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## Governance in a globalised world

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<cn>18.<en><ct>Governance in a globalised world

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Discussions surrounding the sources of power and authority that govern the social world have taken place since ancient times. Finally, in the latter half of the twentieth century, it appeared that this debate had been decisively resolved in favour of the view that governance was the preserve of governments. This was a consequence of the ascendance in the social sciences of methodologies that presupposed human activities to correspond to the territorial boundaries of sovereign states. The privileging of sovereign territoriality did not reflect a poverty of scholarly thinking but was a by-product of their social world. (Taylor, 1996). By the middle of the last century, in advanced industrialised countries at least, state power had infiltrated the everyday lives of citizens to an unprecedented degree. Meanwhile, at the international level, the backdrop of two nuclear-armed superpowers poised on the brink of mutual annihilation underscored the view that states constituted the most powerful actors on the world stage. Paradoxically, it was the development of nuclear weapons, perhaps the most potent symbol of the state's power, that instigated a debate about its possible obsolescence. Bereft of techniques to defend themselves against atomic devices, states were left unable to fulfil their elementary mission: of guaranteeing the security of their citizens through maintaining their territorial integrity (Herz, 1957). Charles Kindleberger's (1969, p. 207) subsequent remark that 'the state is just about over as an economic unit' was another foretaste of the transformations afoot in the social world. This perspective has been given further credence in the interim by the amplification of cross-border movements of trade, capital, production, people, pollution, violence and culture, encapsulated by the portmanteau term 'globalisation' (Held et al., 1999).

Nowhere did globalisation challenge the 'methodological territorialism' (Scholte, 2005) of social research more than in the discipline of international relations (IR), which, as the 'international' prefix connotes, takes nation states as the locus of the world's power and authority. This chapter's cardinal contention is that the novelty of globalisation derives from its designation as an '*ation*' not a '*nation*'. Whereas 'national' perspectives are suffused with the assumption that governance is the exclusive province of the nation state, globalisation as an '*ation*' makes no prior hypotheses about the dominant patterns of power and authority in global politics but instead deems them a matter for empirical investigation. For example, the editors of one of the bestselling texts on international politics chose 'world politics' rather than 'international relations' for the title of their volume 'to signal that ... we are interested in a very wide set of actors and political relations in the world and not only those among nation-states (as implied by "international relations" or "international politics")' (Baylis et al., 2016, p. 2).

<a>GOVERNANCE IN IR THEORY: GOVERNANCE BY GOVERNMENTS

Although it is contested, most definitions of governance coalesce around the idea that refers to the totality of rules, institutions, instruments, structures and processes that permit humankind to define and manage their collective affairs (Commission on Global Governance, 1995; Bevir, 2012). IR's dominant theoretical approaches assume states to be the essential building blocks of world politics. Embedded into these paradigms is a political geography that partitions the globe into discrete parcels of land, each governed by a sovereign body wielding absolute and exclusive authority. The possibility that sources of power and authority exist beyond the state is negated by the pretense that political space equates to conceptions of place that are monopolised by state territoriality. From this it follows that the study of states and relations between states is a necessary and sufficient basis

for understanding and explaining the governance of global affairs. In short, mainstream IR scholars held that *governance* was synonymous with *governments*.

The sentiment that governance was tantamount to government was increasingly at odds with a world undergoing 'a technological revolution in information and communications ... diffusing power away from governments and empowering individuals and groups to play roles in world politics – including wreaking massive destruction – that were once reserved for governments of states' (Nye, 2002, p. x). The 1970s and 1980s were a time of analytical, conceptual and theoretical innovation in IR as the discipline sought tools to interpret the more convoluted global environment. Superficially, work on transnational and transgovernmental relations (Keohane and Nye, 1972, 1974), complex interdependence (Keohane and Nye, 1977) and international regimes (Krasner, 1983) appeared to convey a more intricate image of world politics where outcomes were mediated by a variety of actors. Nevertheless, while conceding the existence of non-state actors, these frameworks clung to the view that their behaviour was determined by the overarching framework of inter-state relations, thus denying the possibility that they could possess or exercise authority in their own right.

