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## HISTORICAL SOCIOLOGY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### The challenge of the global

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#### **Introduction**

The importance of Historical Sociology (HS) for the development of Historical International Relations (HIR) cannot be overstated. While the discipline of IR has been intimately – albeit often implicitly and tacitly – connected to History since its inception (see Lawson, 2012; in this volume, de Carvalho, Costa Lopez, and Leira, 2021), historical work in IR has tended to rely more heavily on the methods and concepts of HS than on the craft of historians. In fact, from the 1980s onwards, much of the historically oriented contributions to IR relied heavily on classic works of HS – most notably works on state formation (see Leira and de Carvalho, 2016; de Carvalho and Leira, 2021a for discussions). As IR – at least in its American guise – had almost forgotten how to be historical by the end of the Cold War, the recovery of historical thinking within the discipline happened much through HS. Thus, distinguishing between HS and HIR today is a question less of different ontologies (especially since the turn to Global Historical Sociology advocated by two of the authors of this chapter) or epistemologies (since they are largely shared), but of definition or orientation; in short, Miles' Law, 'Where you stand depends on where you sit'.

While much of the work in HIR is sociological in character, HS covers a broad spectrum of HIR. However, recent disciplinary developments within IR, notably with the institutionalization of the Historical International Relations Section (HIST) at the International Studies Association (ISA) and its European counterpart (EISA) have aimed to see the historical project within IR as a broader one, covering for instance also international law and international legal history, developments in conceptual history and the history of ideas, and more. It is no longer the case that HS covers HIR *in toto*, although it is still a central component of HIR.

At its core, HS has been concerned with understanding the roots of our current predicament. That is, how can we make sense of modernity through understanding the origins of, and paths to, modernity? Of obvious relevance to dominant strands of IR, HS scholarship examining state formation and the impact of war have been most commonly cited in IR and 'imported' into the discipline. As these speak to the dominant realist imaginary of international politics, they became powerful tools in the toolkit of early constructivists seeking to fire their first shots at the 'neo-neo' edifice in the late 1980s (see Leira and de Carvalho, 2016). Paradoxically, in spite of its association with the constructivist agenda, as Steve Smith provocatively stated in 2001 (Smith,

2001), HS in IR was and had by and large remained stubbornly statist in its approach. While speaking directly to the making of modernity in the West through telling the story of the West, HS had offered few insights into processes of global change, largely focusing on explaining the historical trajectory of a country via dynamics *internal* to that territory, combining this with attention to the ways in which other territories lacked comparable dynamics. Until relatively recently, the underlying assumption of much HS has been that historical development arose from the endogenous characteristics of a handful of powerful (Western) polities.

These tendencies are mirrored by the broader discipline. For much of its disciplinary history, IR has studied the workings of a small part of the world (the West) through a relatively sparse analytical lens (the 'states under anarchy' problematique). Only recently has IR scholarship begun to make clear the ways in which the emergence of the discipline was intimately associated with issues of colonial management (e.g. Vitalis, 2010, 2016; in this volume Bayly, 2021), the diverse range of polities that constitute the international system (e.g. Phillips and Sharman, 2015), and the myriad of social forces, from market exchanges to cultural flows, that make up 'the international' (e.g. Hobson, Lawson, and Rosenberg, 2010; Anievas and Gogu, 2021).

A number of recent works have highlighted the problems associated with such a Western statist view (e.g. Pomeranz, 2000; Christian, 2004; Belich, 2009; Osterhammel, 2014) to the extent that providing an overview of HS today without simultaneously suggesting a way out of the statist impasse is no longer tenable. Recent scholarship has shown that the world has long been a space of 'imperial globality' in which historical trajectories have been intertwined through power relations (Burton and Ballantyne, 2012: 13). Contemporary world politics sits squarely downwind from this space of 'structural entanglements'. As such, the most productive way of providing an overview of HS is through gauging the productive tension underlying a discussion of historical sociology vs *global* historical sociology. This allows for the double aim of (1) providing an overview of HS relevant to IR, while at the same time; (2) pointing at ways to make HS more global.

### **Historical Sociology: the need for a Global Historical Sociology**

While HS as an institutional field of inquiry is multifaceted, it shares certain underlying concerns and themes. Besides its concern with temporality, which requires close attention to processes of change, sequence, and the unfolding of action over time (see Hom, 2021), historical sociology's underlying rubric is its focus on the modern; more specifically, on the emergence and constitution of modernity – or as Adams, Clemens, and Orloff (2005: 2) put it, in 'how people and societies became modern or not'. From the classical founders of historical sociology such as Karl Marx, Max Weber, and W.E.B. DuBois to its 'first wave' represented by Richard Bendix, Barrington Moore Jr., and the early work of S.N. Eisenstadt, historical sociology has sought to illuminate the dynamics and dilemmas involved in the emergence of modernity (Adams, Clemens, and Orloff, 2005: 3–7).

