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Globalisation and the role of states: rethinking the contribution of Nicos Poulantzas

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In mainstream IR/IPE literature on the role of states in globalisation, debates oscillate between neo-realist state-centric assessments on the one hand, emphasising the continuing, almost exclusive centrality of states in the global economy, and liberal evaluations on the other, emphasising the retreat of the state in view of an ever more powerful market. There are interesting parallels within recent historical materialist literature, with some highlighting the necessary 'realist moment' in Marxist IR theory (e.g. Callinicos 2009), while others speak about the emergence of a transnational state (Robinson 2004).

In this paper, we will revisit this issue and develop an alternative position by drawing on the work of Nicos Poulantzas. This will allow us to incorporate globalisation and the related emergence of transnational class fractions in our conceptualisation, while asserting the continuing role of the state as a nodal point in the accumulation of surplus value at a global level.

References:

- Callinicos, Alex (2009) *Imperialism and Global Political Economy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Robinson, William I. (2004) *A Theory of Global Capitalism: Production, Class, and State in a Transnational World*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.