#### <a>GOVERNANCE IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

Conventional wisdom espoused by the 'hyperglobalist' thesis (Held et al., 1999, p. 3) asserts that the territorial boundaries of sovereign states are irrelevant. According to this standpoint we dwell in a 'borderless world' (Ohmae, 1990) where political, social and economic processes are organised on a regional or global scale, often by non-state actors, generating alternative organisational forms and governance that have displaced the state. This outlook is now regarded as empirically and epistemologically suspect. Empirically, sovereign states have flourished in tandem with intensified globalisation. Since 1945 the number of sovereign states has almost trebled and their portfolio of responsibilities has mushroomed. Moreover, as the recent events in Catalonia demonstrated, the clamour for statehood is undimmed. As tourists, immigrants, students, entrepreneurs, criminals and aspiring terrorists can attest, state borders are hardly porous. Similarly, for all the wherewithal attributed to regional, global and private actors, states retain unique and formidable capabilities. More sceptical commentators insist that the state's power remains intact because globalisation has been wildly exaggerated. They argue that the evidence points only to intensified internationalisation (Hirst et al., 2009), that is to say, most of the world's connections are between actors rooted in specific national contexts. The sceptics nonetheless share the hyperglobalisers' methodological shortcomings. Both present the state and globalisation as competing forms of social organisation engaged in a zero-sum battle for supremacy (Clark, 1999). Whereas the hyperglobalisers assume that globalisation automatically drains the power of the state, the sceptics seize upon instances of state power as evidence that globalisation is illusory.

The sceptics and the hyperglobalisers go some way towards illuminating the patterns of power and authority associated with globalisation. The hyperglobalists highlight that the state is not an eternal feature of our physical and imagined geography. Conversely, the sceptics underscore the vitality of state power. Defining globalisation in absolute terms, however, precludes its coexistence with states and has deflected attention from the more elaborate transformations of power and authority accompanying it. Globalisation's significance for the social world and the configurations of power and authority within it lies in its specification as an 'ation' not a 'nation'. *International* and the related spatialities to which it has given rise (*subnational*, *transnational*, *supranational*) infer that states are the singular reference points for conceiving political space and exercising power and authority. *Globalisation*, in contrast, does not possess these connotations. Most writing on globalisation now concludes that states endure as significant containers of power, authority and governance. Equally, however, the 'ation' suffix suggests that states do not monopolise political power and authority and cannot be deemed necessary and sufficient conditions for

governance.

No serious analyst writes states out of the global governance equation. Their bilateral and multilateral interactions and the treaties, institutions and organisations to which they lend their authority are the skeleton upon which the broader anatomy of global governance is draped. The necessity of grappling with a globalised world has compelled states to intensify the incidence and intimacy of their contacts. Data from the Union of International Associations (2013, 2015) show that in 1909 there were only 37 active intergovernmental organisations whereas by 2014 there were 7757 with concomitant growth in multilateral treaties and conferences. In many arenas the power and authority of states is paramount, but the embers of IR's traditional political geography burn most brightly in the realm of security. The world's flashpoints from Syria to Ukraine, worries about the nuclear ambitions of Iran and North Korea, and tensions in the international system surfacing from the rise of 'the rest' (Zakaria, 2008) are normally the result of, and resolved by, state mediation. Irrespective of their notoriety, non-state actors including terrorist groups and private military companies are no match for states in their ability to sustain violent conflict (Abrahamsen and Leander, 2016).

