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Historicizing the New Institutionalism(s)

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NEW INSTITUTIONALISM in American political science is often characterized in relation to a certain periodization of academic political studies in the preceding century. According to this scheme, an old institutionalism was dominant from the late nineteenth century until well into the interwar years. In the 1950s behavioralism developed; it flourished as the disciplinary mainstream through the 1960s, only to wane in the 1970s. Emerging from reactions against behavioralism, the new institutionalism came into its own as a broad new paradigm underlying a range of cutting-edge research agendas during the 1980s.[1]

Such an account does capture certain elements of the discipline's past, but its schematic character is misleading. With regard to developments since the 1970s, it misleads in two ways. First, speaking of new institutionalism in singular terms suggests too much shared content among contemporary agendas. The diversity of the concerns and techniques that have come to be called institutionalist in recent decades is such that we should avoid imputing a single paradigm and instead recount a plurality of intellectual traditions. Second, speaking of new institutionalism as *new* and framing it against behavioralism obscures continuities between these institutionalist traditions and behavioral-era scholarship. While each tradition departs from earlier approaches in certain respects, the character and import of such departures differ significantly across the various new institutionalisms. Moreover, none of these traditions has yet to move beyond the broader currents of modernist empiricism and neopositivism, whose shared ascendancy within American political science was secured in the decades after the Second World War.

The typology of sociological, rational choice, and historical new institutionalisms given by Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor offers a useful entry

[1] The classic formulation of new institutionalism in these terms is James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life," *American Political Science Review* 78, no. 3 (1984): 734–49.

point for exploring the traditions at play here.[2] Their explication of this typology in the mid-1990s is, however, a late move within the series of developments we wish to historicize. In fact, none of the three identifying labels they employ had wide currency prior to the 1990s, although the "schools of thought" to which they attach these labels are each presented as having points of origin in the late 1970s.[3] This gap raises the question of how well their three types capture the concerns and perspectives of the earlier literatures that they associate with them.

Hall and Taylor's sociological institutionalism picks out a school of thought centered in organizational studies, and their rational choice institutionalism identifies a separate school located at the intersection of economics and political science. While these types might be further disaggregated, each does map onto a lineage of scholarship marked by clear conceptual and interpersonal connections. Each corresponds to a distinct tradition that can be narrated forward from a late-1970s origin involving the conscious promotion of a distinctive approach to institutional analysis. Thus, what is now called sociological institutionalism can be narrated as developing from the work of Stanford sociologist John Meyer, with the role of foundational text assigned to his 1977 article, coauthored with Brian Rowan, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony."[4] Likewise, what is now called rational choice institutionalism can be narrated forward from the work of two political scientists at Washington University in St. Louis, Kenneth Shepsle and Barry Weingast.[5] The role of foundational text here is perhaps best played by

[2] Peter A. Hall and Rosemary Taylor, "Political Science and the Three Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44 (1996): 936–57.

[3] Ibid., 936. In locating the earliest exemplars of the "new institutionalism" in the late 1970s, Hall and Taylor's account is congruent with self-narratives offered from within each of the schools they discuss. See Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol, "Historical Institutionalism in Contemporary Political Science," in *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, ed. Ira Katznelson and Helen V. Miller (New York: Norton, 2002); Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell, "Introduction," in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, ed. Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Kenneth A. Shepsle, "Studying Institutions: Some Lessons from the Rational Choice Approach," in *Political Science in History: Research Programs and Political Traditions*, ed. James Farr, John S. Dryzek, and Stephen T. Leonard (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[4] John W. Meyer and Brian Rowen, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony," *American Journal of Sociology* 83, no. 2 (1977): 340–63.

[5] Kenneth A. Shepsle, "Institutional Arrangements and Equilibrium in Multidimensional Voting Models," *American Journal of Political Science* 23, no. 1 (1979): 27–60; Barry R. Weingast, "A Rational Choice Perspective on Congressional Norms," *American Journal of Political Science* 23, no. 2 (1979): 245–62. Shepsle and Weingast went on to write a string of articles central for the development of rational choice institutionalism, many of them coauthored. See, for example, Kenneth A. Shepsle and Barry R. Weingast, "Structure-Induced Equilibria and Legislative Choice," *Public Choice* 37 (1981): 503–19; Kenneth A. Shepsle and Barry R. Weingast, "Institutionalizing Majority Rule: A Social Choice Theory

Shepsle's 1979 "Institutional Arrangements and Equilibrium in Multidimensional Voting Models," invoked in the following year by William Riker as the exemplar of what a "new kind of study of institutions might typically look like."[6]

The case of historical institutionalism is, however, different. More amorphous than either of their other two schools of thought, Hall and Taylor's historical institutionalism groups together works of scholarship guided by concerns and techniques so diverse that they may border on incompatibility. One can make the historical institutionalism map onto a single tradition only through a substantial retrospective reconfiguring of the character of earlier scholarship. Moreover, further reconfiguring would be needed if this agglomerative tradition were to be narrated as developing a distinct general approach to institutions that originated in the late 1970s. The claim to promote such an approach does not appear before the mid-1980s in any of the scholarship that Hall and Taylor locate under historical institutionalism. Earlier exemplars pursue agendas defined in substantive terms—as studies of revolution, of American political development, of corporatism and comparative political economy—not in terms of a new, general approach to the analysis of institutions. As late as 1985, we find the influential edited volume *Bringing the State Back In* engaging in alliance-building and agenda-setting efforts without framing its efforts in such terms.[7] Indeed, as we shall recount in this chapter, the rest of the 1980s was to pass before the notion crystallized of a distinctive school of historical institutionalism.

From the perspective of a radical historicist, this label itself also appears implausible. It may offer self-validation to one strategic grouping of scholars, but it provides little clarification of what, if anything, sets their work apart. If the label *historical* simply implies the minimal content of engaging the past, then historical studies are found in all three categories of Hall and Taylor's typology. If the label is instead meant to pick out and

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with Policy Implications," *American Economic Review* 72, no. 2 (1982): 367–72; Kenneth A. Shepsle and Barry R. Weingast, "When Do Rules of Procedure Matter?" *Journal of Politics* 46, no. 1 (1984): 206–21; Kenneth A. Shepsle and Barry R. Weingast, "The Institutional Foundations of Committee Power," *American Political Science Review* 81, no. 1 (1987): 85–104. For Shepsle's own account of the institutional turn in rational choice, see Shepsle, "Studying Institutions." On the earlier history of rational choice theory, see S. M. Amadae, *Rationalizing Capitalist Democracy: The Cold War Origins of Rational Choice Liberalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[6] Kenneth Shepsle, "Institutional Arrangements and Equilibrium in Multidimensional Voting Models," *American Journal of Political Science* 23, no. 1 (1979): 27–60. William H. Riker, "Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions," *American Political Science Review* 74, no. 2 (1980): 444.

[7] Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

valorize approaches sensitive to historical context, then arguably none of their three types of new institutionalism earn this label, since all engage the past from positions imbued with the analytic gaze and hopes around which modernist empiricism and neopositivism overlap.