As noted above, a range of scholarship has begun to demonstrate that modernity has always been a transnational and global development, occurring on scales higher (and at times lower) than the nation-state, including through imperialism (e.g. Bhambra, 2007a; Goody, 1996; Pomeranz, 2000; Hobson, 2004; Sassen, 2007). Industrialization, ideas of sovereignty, and the modern, rational state: these and other core features of modernity were formed and continue to operate at transnational and global scales (Buzan and Lawson, 2015).

However, as yet, historical sociology has not fully elaborated the concepts and theories that could be used in a systematic analysis of transnational and global processes. To be clear, the issue is not that comparative historical sociology has narrowed its lens to Europe or the United States.

As historical sociologists themselves make clear (e.g. Mahoney, 2011), non-European parts of the world are firmly on the agenda. Rather, the issue is that historical sociology has not yet systematically analysed and theorized the connections *between* or *through* societies and states (whether in the West or elsewhere). In other words, historical sociology is known best for studies of state formation, economic development, gender politics, class formation, and social movements *within* states.<sup>2</sup> However rich such studies are, they are limited by dint of their methodological nationalism – even as transnational and global dynamics (in the form of markets, transnational ideologies, and inter-imperial conflicts) intrude on such accounts, they are rarely given adequate attention, let alone effectively theorized. At the same time, historical sociology is home to a range of comparative accounts that examine the divergent developmental pathways taken by particular states (e.g. Slater, 2010; Mahoney, 2010). Yet these studies are hindered by their internalism – again, even as transnational and global dynamics are often central to how these studies conduct their empirical analysis, such dynamics are neither effectively theorized nor integrated into causal accounts, which remain centred around endogenous factors.

This is true, in particular, of the main work that came out of the ‘second-wave’ of historical sociology (Adams, Clemens, and Orloff, 2005). Indeed, one can be forgiven for noting that second-wave historical sociology has suffered from the same limitations that afflicted disciplinary history decades before its transnational turn: *state-centrism* (Go, 2014). This is the assumption that social relations are territorialized along state lines (Goettlich and Branch, 2021). Social processes, as well as cultural and political relations, are treated as ‘contained’ by the nation-state. What counts occurs within the nation-state. Relations between states are less important; relations, processes, and forms through or ‘above’ nation-states are of little interest either. In the strongest form of state-centrism, such relations are bracketed out altogether.

Second-wave historical sociology is not unusual in its state-centrism – such an orientation has dominated the social sciences since their inception, or at the very least since the Second World War (Taylor, 1996; Wallerstein, 2001). For historical sociology, a particular brand of state-centrism has been manifest in at least two ways (Go, 2013). The first is the more straightforward: the main objects of analysis have been nation-states. The historian Sven Beckert (in Bayly et al., 2006: 1455) usefully conceptualizes transnational history as premised upon ‘the interconnectedness of human history as a whole’; transnational history ‘acknowledges the extraordinary importance of states ... but it also pays attention to networks, processes, beliefs, and institutions that transcend these politically-defined spaces’. This does not characterize second-wave historical sociology, which was instead interested in class formation, types of political regimes, collective action and revolutions, welfare states, gender relations, or economic and political development *within* national states. This is most evident in the proliferation of research and theory on the state – the very research and theory for which second-wave historical sociology became renowned (Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, 1985). While this work fruitfully examined state policies, welfare regimes, or other state forms, it rarely, if ever, studied the international organizations that national states confronted, the transnational networks of ideas that stage managers formed part of, or the imperial webs that states were embedded within (see Nexon, 2009). Furthermore, the states theorized in this work were always ‘national states’ (in Tilly’s, 1990 terminology), and only rarely imperial-states or city-states, or members of regional associations and interstate organizations. Finally, the study of the state itself became dominant. Why emphasize the ‘state’? Why didn’t historical sociologists look at migration flows or the transatlantic slave trade, trading companies or international non-governmental organizations, and global health regimes or transnational women’s movements? When ‘bringing the state back in’, this scholarship blocked virtually everything else out.<sup>3</sup>

The point here is not to deny that the state is an important unit of analysis – of course, it is. Rather, the point is that a dominant focus on the state has acted as an obstacle to effective analysis not only of other units, but also to how states interacted with these. What began as an analytical move became, over time, an ontological one: the state acted as a cage not just of social scientific enquiry but of social relations *in toto*. In other words, analysts acted as if states really were containers of ideas and practices. Yet there are a myriad of actors, forms, and processes operating at different scales that states try to manage, regulate, or discipline but which they ultimately cannot.