Elsewhere the state's grip over the trajectory of world politics is more tenuous, and it is recognised that states and inter-state relationships are just one thread of power and authority woven into the fabric of global governance. As the twentieth century wore on, private and non-state structures of power and authority (re-)emerged, becoming more numerous and more important to global governance. Between 1909 and 1981, the number of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) jumped from 176 to 13 232. In the period since, the population of INGOs more than quadrupled, reaching 58 588 in 2013. Multinational corporations (MNCs) have likewise blossomed. In 1973 there were 9482 MNCs worldwide (Hood and Young, 1979), the figure leaping to 30 000 by 1990 and 100 000 by 2017 (UNCTAD, 2017, p. 30). Moreover, non-state actors were no longer seen as mere pawns on a state-dominated chessboard. Rather they were considered as possessors of political power and authority prompting growing intrigue about the phenomenon of 'governance without government' (Rosenau and Czempiel, 1992). Private and non-state structures of authority, long eclipsed by social science's infatuation with the state, were resurrected as pertinent avenues of enquiry (see Hall and Biersteker, 2002).

Non-state sources of power and authority were always salient to global governance. In the period leading up to the First World War, for example, private actors played a critical role in the Public International Unions, the forerunners of many of today's major organs of global governance, in cultivating harmonised international rules and standards for issues ranging from trade, transport and communications to intellectual property, labour standards and units of measure (Murphy, 1994; Davies and Woodward, 2014). During the twentieth century many of these responsibilities were usurped by states and international organisations. Now, thanks to the policies of privatisation, liberalisation and marketisation presently in vogue, the pendulum has swung back. Recent research demonstrates the growing panoply of issues being sculpted by private structures of authority including the environment (Green, 2013), climate change (Bulkeley and Newell, 2015, Chapter 5), the internet and telecommunications (Maurer, 2018), financial markets (Tsingou, 2015; Kruck, 2017; Campbell-Verduyn, 2018) and security (Dunigan and Petersohn, 2015; Bures and Carrapico, 2018), and for healthcare, pharmaceutical and chemical safety standards. To re-emphasise, this does not mean the state is irrelevant. The state and state-based networks and organisations still provide the scaffolding of global financial governance. Nonetheless, there is clear evidence of private or hybrid public and private actors formulating and monitoring their own rules or being employed to strengthen compliance with state regulation.

<a>FRAMEWORKS OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Appreciating that state-centred notions of politics ‘appear to account for less and less of contemporary patterns of power and authority in an era of globalization’ (Pierre, 2000, p. 5), new frameworks and vocabularies were required to make sense of governance in a globalised world. The final section of the chapter briefly considers the merits and demerits of three such frameworks: (1) multilevel governance; (2) transgovernmental networks; and (3) neo-medievalism.

#### <b>Multilevel Governance

Multilevel governance began life as a way of interrogating the dispersal of decision-making competencies across different tiers of government in the European Union (EU) (see Marks et al., 1996) but has since been applied to describe, explain and understand a range of global governance arenas (see Baker et al., 2005; Hirst et al., 2009; Enderlein et al., 2010; Stephenson, 2013; Mayntz, 2015). Multilevel governance pertains to the ‘simultaneous mobilization of public authorities at different jurisdictional levels’ (Piattoni, 2010). Typically, models of multilevel governance envisage public authorities stacked in the ‘club-sandwich’-style arrangement outlined in Figure 18.1, with the bottom tiers comprising subnational and national actors while the upper echelons contain regional, international and global actors.

Group of 3 (European Union, North America, Japan)

International Regulatory Agencies (WTO, IMF, World Bank etc.)

Regional Governance (EU, APEC etc.)

National-Level Governance

Subnational Governance

*Source:*<em>Adapted from Hirst et al. (2009).