In the first part of this chapter we examine the decade from 1975 to 1985, tracking the rise of scholarly agendas focused on the state and on international regimes. Both of these agendas would, in the mid-to-late 1980s, be retrospectively characterized as examples of new institutionalism, and enter into conversation and contestation with the rational choice tradition that had staked its own claim to embody a new institutionalism as early as 1980. We chart these shifts in the second part of the chapter, following them through to two developments of the early 1990s. The first development is the emergence of historical institutionalism as a rallying label under which diverse political scientists in comparative and American politics located and defended their work from the challenge of rational choice. The second is the emergence among international relations scholars of a constructivism that came to engage with the tradition of sociological institutionalism. In conclusion we return to Hall and Taylor's 1996 article, to highlight the payoffs that accrue from our own radical historicizing perspective on the new institutionalisms.

Before "New Institutionalism": The Study of States and International Regimes, 1975–1985

Two conceptual shifts stand out in scholarship of late 1970s and early 1980s: an upswing in use of the concept of the state across several literatures and the development of the concept of regimes in the field of international relations. Both shifts would later be recounted as early stages of new institutionalism, but neither was understood in such terms before the mid-1980s.

Neostatism: Bringing the Concept of the State Back In

During the 1950s and 1960s, the concept of the state was unfashionable in many parts of political science and political sociology. But in the mid-to-late 1970s the pendulum swung back as a new generation of scholars, working in a range of literatures, embraced the older concept.[8] This shift

[8] While proponents of the state concept did draw on the earlier work of Nettl and Bendix—see J. P. Nettl, "The State as a Conceptual Variable," *World Politics* 20, no. 4 (1968): 559–92; and Reinhard Bendix and others, eds., *State and Society: A Reader in Comparative Political Sociology* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968)—the major upswing of the concept can be dated from the appearance of several key books and articles in 1975/76: Charles Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European State-Making" and "Western State-Making and Theories of Political Transformation" in *The Formation of National States in Western Eu-*

presented itself in some cases as a rather minor event—a signal of engagement with perspectives that had never quite gone out of fashion. In other cases, it presented itself as the rallying cry of young scholars resisting prevailing orthodoxies and engaged with one or more of the neo-Marxist perspectives that had flourished in the prior decade: dependency theory, world-systems theory, and structural Marxist theories of the state.[9] The wave of state-centric books and articles that appeared in 1978–79 exemplify this range of attitudes and modes of self-presentation; they include Alfred Stepan, Guillermo O'Donnell's and Peter Evans's writings on Latin America, Stephen Krasner and Peter Katzenstein's works on international and comparative political economy, and Theda Skocpol and Ellen Kay Trimberger's studies of revolution.[10]

The turn to the state in these literatures occurred largely independently, with each turn marked by its own precursors and problematics. However, there were also parallels—such as a common emphasis on the importance of international contexts for domestic politics—and efforts were soon launched to bring the various strands of scholarship together. In February of 1982, a conference was convened at Mount Kisco in New York to consider the "research implications of current theories of the state." This conference led to the formation, under the auspices of the Social Science Research Council, of a research committee, the Committee on States and Social Structures, to promote the state as an orientating concept and as a

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rope, ed. Charles Tilly (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 3–83 and 601–38; Peter J. Katzenstein, "International Relations and Domestic Structures: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States," *International Organization* 30, no. 1 (1976): 1–45; Stephen D. Krasner, "State Power and the Structure of International Trade," *World Politics* 28, no. 3 (1976): 317–47.

[9] Andre G. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967); Immanuel M. Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic, 1974); Ralph Milibrand, *The State in Capitalist Society* (New York: Basic Books, 1969); Nicos Poulantzas, *Political Power and Social Classes*, trans. Timothy O'Hagan (London: New Left Books, 1973).

[10] Alfred Stepan, *The State and Society: Peru in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978); Guillermo O'Donnell, "Reflections on Patterns of Change in the Bureaucratic Authoritarian State," *Latin American Research Review* 13, no. 1 (1978): 3–38; Peter Evans, *Dependent Development: The Alliance of Multinational, State, and Local Capital in Brazil* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979); Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *Between Power and Plenty: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978); Stephen D. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Ellen Kay Trimberger, *Revolution from Above: Military Bureaucrats and Development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt and Peru* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1978).

subject matter of empirical research. The committee was chaired by two conference participants, Theda Skocpol and Peter Evans, and completed by six other participants: Charles Tilly, Ira Katznelson, Stephen Krasner, Peter Katzenstein, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Albert Hirschman. Revised versions of papers from the conference form the bulk of the committee's first publication, *Bringing the State Back In*, which appeared in 1985 under the editorship of Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol.[11]

The title of the volume was taken from the paper that Skocpol presented at the 1982 conference and that appeared in revised form as the volume's introductory chapter. This chapter combines the broad, if somewhat vague, imagery needed to frame the various state literatures as a single movement with the rhetorical charge needed to propound a programmatic agenda. It offers the image of an ongoing "intellectual sea change," with scholars turning away from "society-centered ways of explaining politics and governmental activities" and converging "on complementary arguments and strategies of analysis" that take seriously the role of states as actors.[12] Krasner offers a similar image in a 1984 review article that frames the new statism as a transformative shift away from pluralism and the general behavioral orientation within which pluralism had flourished.[13]

Such images presuppose that political science was dominated in the 1950s and 1960s by societally reductionist theories that did not consider states to be potentially autonomous actors.[14] But this view involves major simplifications. By centering their claim to novelty upon it, the neostatists left themselves vulnerable to criticism, especially from advocates of the approaches they were claiming to transcend.[15] Gabriel Almond, for one, took advantage of the opening to launch a stinging criticism of the new agenda as little more than a mere semantic shift passed off as a substantive

[11] See Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, "Preface," in Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, *Bringing the State*, vii–x.

[12] Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, *Bringing the State*, 3–4.

[13] Stephen D. Krasner, "Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics," *Comparative Politics* 16, no. 2 (1984): 223–46.

[14] Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, "Preface," vii. Skocpol herself recognized the difficulty of making this claim in a qualifying footnote that went on to exempt many of the leading scholars of the 1960s—Samuel Huntington, Seymour Martin Lipset, Reinhard Bendix, S. N. Eisenstadt, Stein Rokkan—from the characterization offered in the main text. Skocpol, "Bringing the State," 31 n. 7.

[15] In employing "neostatism" and "neostatists" as aggregating terms we draw on language employed by Ira Katznelson, one of the members of the SSRC committee. See Ira Katznelson, "The State to the Rescue? Political Science and History Reconnect," *Social Research* 59, no. 4 (1994): 719–37.

intellectual transformation only at the cost of caricaturing the disciplinary past and thereby obscuring hard-won insights.[16]

Neither the neostatist image of paradigmatic transformation nor Almond's counterimage captures particularly well the new scholarship's relation to its predecessors. Almond was correct to reject the notion that recognizing the potential autonomy of the state was any great departure; the neostatists were right, however, that their analytic approach broke with strands of behavioralism, though the break was rather more partial than they implied. What they rejected was specifically the mode of theorizing and techniques associated with neopositivist strands of behavioralism. They rejected structural-functional theorizing and, more broadly, the whole project of crafting general, universally applicable theory. They were also wary of cross-national comparative work that took the form of large-*N* statistical analysis. However, they retained the goal of developing theory that was empirical (in the sense of being independent of normative commitments) and centered on generating and testing hypotheses about recurring relations between prior conditions and outcomes. What they preferred to large-*N* statistical analysis was a program of small-*N* studies hedged in by "context," but also sufficiently "analytical" to generate and test "mid-range theory." *Bringing the State Back In* thus combines disavowal of any attempt to offer a general theory of the state, with promotion of this modernist empiricist strategy of "analytical induction." Skocpol's introduction and the three editors' conclusion advocate crafting midrange theory by using analytic categories to inductively generalize from small-*N* comparisons and case studies.[17]

The neostatists thus remained comfortably within the parameters on which modernist empiricists and neopositivists in political science had long found common ground: the use of analytic classification, the pursuit of empirical theory, and the rejection of explicitly normative pursuits. They were far from replicating the approach of the principle-generating comparative historians of the state that we met in Farr's contribution to

[16] Gabriel A. Almond, "The Return to the State," *American Political Science Review* 82, no. 3 (1988): 853–74.