Some second-wave scholarship recognized this point. For example, Skocpol's (1979) seminal study of social revolutions *did* include analysis of international factors. For Skocpol (1979: 22–30), the elision of international factors in previous accounts of revolution (not least by Barrington Moore, Jr.) was something she sought explicitly to rectify. Similarly, Charles Tilly (1990: 26) referred to international factors in his analysis of European state formation: 'Other states—and eventually the entire system of states—strongly affected the path of change followed by any particular state'. For Tilly (1990: 23), competition between states in the form of war and preparation for war was the determining factor in dynamics of state formation: war made states just as states made war.

But here arises the second way in which historical sociology's nation-state-centrism made its appearance – as a 'realist' theory of the international that limits this realm to the regulation of violence. For most second-wave historical sociology, the international system was treated as a bare space of 'anarchy' largely devoid of empires, transnational networks of actors, ideas that crossed borders, cultural flows, and so on. This is a radically impoverished vision of the international. There are processes, logics, and forms in the international realm that are irreducible to the actions of states, just as state policies and militaries do not exhaust the complex reality of the international system. Yet the references by second-wave historical sociologists to international dynamics were largely limited to the coercive realm. For instance, the interstate system that Tilly historicizes in *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990–1992* turns out not to be little more than a collection of polities battling for position in the European theatre. It is *war* that makes and remakes states: 'War drives state-formation and transformation' (Tilly, 1990: 20–23). For Tilly, the international system is a largely passive arena – a space of conflict-strewn competition between states-as-actors (Tilly, 1990: 23).<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Skocpol's overarching argument is that social revolutions are primarily caused by state breakdown, which is in turn most often brought about by defeat in war (Skocpol, 1979: 60–63, 186, 95–98, 104). As in Tilly's work, Skocpol's (1979: 20) bellicist theory of the state summons a realist theory of the international: the international is merely a 'structure of competing states'.

A final example is provided by Michael Mann's (1986, 1993, 2013, 2014) four-volume *The Sources of Social Power*. Mann's very warrant for his reinterpretation of the 'history of power in human societies' is that he had 'arrived at a distinctive, general way of looking at human societies that is at odds with models of society dominant within sociology and historical writing'; that is, societies should be seen as 'constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting sociospatial networks of power' (Mann, 1986: 1). Theoretically, this view of social relations could adduce to an analysis of global networks that seep through and across nation-states rather than being contained within them. However, in Mann's empirical analysis, this promising approach does not come to fruition. Instead, when referring to global or transnational factors that explain the rise of states, classes, and capitalism, he reverts to two different, arguably opposed theorizations of global space, with one dominating the other: 'culture' (Mann, 1993: 753) and interstate competition, especially war, where the latter is the one that dominates his analysis. Such competition and war requires 'military-fiscal extraction' which imposes heavy tax burdens on populations (Mann,

1993: 214–225). In turn, this imperative impacts domestic class conflict and state formation. In Mann's work, as in Tilly's and Skocpol's, the global is *primarily* a space of war – all three theorists hold the same bellicist *cum* realist conception of the global.<sup>5</sup>

Historical sociology has not erred by discussing militaries or war – both are powerfully generative of how domestic and international orders have emerged and been shaped over time. The issue is that Skocpol, Tilly, and Mann reduce the international to little more than war between competitive states in a sparse environment represented by 'anarchy'. Despite repeated gestures to the productive capacity of 'the international', their analysis contains only the thinnest conceptualization of this sphere. This means that all three theorists buy into the notion that violence is largely, at least in the modern era, something carried out by and between states. This assumption omits the multiple forms of violence that escape the nation-state frame, from the procreant role played by colonial and postcolonial forces in 'Western' wars to the impact of ostensibly 'private' actors on coercive practices (see Barkawi, 2017; de Carvalho and Leira 2021b). Wedded to state-centrism and an accompanying 'states-under-anarchy' motif, the rich insights Skocpol *et al.* furnish in terms of domestic outcomes are not matched by equivalent insights into the relations that flow between or across boundaries.