*Figure 18.1*<em>Multilevel governance

As a prototype for visualising the dizzying array of power and authority structures, multilevel governance has much to commend it. First, multilevel governance offers a ‘palatable, easily digestible paradigm’ (Stephenson, 2013, p. 817) that chimes with the everyday experiences of citizens. Multilevel governance is intrinsic to federal political systems, but even unitary systems tend to devolve some power down to regional and local government layers of government and up to regional and international organisations. These trends are accelerating in the new millennium, with more states gravitating towards decentralised domestic political systems (Schakel et al., 2015) and granting greater authority to international organisations by investing their decision-making mechanisms with elements of supranationality (Hooghe and Marks, 2015). Second, while it maintains a pivotal role for states and public authorities, multilevel governance is sensitive to the ongoing metamorphoses of the state’s duties and the way in which its enmeshment in a labyrinth of wider assemblage of governance structures constrains and enables its sphere of autonomy. Last, multilevel governance encourages us to think about the interdependence of governance structures and how (or not) they blend to provide for effective control of global problems. Studies of environmental governance, for

instance, reveal that the states might negotiate international agreements and translate these broad principles into actionable policies, but the bulk of the implementation is frequently undertaken by cities, regions and localities (Biermann and Pattberg, 2012, Part III). Nevertheless, multilevel governance has its drawbacks. The model tends to conflate governance with government and struggles to cope with private actors whose authority is not obtained from control over a sovereign territorial space nor circumscribed by its boundaries. The reimposition of customary spatial scales predicated on territoriality (subnational, international) in models of multilevel governance suggests that it is 'a means for preserving a statist agenda with its conventional geographical mosaic of territories' (Taylor, 2000, p. 1105). Some theoretical and practical points are also underdeveloped. There are questions about how levels are fabricated and the acquaintances within and between those levels. For instance, models of multilevel governance seem to declare that levels are cohesive entities constructed of homogeneous actors. If the state level is selected as an example, such certainties swiftly evaporate. The theory and practice of IR demonstrates that cooperation amongst states is a variable and fractures between them are commonplace. Furthermore, there is a mass of scholarly literature detailing the spectrum of state structures and the impact this has on their engagement with globalisation and governance (see Weiss, 2003). Ambiguities also surround whether actors can concurrently belong to different layers, plausibly playing different roles and taking different forms in the process. States might perform as monolithic actors in the state level but take on a more disjointed form at the international level with representatives of particular state institutions operating with a degree of autonomy from the parent state in their dealings with colleagues in international organisations. In short, the 'concern with multiple levels of governance is not enough although it is a good start' (Weiss and Wilkinson, 2014a, p. 207).

#### <b>Transgovernmental Networks

In the aftermath of the global financial crisis the foremost attention was reserved for the responses piloted through the main multilateral economic organisations: the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Just as vital, if less celebrated, were the networks of financial regulators at the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, the Financial Action Task Force, the Financial Stability Board, the International Association of Insurance Supervisors, and the International Organisation of Securities Commissions that subsequently orchestrated a quiet revolution in regulatory 'plumbing' designed to support the architecture of global financial governance (Buckley et al., 2016, Part I; Jordana, 2017). While the former stressed states operating as unitary bodies the latter hinted that states were 'disaggregating into [their] functionally distinct parts'. In turn these separate parts are 'networking with their counterparts abroad, creating a dense web of relations that constitutes a new, transgovernmental order' (Slaughter, 1997, p. 184). From this vantage point the building blocks of global governance are not states but the ministries, regulatory agencies, executives and legislatures of which they are composed and the political and bureaucratic linkages they are fomenting within and across sovereign borders. As the aforementioned work of Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye demonstrates, transgovernmental ties are not a novelty in themselves but the magnitude, span and levels of institutionalisation certainly are (Slaughter, 2004). Networks discharge an assortment of functions from fostering trust and reciprocity amongst national officials, erecting, policing and implementing internationally agreed best practices, promoting convergence of national practices and providing technical assistance to developing states.