[17] Skocpol, "Bringing the State"; Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, "On the Road toward a More Adequate Understanding of the State," in Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, *Bringing the State*. For further illustrations of this stance in the neostatist literature, see Peter J. Katzenstein, "Introduction," in Katzenstein, *Between Power and Plenty*; Theda Skocpol and Margaret R. Somers, "The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22, no. 2 (1980): 174–97; Ira Katznelson, "Working-Class Formation: Constructing Cases and Comparisons," in *Working-Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States*, ed. Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).

this volume, and their conception of the state differed correspondingly. It was not nineteenth-century ethical notions of the state and social science that most neostatists adhered to, but a reading of Weber centered narrowly on his effort to define the state "in terms which abstract from the values of the present day."[18]

Neostatism and the Study of American Political Development

Neostatism first took shape in comparative and international studies, but it soon began to make major inroads among political scientists specializing in "American Political Development" (APD). Scholars in this area had long engaged with the literature of comparative politics. Indeed, the APD label for their field of specialization is a legacy of 1960s' interchanges with the political development literature produced under the aegis of the Committee on Comparative Politics and discussed in Adcock's earlier chapter. Such engagement continued in the 1970s as the CCP's search for general theory fizzled and neostatism developed.[19]

In the late 1970s and early 1980s Cornell University and the University of Chicago stand out as sites of this cross-field engagement. At Cornell, it was exemplified in the work of Martin Shefter[20] and was further developed by Stephen Skowronek in the doctoral research underpinning his *Building a New American State*.[21] When Shefter visited Chicago in 1979–80, the department's chair, Ira Katznelson, and then graduate student Amy Bridges were working on two other classic books of the early 1980s APD literature—Bridges's *A City in the Republic* and Katznelson's *City*

[18] Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 56. As we discuss below, the work of Stephen Krasner stands aside somewhat from this general characterization.

[19] As discussed in chapter 10, this shift is well captured by Charles Tilly's editorship of the penultimate CCP volume. Tilly took his editorship as an opportunity to sharply critique the committee's pursuit of a general theory of political development and to promote the "state" as the locus of a new agenda. Tilly, "Reflections" and "Western State-Making."

[20] Martin Shefter, "Party, Bureaucracy, and Political Change in the United States," in *Political Parties: Development and Decay*, ed. Louis Maisel and Joseph Cooper (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1977); Martin Shefter, "Party and Patronage: Germany, England, and Italy," *Politics and Society* 7, no. 4 (1977): 403–52; Martin Shefter, "Regional Receptivity to Reform: The Legacy of the Progressive Era," *Political Science Quarterly* 98, no. 3 (1983): 459–83.

[21] Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). In his book's preface, Skowronek singles out two Cornell faculty for special thanks: Katzenstein for giving him his "first sense of the state" and Shefter for sharing his "insight into American political development." Skowronek, *Building*, x.

Trenches.[22] All three began to work together at this time on a comparative historical study of the working class that Katznelson was organizing with Aristide Zolberg.[23] The early 1980s also saw Theda Skocpol arrive at Chicago. While there she elaborated her own emerging concern with American political development, publishing a string of articles in the area with graduate students such as John Ikenberry, Ann Orloff, Margaret Weir, and Edwin Amenta.[24]

This network of scholars at Cornell and Chicago established the analytical approach, substantive concerns, and conceptual categories of neostatism as a cutting edge of scholarship in American political development. But their studies did not constitute the entirety of important new work in APD in the late 1970s and early 1980s. There also appeared, for example, Samuel Huntington's *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*, which brings the views of Louis Hartz and Walter Dean Burnham together with Huntington's earlier arguments in a synthesis of American political history centered on the interplay of ideals and institutions.[25] Lines of work

[22] Amy Bridges, *A City in the Republic: Antebellum New York and the Origins of Machine Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Ira Katznelson, *City Trenches: Urban Politics and the Patterning of Class in the United States* (New York: Pantheon, 1981). Katznelson's account of the origin of America's class relations would be reframed in the distinctive neostatist form of promoting a "state-centered explanation" over "society- and economy-centered" alternatives in *Bringing the State Back In*. See Ira Katznelson, "Working-Class Formation and the State: Nineteenth-Century England in American Perspective," in Evans, Rueschemeyer, Skocpol, *Bringing the State*, 257–84.

[23] Katznelson and Zolberg, *Working-Class Formation*. When this volume appeared in 1985 Katznelson and Zolberg were still colleagues, but now at the New School for Social Research in New York, where Charles Tilly had also recently moved. While there Tilly and Katznelson were key figures in the "Proseminar on State Formation and Collective Action" in which their colleague Richard Bensel tried out many of the issues that would be explored in his American Political Development classic, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of Central State Authority in America, 1859–1877* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[24] Skocpol began this turn in her research focus while at Harvard. See Theda Skocpol, "Political Responses to Capitalist Crisis: Neo-Marxist Theories of the State and the Case of the New Deal," *Politics and Society* 10, no. 2 (1980): 155–201; Theda Skocpol and Kenneth Finegold, "State Capacity and Economic Intervention in the Early New Deal," *Political Science Quarterly* 97, no. 2 (1982): 255–78. For its further development at Chicago, see Theda Skocpol and G. John Ikenberry, "The Political Formation of the American Welfare State in Historical and Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Social Research* 6 (1983): 87–148; Ann Shola Orloff and Theda Skocpol, "Why Not Equal Protection? Explaining the Politics of Public Social Spending in Britain, 1900–1911, and the United States, 1880s–1920," *American Sociological Review* 49, no. 6 (1984): 726–50; Margaret Weir and Theda Skocpol, "State Structures and the Possibilities for 'Keynesian' Responses to the Great Depression in Sweden, Britain, and the United States," in Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol, *Bringing the State*, 107–63; Theda Skocpol and Edwin Amenta, "States and Social Policies," *Annual Review of Sociology* 12 (1986): 131–57.