Second-wave historical sociology, therefore, derived a range of resources through which to think about international, transnational, and global processes. Mann opened up the possibility of theorizing transnational 'networks' and global norms; Tilly intimated how 'empire-states' may have constituted global order; Skocpol referred to 'world historical time'. But the promise of a fully fledged 'global imagination' was not fulfilled (Magubane, 2005). Instead, state-centric modes of analysis persisted and, in some cases, largely domesticated second-wave analysis.

More recent work within the so-called third wave of historical sociology (Adams, Clemens, and Orloff, 2005) aims to go beyond the confines of the nation-state. For instance, something of a nascent transnational or global turn can be seen in recent sociological examinations of empire and colonialism (e.g. Adams, 2005; Go, 2009, 2011; Lange, Mahoney, and Hau, 2006; Mahoney, 2010; Wimmer and Feinstein, 2010), as well as in emerging work on the transnational activities of missionaries (e.g. Stamatov, 2010), trading companies (e.g. Adams, 1996; Erikson and Bearman, 2006; Wilson, 2011), maritime violence (e.g. Norton, 2014; Leira and de Carvalho, 2011; Leira and de Carvalho, 2021b), international organizations (e.g. Chorev, 2012), revolutions (e.g. Lawson, 2019), and culturally based reinterpretations of modernity (e.g. Bhambra, 2007a; Reed and Adams, 2011). A related development can be seen in the rising interest in postcolonial studies within historical sociology and social theory (e.g. Bhambra, 2007b, 2010; Boatcă and Costa, 2010). This work can serve as the basis for a more *global* historical sociology.

## **Historical Sociology in IR**

So too does companion work in IR. At the risk of oversimplification, there have been two main stages in the development of historical sociology in IR. The first stage, appearing around the same time as second-wave historical sociology and much influenced by it, was oriented around three core wagers. First, emphasis was placed on the interaction between national and international scales, with particular attention to the ways in which pressures emanating from the international system reshaped national societies (e.g. Hobson, 1997). Second, historical sociologists in IR sought to transcend the materialism of mainstream IR by attending to the impact of transnational ideologies and norms – here Mann's (1986) emphasis on the potentially 'transcendent' power of ideology was a key resource (e.g. Ruggie, 1993; Reus-Smit, 1999). Finally, this scholarship emphasized the importance of discontinuity in the international realm, thereby disrupting

mainstream claims as to the ‘enduring sameness’ of world politics (e.g. Cox, 1987; Rosenberg, 1994; Spruyt, 1994; see the discussion in Leira and de Carvalho, 2016).

More recent historical sociological work in IR is less influenced by second-wave historical sociology than its predecessor. Rather, a wide range of scholarship has opened up mainstream assumptions about how to conceive and theorize ‘the international’. Contemporary historical sociology in IR covers a broad range of sensibilities (materialist and ideational, structural and agency based) and examines a similarly broad range of issue-areas (from the legacies of colonialism to the development of the human rights regime). Historical sociology in IR has sought not just to unpack the different forms that international orders have taken in the past, but also the ways in which the contemporary international order cannot be treated as a predetermined given. Proponents share an understanding of the centrality of discontinuity, contingency, and particularity in international processes alongside an interest in examining how social forms and processes shape international events. As such, historical sociology in IR offers a double punch: a focus on the rich detail of historical international relations alongside an emphasis on how configurations of social relations combine in particular contexts in order to generate discrete outcomes.

If historical sociology in IR has managed to establish a foothold in the discipline, there are two challenges that scholars working in this idiom confront. First, historical sociology in IR has become somewhat unwieldy, making its *distinctive* contribution hard to identify (Lawson, 2007). Indeed, quite often, historical sociology in IR boils down to little more than a commitment to inject historical sociological insights into IR without necessarily explaining *why* IR scholarship should take note of such research. Paradoxically, therefore, just as the work of historical sociologists in IR has proliferated, so its core rationale has become less clear and the specific challenge it offers has receded from view. The second problem is rooted in a more intellectual challenge: the failure shared by both classical social theorists and IR scholars to ‘theorize the international’ (Rosenberg, 2006). As a discipline, IR appears to have a semipermeable membrane that allows ideas from other disciplines in, but blocks substantive traffic out.

