diplomatic organizations, but that their applicability is less relevant than ever. The variable-oriented approach seems perfectly suited to the busy policy planners, who can comfort themselves in the certainty of numbers provided by scientific statistical analysis. The beauty of the variable-oriented approach is that it can assess "the correspondence between relationships discernible across many societies or countries, on the one hand, and broad theoretically based images of macrosocial phenomena, on the other."²³ As Ragin notes, the findings of this approach are of unknown value. Moreover, in many instances the policy relevance can hardly be demonstrated, the emphasis on technique being the main preoccupation rather than substance;²⁴ that is, the generalist, who focuses on structural process, is substituted for the area specialist, who focuses on human agencies.

16. The two preceding comparative approaches can be combined, that is, both are applied to the same problem under investigation, or,

²³ Ragin, The Comparative Method [...], page 53.

²⁴ Bill and Hardgrave, Comparative Politics [...], page 17.