[25] Samuel P. Huntington, *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1981).

rooted in behavioral scholarship of the 1960s also continued to develop. There were thus, for example, important new contributions in the study of past electoral behavior and realignments and of the history of Congress.[26] Since Huntington's book and these other lines of work build on scholarship of the decades after the Second World War, it would be a mistake to see the study of American political development as somehow starting with the rise of neostatism.[27]

Krasner, the State, and Regimes

An account of the rise and diffusion of neostatism should be qualified not only by recognizing other currents in fields that it entered, but also by recognizing that the effort to weld together a single neostatist agenda did not eliminate differences among the scholars associated with it. Differences among them existed before the Committee on States and Social Structures came together, persisted through the committee's lifespan (1983–90), and led into divergent positioning in the 1990s. While developments from the mid-1980s on are explored later in this chapter, we highlight here some earlier differences elided in the introduction and conclusion of *Bringing the State Back In*. In those chapters the volume's editors pursue alliance building and agenda setting by translating other scholars' studies into the terms of a single perspective. To illuminate some differences muted in this process, we consider the late 1970s and early 1980s work of Stephen Krasner—who sat on the committee but did not contribute to *Bringing the State Back In*—as a contrast to the perspective of the most prominent neostatist, Theda Skopcol. Attention to Krasner's developing perspective leads us in turn to the rise of the concept of "regimes" in the study of international relations—a second shift of the 1975–85 decade that, like neostatism, would later be retrospectively perceived as an early stage of new institutionalism.

The substantive engagements and concerns of Krasner's *Defending the National Interest* (1978) lie at some remove from those which Skocpol

[26] On electoral behavior and realignment, see: Joel H. Silbey, Allan G. Bogue, and William H. Flanigan, eds., *The History of American Electoral Behavior* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978); James L. Sundquist, *Dynamics of the Party System: Alignment and Realignment of Political Parties in the United States* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1983). On congressional history, see: David W. Brady, Joseph Cooper, and Patricia Hurley, "The Decline of Party in the House of Representatives," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 4, no. 3 (1979): 381–407; Joseph Cooper and David W. Brady, "Institutional Context and Leadership Style: The House from Cannon to Rayburn," *American Political Science Review* 75, no. 2 (1981): 411–25; Joseph Cooper and David W. Brady, "Toward a Diachronic Analysis of Congress," *American Political Science Review* 75, no. 4 (1981): 988–1006.

[27] For such a narrative, see Katznelson, "The State to the Rescue?"

pursues in *States and Social Revolutions* (1979) and which she places at the core of neostatism in *Bringing the State Back In*. Where Skocpol's use of the state concept is informed by her reading of Weber and Hintze, Krasner distances himself from key aspects of Weber's approach to the state and makes no reference to Hintze. His conception is informed instead by Meinecke's work on reason of state and Pareto's differentiation of utility for and of the community.[28] In line with these influences, Krasner links the state with the national interest—understood as the "international analog" of "the public interest"[29]—in a fashion more reminiscent of those approaches Weber's definition broke with than of the Weberian stance favored by most neostatists.

Further differences between Krasner and Skocpol emerge in their contrasting responses to structural neo-Marxism. While Skocpol dismisses structural Marxism as failing to grasp the autonomy of the state,[30] Krasner treats it as a serious rival to his own state-centric realism. He acknowledges that both approaches can account for cases examined in *Defending the National Interest*, such that their "relative merits are most difficult to assess." In the end, he argues for the superiority of his approach on the ground that "the nonlogical manner in which American leaders pursued their anticommunism is not compatible with structural Marxism."[31] For Krasner their pursuit became nonlogical when it led to actions at odds with the pursuit of national interest, and he attributes this divergence to the impact of ideology. In doing so, he grants ideational factors a significant explanatory role, albeit one constrained by their place in a larger interest-based analytic framework. In contrast, Skopcol's *States and Social Revolutions* emphatically rejects modes of explanation centered on ideas, norms, or values.[32] It is hence unsurprising that when surveying Krasner's book in the introduction to *Bringing the State Back In*, Skocpol objects to its stress on "'nonrational' ideological objectives

[28] Krasner, *Defending the National Interest*, 42–43, 10–13.

[29] Ibid., 35–36.

[30] Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, 20. Skocpol repeated the charge that recent Marxist theorizing was inadequate in this regard in "Bringing the State," 20. This claim provoked a sharp reaction from neo-Marxists such as Paul Cammack in "Bringing the State Back In: A Polemic," Manchester Papers in Politics, Department of Government, University of Manchester, 1987. Cammack published an abbreviated version of this critique: "Dependency and the Politics of Development," in *Perspectives on Development: Cross-Disciplinary Themes in Development Studies*, ed. P. F. Lee ton and M. M. Minogue (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988).

[31] Krasner, *Defending the National Interest*, 332–33. See also 316, 15–16, 32–34.

[32] See esp. Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, chap. 1. Her chapter with Margaret Weir in *Bringing the State Back In* does take on ideas, but does so in order to reject arguments that give explanatory centrality to intellectual developments. Weir and Skocpol, "State Structures."

of state policy," and prefers instead to look to "geopolitical 'interests' " as the best counter to structural Marxist arguments.[33]

Krasner's concern with ideational factors and with constraints on the pursuit of national interests provides the backdrop to his growing engagement, through the late 1970s and early 1980s, with the developing literature on international regimes. The concept of regimes, like that of the state, recalls the political science of an earlier era, but overall it had fared better in the behavioral era. Thus, for example, David Easton, an articulate behavioralist critic of the state concept, gives "regime" a major role in his 1965 *A Systems Analysis of Political Life*. He characterizes a regime as a set of constraints on political interaction with three elements: "values (goals and principles), norms, and structure of authority."[34] While applied to domestic rather than international politics, Easton's characterization hews closely in content to the notion of regime later favored by Krasner, as well as that of John Ruggie, who is often credited with introducing the concept to the study of international relations in the mid-1970s. Ruggie's early work in this area stresses "mutual expectations, generally agreed-to rules, regulations and plans in accordance with which organizational energies and financial commitments are allocated." Working with Ernst Haas at the University of California, Berkeley, he deployed the concept to analyze a type of "collective response" that both saw taking place in the international system in relation to technological and environmental issues.[35]

During the late 1970s the regime concept was taken up by international relations scholars working from a range of perspectives. Two conferences in the area led to a 1982 special issue of *International Organization*, which was in turn published as a volume edited by Krasner. When Krasner sets out, in the opening chapter of *International Regimes*, to group the volume's contributing scholars into schools, he places Ruggie alongside Robert Keohane, and implicitly himself, under a middle-ground stance of "modified" structural realism.[36] In doing so, he—like Skocpol and her coeditors in *Bringing the State Back In*—elides differences that would lead into divergent positioning during the subsequent rise of new institutionalism in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

[33] Skocpol, "Bringing the State," 34 n. 36.

[34] David Easton, *A Systems Analysis of Political Life* (New York: Wiley, 1965), 193.

[35] John G. Ruggie, "International Responses to Technology: Concepts and Trends," *International Organization* 29, no. 3 (1975): 569, 558, 567–68. See also Ernest B. Haas, "On Systems and International Regimes," *World Politics* 27, no. 2 (1975): 147–74.

[36] Stephen D. Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables," in *International Regimes*, ed. Stephen D. Krasner (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 1–21.