If such looting and pillaging raids are to be curtailed, historical sociology in IR needs to make a comparable move to that undertaken by historical sociologists working in Sociology. Indeed, the task faced by the former is the mirror image to that confronting the latter. Whereas historical sociologists in Sociology are burdened by the internalism that pervades state-centrism and methodological nationalism, historical sociologists in IR are waylaid by ‘externalism’: the bracketing of the international realm into a discrete sphere of analysis with its own distinct logics. The simultaneous existence of multiplicity *and* interactivity – ‘interactive multiplicity’ – is what constitutes the field of IR; it is also what historical sociology in IR is best placed to interrogate (Hobson, Lawson, and Rosenberg, 2010).

### **Globalizing Historical International Relations**

Where HS has contributed to the opening the state to historical inquiry in IR, as argued above, this has nevertheless happened within the confines of a statist ontology – one that can no longer be defended in light of the recent focus on the importance of transnational and global dynamics. It has also demonstrated the extent to which IR must further globalize its concepts (Çapan et al., 2021). At first glance, these may seem like odd statements to make. After all, the relationship between history and IR has often been close (Suganami, 1999; Kratochwil, 2006; Lawson, 2012). And what social scientific discipline is more ‘global’ than IR? However, for much of its disciplinary history, IR has been provincially oriented towards Western interests, concepts, and concerns (Hoffman, 1987; Wæver, 1998; Buzan and Little, 2001;

Hui, 2005; Shilliam, 2011). Furthermore, despite the apparent closeness between history and IR, over the past generation much mainstream IR theory has assumed an ahistorical (not to mention asocial) character, best illustrated by Waltz's (1979) neorealism and Keohane's (1984) neoliberal institutionalism. Both of these approaches take the main actors of the international system to be sovereign states. Both see states as unitary actors with interests that are predetermined and universal across time and place. And both work with the assumption that the international realm is distinct by virtue of its anarchical nature – in other words, its lack of an overarching sovereign authority. Put simply, neorealism and neoliberal institutionalisms rely upon the same assumptions about the international sphere that many second-wave historical sociologists wittingly or unwittingly incorporated in their work. This generates certain analytic and theoretical limitations, not least regarding the historical – or rather ahistorical – canvass painted by conventional IR scholarship.

IR scholarship that defends the views associated with Waltz, Keohane, and their variants see their strength as lying in the parsimony of their assumptions. Because actors are of a single kind and because the structural context of anarchy is unchanging, it is possible to reduce the international to a small number of derivative logics: a self-help system, the requirement for states to prioritize survival, a recurring security dilemma, and the mechanism of the balance of power. If anarchy stands as a constant structural condition, the international sphere appears as a continuous, static holding pen for 'actual' international relations. This means that IR scholarship is – or should be – concerned with mapping the relentless struggle for survival (as in neorealism) or the conditions for cooperation (as in neoliberalism) that take place within a timeless and spaceless anarchical system.

From this, assumption of the 'enduring sameness' of international anarchy (Waltz, 1979) flows a particular view of history. Because in structural terms at least, international relations is a realm of 'recurrence and repetition', history becomes little more than a contextless sphere of timeless 'lessons'. This lack of concern for temporality generates a selection bias in which history becomes little more than the predetermined site for the empirical verification of theoretical claims. Although *history* as a point of data collection is often present in mainstream accounts, *historicism* – a commitment to historically locating practices and dynamics, a concern for the contingent, disruptive, constitutive impact of historical events and processes, and the study of contextualized rationalities and inter-subjectivities – is largely absent. Most mainstream approaches use history merely in order to code findings, mine data, or as a source of *post factum* explanations (Isacoff, 2002; Lawson, 2012; in this volume, MacKay and LaRoche, 2021).

By taking a static picture of the structure of world politics (the anarchical states-system), much mainstream IR occludes differences between polities (such as empires and nation-states), fails to distinguish between types of international order (such as imperial and sovereign orders), ignores *social* structural forces (such as capitalism, patriarchy, and racism), and reduces agency to the actions of state managers, financiers, and generals. In this way, historically specific *social* categories – the balance of power, sovereignty, anarchy, etc. – are seen as stable, fixed entities that can be deployed without regard for time and space specificity. Such thinking results in the swallowing of a 'continuist mystique' in which the past is ransacked in order to explain the present: the contest between Athens and Sparta is transplanted to the Cold War in order to elucidate the stand-off between the United States and the Soviet Union; all wars, whether they be guerrilla insurgencies or great power conflicts, are explicable by the basic fact – or permissive context – of anarchy; and all political units – city-states, empires, nation-states, and transnational alliances – are functionally undifferentiated. The result is a 'gigantic optical illusion' that generates an isomorphic homology of social forms (Hobson, 2002).