Slaughter (2004, p. 132) propounds that the newfound density and coverage of networks makes them the 'foundation of a full-scale disaggregated world order'. As a framework, the sketch of a transgovernmental order has the advantage of conserving the state

as a key, albeit transformed, strand of power and authority. Transgovernmental networks help to address the dilemma of how to achieve collective action without prejudicing national sovereignty (Levi-Faur, 2012). Moreover, transgovernmental rules are devised and enforced by national-level organisations that are domestically accountable. Transgovernmentalism, which involves state actors operating at national, regional and international levels, may also offer insights into how the levels in multilevel governance models consort (Slaughter and Hale, 2011). Again, however, transgovernmentalism offers only a partial account of *global* governance. First, while it is acknowledged that transgovernmental networks operate in conjunction with existing international organisations, they underplay private actors. The ‘transgovernmental’ label is something of a misnomer for networks that, in many cases, are amalgams of government and private participants. Second, the thickness of transgovernmental relations wither outside the hallowed clubs of the advanced industrialised states. The OECD may be ‘the quintessential host of transgovernmental regulatory networks’ (Slaughter, 2004, p. 46), but has just 35 members, none of which are from Africa.

### <b>Neo-medievalism

Neo-medievalism surmises that the world is going ‘back to the future’ (Kobrin, 1998) because, rather than the orderly agglomeration of collective interests suggested by Westphalian geography, the contemporary world again resembles the crisscrossing and competing fiefdoms emblematic of the period of medieval Christendom (Ruggie, 1993). Jumbled boundaries and fissured loyalties are thought to jeopardise sovereignty, reducing the state to just one actor amongst many. Today, millions of people live in blissful ignorance of the identity of their sovereign rulers, answering instead to tribal elders, feudal landlords, mercenary commanders, religious leaders or corporate executives (Khanna, 2009).

The benefit of this perspective is that it conveys the fluidity and messiness of the prevailing landscape where issues are synchronously subject to several authority structures. Furthermore, by suggesting that territory is no longer the sole organising principle for governance, neo-medievalism is better able to account for the private ‘sovereignty-free’ (Rosenau, 1990) sources of power and authority. The neo-medieval slant is not free of difficulty, however. First, it overstates the changes in a manner analogous to the hyperglobalisers, with all the attendant dangers. Despite the state’s many vulnerabilities there are few areas where its power and authority do not operate. In areas where private actors appear to vie for superiority with states this often reflects a mix of ideology and goodwill on behalf of the latter. States also have the ascendancy where situations involve high risks, enforcement or the application of legitimate coercion. Second, neo-medievalism does not offer an alternative map. It presents governance structures as an undifferentiated mass offering few clues as to how this turbulent world can be understood, where power lies or how the system of global governance works. Like many general definitions of governance, neo-medievalism ‘tends to mix together all those involved on the international scene, without ranking their functions, the lines of authority and force that connect them, their political influence, or the nature of their specific contribution to regulatory structures’ (de Senarclens, 1998, p. 98). Finally, neo-medievalism reimposes the Eurocentrism of much social science theorising, taking European politics before the confinement of the modern nation state as its inspiration. Unfortunately, this has been the norm for a large part of the globe. By taking Europe as its starting point the neo-medievalists might be overstating past changes and thus overstating changes in the present.

### <a>CONCLUSION

This chapter has argued that globalis‘ation’ confronts directly the ‘national’, state-centred script dramatised by the twentieth century’s political scientists. Whereas ‘national’ approaches to politics believe that the mysteries of governance can be deciphered by probing states and their interactions, globalis‘ation’ points us towards plurality of other structures and

actors that, alongside states, possess the power and authority to contribute to management of our collective affairs. There are many aspects of world politics, particularly in the ambit of security and military affairs, where the power and authority of states reigns supreme and where inter-state relations do largely explain outcomes. Equally, there are provinces where the authority of the state is contested, compromised or delegated and where the slack is picked up by structures of authority from beyond the state system. The recognition that the ecology of global governance is more complicated than state-centred analyses insinuate is only the first step; the next is to evolve and refine analytical and theoretical models capable of depicting how the myriad of actors now recognised as agents of global governance interact. (Weiss and Wilkinson, 2014b). The models outlined in this chapter encapsulate only parts of the emergent tangle of power and authority in the global political system. Nonetheless, cartographers charting the changing contours of global governance increasingly agree that while the power and authority of states provide prominent coordinates, they do not define the map.

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