The divergence that would later take shape as the regimes literature evolved to become yet another institutions literature is foreshadowed in *International Regimes*, but by Ruggie's contribution rather than by Krasner's overview. Ruggie locates his approach to regimes against rather than within realism and specifically contrasts it to the approach he sees as played out in Krasner's and Kenneth Waltz's work. He suggests that Krasner and Waltz engage regimes only within the constraints of a narrow emphasis on power. He maintains, as a contrast, that the study of regimes should treat political authority as a "fusion of power with legitimate social purpose," and holds that this perspective sets his own work apart.[37] The study of regimes should, Ruggie believes, go beyond analyzing the use of power to pursue interests, to focus also on international ideational processes that he sees shaping state actors' understandings of what their interests are in the first place. The thrust of his stance had already been evident in his mid-1970s work, where he drew on Foucault's concept of episteme to argue that the development of regimes "involves not only the institutional grid of the state and of the international political order, through which behavior is acted out, but also epistemes through which political relationships are visualized."[38]

The import of the distinction made by Ruggie would become evident later in the 1980s as the concept of regime began to give way before the increasingly popular language of institutions. In an influential 1988 essay, Robert Keohane would, as we recount below, make a distinction parallel to Ruggie's, but reframe it as a contrast between two approaches to "international institutions."[39] The more thoroughgoing ideational approach, of which Ruggie's work was narrated as the prime early exemplar, would in turn, in the early 1990s, come to be labeled *constructivism*.

[37] John G. Ruggie, "International Regimes, Transactions and Change: Embedded Liberalism in the Postwar Economic Order," in Krasner, *International Regimes*, 198. Krasner's own approach to regime analysis was further fleshed out in his 1985 *Structural Conflict*, which explored north-south tensions between developing and developed nations. Krasner persisted there in a realist line of emphasis, seeing states as making decisions in pursuit of their national interest. He suggested that developing countries had consistently endorsed principles and norms that legitimate authoritative allocation based on the decisions of states rather than market allocation based on the endowments and preferences of private actors, not because they preferred "control to wealth" but because such "authoritative regimes can provide them with both, whereas market oriented ones cannot." Stephen D. Krasner, *Structural Conflict: The Third World against Global Liberalism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 5.

[38] Ruggie, "International Responses," 569.

[39] Robert O. Keohane, "International Institutions: Two Approaches," *International Studies Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (1988): 379–96.

Constructing and Contesting the "New Institutionalism(s)," 1984–1996

The discourse of a new approach to institutions has held currency among rational choice scholars in political science at least since Riker's announcement of it in 1980. Talk of such an agenda did not enter the conversation of most other political scientists, however, until after the publication of James March and Johan Olsen's "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life" in the *American Political Science Review* in 1984. Within a few years, the phrase swept the discipline such that by the late 1980s, all manner of intellectual traditions were claiming to embody it in one form or another. The resulting confusion and contestation in turn spurred a series of efforts to differentiate and defend various new institutionalisms. It is our goal here to follow the dynamic of these developments, tracing the spread of new institutionalist discourse and the subsequent emergence in the early 1990s of historical institutionalism and constructivism as rallying points for scholars propounding alternatives to rational choice.

The origins of much of the confusion enveloping "the new institutionalism" lie in the article that popularized this phrase. March and Olsen there lift the new approaches to institutions within organizational sociology and rational choice out of the specific intellectual contexts in relation to which each developed and instead narrate them as exemplars of a generic paradigm shift toward a new institutionalism whose further development they wish to promote.[40] Their new institutionalism not only incorporates these two independent, divergent approaches, but also encompasses other recent agendas, such as neostatism. In constructing such a broad new institutionalism, March and Olsen rely on a caricature of the "basic vision" purported to have dominated political science since around 1950. The vision provides a straw man in contrast to which the diverse—even incompatible—character of various streams of recent scholarship is obscured. But without this caricature, the appearance of commonalities, as well as the supposed novelty of some of this scholarship, dissipates,

[40] James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life," *American Political Science Review* 78, no. 3 (1984): 734–49. The "new" institutionalism in organizational sociology understood itself as such in contrast to the "old" approach taken by postwar sociologists especially Talcott Parsons and Philip Selznick. The "new" institutionalism in rational choice originated as a corrective to earlier approaches to formal modeling that had not incorporated institutional structure. Contrary to the implications of March and Olsen's grand narrative, a reaction specifically against behavioralist scholarship in political science does not seem to have been an important factor in the intellectual genesis of either of these two "new" institutionalisms."

leaving no grand paradigm shift to promote. Both in its agenda-setting function and in its dubious content, March and Olsen's image of the decades after the Second World War shares much with the image of a societally reductionist intellectual past offered by Skocpol in *Bringing the State Back In*. However, as we earlier noted, while that volume would later be cited as a key new institutionalist work, it did not frame itself in such terms.

The notion of promoting a general approach to institutions instead makes its appearance in the discourse of neostatism with Krasner's review article "Approaches to the State." Krasner here parallels Skocpol's imagery by contrasting statist and pluralist orientations, but his frequent recurrence to the language of institutions also makes his article far closer to March and Olsen's rhetoric of a new institutionalism.[41] Krasner's review interprets several statist works as being oriented around a common question, framed in the language of institutions: "How do institutional structures change in response to alterations in domestic and international environments and then in subsequent time periods influence these environments?"[42] This framing constructs parallels between young neostatists and the older tradition of institutional political science with a macroqualitative bent long prominent at Harvard. Thus Krasner remarks that Skowronek's *Building a New American State* "complements the work of other scholars, such as Huntington and Hartz."[43] In seeking to flesh out characteristics of a broad institutional approach under which these various scholars might be grouped, Krasner emphasizes a shared concern with the contrast "between periods of institutional creation and periods of institutional stasis." Drawing on evolutionary biology, he suggests that such historical patterns may be conceptualized in terms of "punctuated equilibrium."[44] Though his terminology is novel, the ease with which Krasner groups neostatists together with exemplars of a long established approach sits rather awkwardly alongside his claim that neostatism sets "a different agenda" for research by taking institutions seriously.[45]

[41] Krasner's intermediary position fits with the fact that, in addition to reading and commenting on the 1982 Skocpol paper that was published in revised form as the introduction to *Bringing the State Back In*, he also had provided comments on the March and Olsen article (he and James March were colleagues at Stanford).

[42] Krasner, "Approaches to the State," 224.

[43] Ibid., 238. Though Krasner does not emphasize this, there is more than chance underlying the parallels here. Indeed, by following up the chains of intellectual influence, it would be easy to suggest that much (though not all) of neostatism could be narrated as simply one offshoot of this established tradition.

[44] Ibid., 240.

[45] Ibid., 243.