Against this background, historical sociology in IR has sought to inject historicist insights into IR, demonstrating the hierarchical rather than anarchical formations that international orders assume (e.g. Cox, 1987; Keene, 2002; Hobson, 2014; Bially Mattern, and Zarakol, 2016), the distinctions that can be drawn between modes of international order-making (e.g. Zhang, 2009; Buzan and Lawson, 2015; Phillips and Sharman, 2015:202), the specious historical reading of the Peace (or ‘Myth’) of Westphalia upon which conventional approaches rely (Oslander, 2001; Teschke, 2003; de Carvalho et al., 2011), and more. Such insights have joined the array of historically informed approaches that have emerged, or re-emerged, in recent decades, from constructivism (e.g. Ruggie, 1993; Reus-Smit, 1999, 2013; Nexon, 2009) to neoclassical realism (e.g. Schweller, 2006), and from approaches associated with the English School (e.g. Buzan and Little, 2001; Keene, 2002; Suzuki, 2009; Zarakol, 2011) to postcolonial analysis (e.g. Grovogui, 1996; Inayatullah and Blaney, 2004; Shilliam, 2011). The result is a shared concern with historicizing and, thereby, denaturalizing the ahistorical, asocial assumptions of mainstream IR.

### **Conclusion: addressing the global through history**

There are, therefore, striking parallels between the critiques of second-wave historical sociology and the emergence of historical sociology in IR. Second-wave historical sociology generated commanding accounts of internal development and change. And Skocpol, Mann, Tilly, and others used their awareness of the historical diversity of social orders to construct searching comparative accounts that distinguished between pathways of historical development on the basis of the presence or absence of certain endogenous factors. However, this tradition tended to reduce the international to a zone of timeless geopolitical imperatives in which the main actors were independent nation-states. As a consequence, these scholars did little to close the gap between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’, ‘internal’ and ‘external’, and ‘domestic’ and ‘international’ – to the contrary, they hardened it. The ‘international’ was externalized from the object domain of historical sociology even as historical sociologists in IR showed how the multifaceted effects of global and transnational dynamics – processes of capitalist accumulation, cultural flows that accelerated or redirected historical pathways, or patterns of integration that extended far beyond single polities – contained a constitutive effect on dynamics of continuity and change (Hobson, Lawson, and Rosenberg, 2010).

For second-wave historical sociologists, a particular subgrouping of these effects – political-military relations – was seen as representing the limits of the international, or at least as its principal contribution to the wider academy (Mann, 2006). For their part, historical sociologists in IR, even as they worked from a wide range of sensibilities and explored a plethora of issue-areas, did little to overcome the ‘externalist’ logic associated with realism. Indeed, just as was the case with second-wave historical sociologists, their enquiry often served to strengthen the boundary between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’. To this end, a concern for the interactive multiplicity of international dynamics provides a common resource through which historical sociologists working in both Sociology and IR can transcend their disciplinary shortcomings. Going beyond the state-centrism that characterizes – and constrains – second-wave historical sociology carries the promise of a truly global historical sociology in IR, one that can make sense of units and interaction well beyond the confines of the state. To be sure, states are (still) the principal forms of political authority in the contemporary world. They are also key sites of identity and affective sentiment. But, taking the state seriously means seeing it not as a static, independent object but as an entity-in-motion that is embedded within, and formed by, wider flows, circuits, and networks (Go and Lawson, 2017).



## Suggestions for further reading

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## Notes

- 1 This contribution is based on Go and Lawson (2017).
- 2 It would be impractical to cite all of the works on these themes, but for important overviews, see: Adams, Clemens, and Orloff (2005); Calhoun (1996); and Smith (1991).
- 3 See the critique in Towns (2009). One notable exception is the contribution by Peter Evans to *Bringing the State Back In* (in Evans et al. 1985).
- 4 So important was this debt to realism that Tilly's analysis (alongside the broader move to 'Bringing the State Back In') helped to foster a resurgence in realist inspired analysis of state formation (e.g. Brewer, 1990; Downing, 1992; Ertman, 1997; Spruyt, 1994). This was not the only link between realism and historical sociology – a further example can be found in the cross-pollination of ideas between hegemonic stability theory and world systems' analysis (e.g. Chase-Dunn and Hall, 1997; Gilpin, 1981).
- 5 In Volume 2 of *Social Sources*, Mann (1993: 258) explicitly refers to Morgenthau as providing the model for his thinking on international relations. For discussions of Mann's realism, see Hobden (1999), Hobson (2006), and Lawson (2006); for responses, see: Mann (2006).

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