An urge to conceptual novelty helped bring the state to prominence between the mid-1970s and the early 1980s, but by the mid-to-late 1980s the initial excitement associated with the concept was fading, and lines of substantive work associated with neostatism turned increasingly to the rising discourse of institutionalism. This shift was more than terminological. It reflected growing skepticism about the substantive payoff of efforts to bring the state back in. Scholars working with an analytic approach and substantive concerns typical of neostatism, such as Peter Katzenstein and Peter Gourevitch, now qualified or questioned the amount of explanatory burden that can be carried by such notions as state autonomy.[46] As the novelty of a statist agenda wore off, the relation between neostatism and other strands of scholarship opened up for reshaping. In particular, as suggested by Krasner's comments placing Skowronek in relation to Huntington and Hartz, many works pursuing the young agenda could be renarrated as partaking of a perspective that was less novel than a continuation of an older tradition especially associated with Harvard's Government Department and the works of Louis Hartz, Samuel Huntington, and Samuel Beer. While that tradition's concern with ideas alongside institutions placed it in contrast to certain variants of neostatism—such as Skocpol's structuralism—it was compatible with, and indeed had helped to generate, other variants of neostatism. The potential for combining the "ideas and institutions" thrust of the older tradition with elements of neostatism is well displayed in the mid-to-late 1980s works of Beer's student Peter Hall, who brings a distinctive concern with ideas into neostatist discussions of comparative political economy.[47]

In the face of the relative eclipse of the state as a rallying point for explanatory efforts and the potential for reshaping allegiances, the vague term "institutionalism" appealed broadly as a concept around which to reframe and promote substantive agendas and analytical perspectives. In the mid-to-late 1980s, following Krasner's turn to the discourse of institutionalism and March and Olsen's christening of her work as an example

[46] The notion plays little role in Peter J. Katzenstein, *Small States in World Markets: Industrial Policy in Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985); its limited explanatory payoff is argued by Peter A. Gourevitch, *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986). For more on the rise and decline of the state autonomy agenda, see Ronald Rogowski, "Comparative Politics," in *The State of the Discipline II*, ed. Ada Finifter (Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, 1993), 439–41.

[47] In addition to Hall's career-making *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), see also Peter A. Hall, "Conclusion: The Politics of Keynesian Ideas," in *The Political Power of Economic Ideas*, ed. Peter A. Hall (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 351–91.

of it, Skocpol came to identify her approach with new institutionalism.[48] The field of American political development in which her research was increasingly centered also picked up the mantle more broadly at this point. Thus, in 1986, we find Skowronek and Karen Orren, coeditors of the new journal *Studies in American Political Development*, explicitly presenting that journal's creation as part of the ongoing rise of new institutionalism.[49] By 1988, new institutionalist language was also diffusing to the field of public law and becoming increasingly prevalent within the field of international relations.[50]

The spread of new institutionalist discourse, and the remaking of intellectual identities associated with it, raised the question of how far the realignment and reshaping of traditions and agendas would go. As we have suggested, the line between neostatism and the older ideas and institutions tradition blurred in the mid-1980s to produce a shared tradition of institutionalism with a macrohistorical, qualitative bent. In the late 1980s further realignment took shape in relation to strands of historical work rooted in behavioralism.[51] The first volume of *Studies in American Political Development* includes an article by Samuel Kernell, squarely behavioralist in its use of time series and content analysis techniques.[52] The appearance of the article in the new journal suggests a concern to reach across previous fracture lines in support of a spectrum of modernist empiricist approaches to the past. This effort took on an increasingly established form in succeeding years as Amy Bridges and David Brady led an

[48] Skocpol was using the language of new institutionalism by early 1987. See the comments reporting on Skocpol's talk to the 1987 Midwest Political Science Association in Margaret Levi, "Theories of Historical and Institutional Change," *PS* 20, no. 3 (1987): 684–88, 687.

[49] Karen Orren and Steven Skowronek, "Editor's Preface," *Studies in American Political Development* 1 (1986): vii–viii.

[50] Rogers M. Smith, "Political Jurisprudence, the 'New Institutionalism,' and the Future of Public Law," *American Political Science Review* 82, no. 1 (1988): 89–108; Keohane, "International Institutions"; G. John Ikenberry, "Conclusion: An Institutional Approach to American Foreign Economic Policy," in *The State and American Foreign Policy*, ed. G. John Ikenberry, David A. Lake, and Michael Mastanduno (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988). This edited volume was the result of a collaborative project (encouraged by Katzenstein and Krasner) that had begun with two conferences in 1985. In addition to Ikenberry's conclusion, the chapters by Judith Goldstein and Stephen Haggard exemplify the shift from statist to institutionalist discourses ongoing as this project moved from initial conferences through to publication.

[51] On the effort to bring together the neostatist tradition with the tradition of historically oriented work growing out of behavioralism, see David Brian Robertson, "The Return to History and the New Institutionalism in American Political Science," *Social Science History* 17, no. 1 (1993): 1–36.

[52] Samuel Kernell, "The Early Nationalization of Political News in America," *Studies in American Political Development* 1 (1986): 255–78.

effort to establish a new organized APSA section—the "History and Politics" section, which formally took wing in 1990.

The new section suggests the extent to which intellectual identities, allegiances, and lines of debate had been reshaped since the heyday of neostatism. The earlier neostatist tendency to self-define by contrast to pluralism and behavioralism declined as macroqualitative studies became increasingly allied alongside historically oriented strands of behavioralism. Conversation and cooperation here was facilitated by a shared modernist empiricist concern to approach the past in an inductive manner, sufficiently analytic enough to count as social scientific and thus also well removed from the historicism typical of most historians. While historians, especially those with a proclivity to flirt with postmodern heresies, provided an extradisciplinary "other" against which to negotiate some conversations across previous fracture lines, the situation proved more charged with regard to the rising tradition of rational choice. The second volume of *Studies in American Political Development* (1987) included a pair of articles with a rational choice orientation,[53] thereby suggesting some potential for a cooperative relationship. There was, however, also ample potential for contestation, since the application of rational choice theory's neopositivist deductive logic to historical materials could be seen as posing a challenge to the macroqualitative and behavioral traditions' more inductive, modernist-empiricist approaches.

The Challenge of Rational Choice and the Crafting of "Historical Institutionalism"

Multiple strands within rational choice scholarship had converged by the late 1980s, presenting other traditions in political science with a dynamic, self-confident rival that was enriching its technical base while also expanding its substantive scope. First, there were new developments within the strand of more formalized theoretical work, whose turn to modeling political institutions in the late 1970s provides the rational choice tradition with its proprietary claim to be the first self-conscious new institutionalism to emerge within political science. In the early 1980s this strand, exemplified in the work of such figures as Barry Weingast, expanded its repertoire of concepts and tools to draw on the new economics of organization associated with such economists as Oliver Williamson.[54] Further

[53] See Terry M. Moe, "Interests, Institutions, and Positive Theory: The Politics of the NRLB," *Studies in American Political Development* 2 (1987): 236–99; J. Hansen, "Choosing Sides: The Creation of an Agricultural Policy Network in Congress, 1919–1932," *Studies in American Political Development* 2 (1987): 183–229.

[54] On the "new economics of organization" literature see the overview by Terry Moe, which closes by discussing the emerging political science applications of this approach, and in particular Weingast's employment of principal-agent models. Terry M. Moe, "The

cross-disciplinary exchange followed after leading economic historian Douglass C. North joined Weingast and others at Washington University in St. Louis in 1983.[55] The charge that the developing positive theory of political institutions was only concerned with contemporary American institutions became increasingly less plausible toward the end of the decade as Weingast, in coauthorship with North, started to work on historical material.[56]

A different road to a similar destination was taken by a second strand in the rational choice tradition: the less formalized use of rational choice perspectives in comparative politics that built particularly on Mancur Olson's arguments about collective action. This perspective was pioneered in the late 1970s in Samuel Popkin's *The Rational Peasant* and further developed in the early 1980s in Robert Bates's *Markets and States in Tropical Africa* and *Essays on the Political Economy of Rural Africa*.[57] Like some leading neostatists, Popkin and Bates were substantively concerned with the state, peasants, and conflict in relation to large-scale processes of political and economic change, and analytically they also sought to navigate a course away from the structural-functionalism prominent in comparative politics during the behavioral era. But the course they charted diverges sharply from that taken by neostatists like Skocpol, who retained structural-functionalism's concern to generate theory at the macrolevel while rejecting neopositivist's universalizing goal. Popkin and Bates, in contrast, retained the goal while breaking away from the macro-

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New Economics of Organization," *American Journal of Political Science* 28, no. 4 (1984): 739–77.

[55] In an autobiographical statement, North explains that he was drawn to Washington University by the "exciting group of young political scientists and economists who were attempting to develop new models of political economy." See Douglass C. North, "Autobiography, Nobel Lecture Banquet Speech," retrieved August 8, 2003, from www.nobel.se/economics/laureates/1993/north-autobio.html. The success of the group of rational choice scholars at Washington University is suggested by the fact that when Shepsle left there in 1986, it was for Harvard, and when Weingast left it was for Stanford. During the 1990s, both went on to chair their respective departments.

[56] Douglass C. North and Barry R. Weingast, "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England," *Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 4 (1989): 803–32; Paul R. Milgrom, Douglass C. North, and Barry R. Weingast, "The Role of Institutions in the Revival of Trade: The Law Merchant, Private Judges, and the Champagne Fairs," *Economics and Politics* 2, no. 1 (1990): 1–23.

[57] Samuel L. Popkin, *The Rational Peasant: The Political Economy of Rural Society in Vietnam* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979); Robert H. Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa: The Political Basis of Agricultural Policies* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1981). Bates's book was the first publication in the California Series on Social Choice and Political Economy, edited by Brian Barry and Samuel Popkin. Bates singles out Popkin for special thanks in his acknowledgments. Bates, *Markets and States*, xi.

orientation to rely instead on microlevel theory and, in particular, rational choice theory. Their "collective-choice school of political economy" quickly took up the institutionalist language already developing elsewhere in the rational choice tradition. By 1983 Bates was identifying institutions as the core concern of this school.[58] Though Popkin and Bates do engage the past, the full historical ambition of this strand of scholarship only became evident a few years later, with the 1988 publication of Margaret Levi's *Of Rule and Revenue*.[59] Levi's broad temporal scope surpasses that of any neostatist, encompassing cases from Republican Rome, Middle Age Europe, and early-modern Britain, in addition to twentieth-century Australia.

By the late 1980s, multiple strands of rational choice scholarship were thus converging on a self-consciously new institutionalist approach increasingly confident in its ability to take on the historical concerns claimed as home turf by the neostatists, who were, at the same time, busy renarrating themselves as new institutionalists. The lines of potential conflict here were evident in 1987, when the political economy section of the Midwest Political Science Association hosted a "roundtable on theories of historical and institutional change."[60] With Katznelson and Skocpol on the one side, and Bates and Levi on the other, the roundtable brought out tensions between structuralism and methodological individualism, inductive comparative case studies, and neopositivist deductive theory, which would define debates for years to come. These tensions came out more fully in Levi's "Bringing People Back into the State," published as an appendix to *Of Rule and Revenue*. Levi here criticizes neostatism for an excessive structuralism in which "individuals become little more than the embodiment of the structures they represent," while also suggesting that Skocpol's modernist empiricist strategy of "stockpiling case studies" is "not the solution." She argues that the success of a "new macro-comparative history" requires greater attention to "micro-foundations" and points to rational choice theory as the best available tool for the job.[61] From Levi's standpoint as a rational choice institutionalist, it seemed obvious that

[58] Robert H. Bates, *Essays on the Political Economy of Rural Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 134–47.

[59] Margaret Levi, *Of Rule and Revenue* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988). Levi's book appeared in the ongoing series edited by Popkin and Barry (and now also Bates) that had begun with Bates's 1981 book. Levi dedicated the book to Douglass North, who had heavily influenced her while they were cofaculty at the University of Washington, before his move to Washington University in St. Louis.

[60] Levi, "Historical and Institutional Change," 687.

[61] Levi, *Of Rule*, 197. For more arguments along the same lines, see also Michael Taylor, "Structure, Culture and Action in the Explanation of Social Change," *Politics and Society* 17, no. 2 (1989): 115–62.

more rigorous attention to the microlevel was needed to make theoretical sense out of the kind of macrocomparative historical studies that neostatists and their emerging successors produced.

The challenge that rational choice scholars came to pose by the late 1980s seems to have provided the final thrust that led some scholars to differentiate among competing variants of new institutionalism. While earlier discussions among neostatists and their associates had spelled out attributes that would now come to be associated specifically with "historical" institutionalism, they did so without employing that label or framing their approach in contrast to rational choice. The label begins to appear only as the counterpart to conscious efforts to differentiate and defend this approach from the rational choice tradition. In January of 1990, Skocpol, Hall, Weir and a number of other scholars gathered in Boulder, Colorado, for a workshop organized to highlight "common analytic themes" in their new institutionalism.[62] The conference led to *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*, a volume that appeared in 1992 under the editorship of three younger scholars, Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth. While mainly framed by its editors in relation to debates in comparative politics, the volume's contributors cross subfields, repeatedly engaging American political development.[63] In their opening essay, Thelen and Steinmo narrate historical institutionalism in two ways: first, in terms of the sweeping aggregations of the stylized sequence of old institutionalism, behavioralism, and new institutionalism; and second, in terms of a contrast within new institutionalism between traditions of rational choice and historical institutionalism. The term "historical institutionalism" is credited to Skocpol, and presented as being intended "to distinguish this variant of institutionalism from the alternative, rational choice."[64]

Since, as we have seen, rational choice scholars were already confidently addressing the past, the "historical" adjective here could only serve a differentiating purpose if meant to imply more than this. The introduc-

[62] See the preface to Sven Steinmo, Kathleen Thelen, and Frank Longstreth, *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), ix–x.

[63] Of the volume's seven substantive chapters, three treated aspects of American political development in a paired comparison with one other country (see chapters by Colleen Dunlavy, Victoria Hattam, and Desmond King), and Margaret Weir's chapter focused on American developments alone.

[64] Kathleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," in Steinmo, Thelen, and Longstreth, *Structuring Politics*, 1–32. The specific attribution of the "historical institutionalism" term to Skocpol comes in fn. 4, p. 28. Notably, the emphasis on this term seems to have developed only at or after the conference, which was itself entitled "The New Institutionalism: State, Society, and Economy in Advanced Industrial Societies."

tion of the term appears as a preemptive attempt to claim for one group of scholars the right to judge what it means to be historical and, in particular, to draw the boundary of the historical so as to exclude rational choice with its universalizing microtheory. Key to this boundary-drawing endeavor is the belief that a historical approach treats people's motives and actions as dependent on particular institutional settings.[65] This emphasis on the role played by social and institutional contexts in structuring individuals' preferences and choices can, however, be taken only so far, before calling into question the practices of abstraction and comparison necessitated by the goal of using analytical induction to generate and test mid-range empirical theory. In its allegiance to a modernist empiricist *tertium quid* in which context and comparison can both be appealed to,[66] but neither taken so far as to bring out its potential contradiction with the other, the emerging school of historical institutionalism inherited the analytical stance and theoretical aporias of earlier neostatism. While a distinctive rational choice institutionalism can be identified by its use of specific forms of microtheory, the self-proclaimed historical institutionalism follows neostatism in evading, or being opportunistically pluralistic, about theoretical issues. This is one of several interpersonal and conceptual connections between neostatism and historical institutionalism—exemplified in the central role played by Skocpol and macrohistorical small-*N* analysis in both groupings. Such connections explain why, when historical institutionalists claim *Bringing the State Back In* as a founding document, they are largely correct to do so, even though there is something curiously anachronistic about giving that status to an edited volume in which the discourse of new institutionalism is itself absent.

Historical institutionalism, however, also differs from neostatism in ways that reflect the other strands on which it draws. Thus, while much of neostatism tends to a form of structuralism that gives little weight to ideas, norms, or values as independent explanatory variables, historical institutionalism takes a different approach that makes Hall's work, rather than Skocpol's, perhaps its best exemplar. Thelen and Steinmo, in their introductory essay, identify "ideational innovation," albeit within "institutional constraints," as a previously neglected area that offers a new "frontier" for historical institutionalists.[67] By the time that Hall himself,

[65] See for the example the emphasis that Thelen and Steinmo place on the role of "institutional context" in shaping individuals goals and preferences in their effort to spell out points of divergence between historical and rational choice institutionalists. Ibid., 7–10.

[66] See for example, Thelen's later articulation, along with coauthor Richard Locke, of the notion of "contextualized comparisons." Richard M. Locke and Kathleen Thelen, "Apples and Oranges Revisited: Contextualized Comparisons and the Study of Comparative Labor Politics," *Politics and Society* 23, no. 3 (1995): 337–67.

[67] Thelen and Steinmo, "Historical Institutionalism," 22–26.

together with Taylor, came, a few years later, to offer his own presentation of historical institutionalism, we find attention to the role of ideas being incorporated as a key feature meant to differentiate this school from other new institutionalisms.[68] Another distinctive change, central to the very emergence of historical institutionalism as a self-conscious grouping, is the shifting of the outside "other" in contrast to which the identity of the group is contrasted and negotiated. The role once played by historically questionable images of the behavioral-era past comes to be played by unnuanced aggregate images of rational choice scholarship.

Alternative Trajectories

The move to a self-identified historical institutionalism was not, however, the only path forward from neostatism. While discussions in both comparative politics and American political development in the early 1990s tended to follow this path, some scholars rejected the invitation to approach rational choice as a new other against which to reframe and rearticulate their identity and allegiances. Thus, for example, when Martin Shefter republished several of his articles as a book in 1994, he identified with a "state-centered approach" and the "new institutionalism" as broadly presented by March and Olsen, but rejected a notion of competing new institutionalisms in favor of a cooperative framing of the relation between attention to "strategic choices" and to "macro-historical context."[69]

Alternative trajectories in the early 1990s were particularly prominent in the field of international relations. Here historical institutionalism failed to catch on as a self-identification even for scholars who had served alongside Skocpol on the SSRC Committee on States and Social Structures. Thus while Krasner's early discussions of path dependence and punctuated equilibrium proved popular with budding historical institutionalists, his own later work does not frame itself in historical institutionalist terms. Particularly interesting here is the path taken by a further committee member, Peter Katzenstein, whose work up through the mid-1980s is usually invoked alongside Hall's and Skocpol's as foundational for historical institutionalism.[70] He has played at most a minor role in

[68] Hall and Taylor, "Three Institutionalisms," 942.

[69] Martin Shefter, *Political Parties and the State: The American Historical Experience* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3.

[70] Steinmo, Thelen and Longstreth, "Preface," *Structuring Politics*, ix. At the outset of this volume, Katzenstein's work is folded in with that of Hall and Skocpol as representing the historical institutionalist side of the "new" institutionalism. See p. 1. While not a contributor to the volume, Katzsenstein did attend the Colorado conference in 1990 out of which it grew.

articulating and defending this new grouping. In part this may be attributed to the fact that, by the late 1980s, his substantive engagements had moved largely into the field of international relations, where this self-identification carried little weight. It should also be seen, however, in relation to Katzenstein's moves within international relations debates, where he came down on the side of Ruggie.[71]

The set of intellectual conversations and alignments that Katzenstein took up hew closely to the tradition of scholarship in international relations that follows from Ruggie's version of the regime concept. As discussed earlier, by the mid-1980s, Ruggie was seeking to differentiate his approach to regimes from that of Krasner and others who came to the concept later. In a 1986 article, coauthored with Frederic Kratochwil, Ruggie further articulates his stance, emphasizing the social construction of the identities and interests of states making up an international regime, and the corresponding normative and "inescapable intersubjective quality" of such a regime.[72] Contrasting his stance to that of realists—who he holds approach international organizations in terms of a static structure of regulative rules—Ruggie presents the conduct of states as governed by an identity based system of potentially transformative constitutive as well as regulative rules. In so doing, he frames his stance as an "interpretive" challenge to the "positivist" focus within international organizations theory, which he fears had come to dominate regime analysis.[73]

Critical efforts to engage Ruggie's variant of regime analysis in the late 1980s overlapped with the diffusion of institutionalism discourse into the study of international relations, such that in the course of these efforts, the debate was reframed in the terms of contrasting approaches to international institutions. It is in such terms that Robert Keohane, in 1988, presents Ruggie's work as exemplifying one of two approaches in IR literature on institutions. He characterizes it as a "reflective" approach and, while holding out hope for eventual synthesis, juxtaposes it to an alternative "rationalistic" approach, which he characterizes as intertwined with the developing tradition of rational choice and as displayed in his own

[71] Peter J. Katzenstein, "Die neue Institutionalismus und internationale Regime: Amerika, Japan und Westdeutschland in der internationalen Politik" in *Macht und Ohnmacht politischer Institutionen*, ed. Hans-Hermann Hartwich (Westdeutscher Verlag, 1989). The intellectual exchange here goes back several years with pointers of the path Katzenstein was to take already evident in his 1985 book. In the book's preface he noted his participation in colloquiums organized by Ruggie; while in the text he praised Ruggie's contribution to the Krasner volume on regimes and made "ideology" one of three components of his own key concept of "democratic corporatism." Katzenstein, *Small States*, 13, 78, 87–89.

[72] Friedrich Kratochwil and John G. Ruggie, "International Organization: A State of the Art on an Art of the State," *International Organization* 40, no. 4 (1986): 764.

[73] Ibid., 765–66.

work, along with that of Douglass North and Krasner. According to Keohane, in either approach the concept of institution might be critiqued for its "fuzziness."[74] But despite such concerns, the institution concept was clearly on the ascendant at this time, and in the 1990s, it largely supplants that of regime.[75]

While the discourse of institutionalism used by Keohane thus embodied a larger trend, his particular label for Ruggie's approach did not persist. It was soon supplanted by the alternative term *constructivism*, as promoted by Alexander Wendt in an influential 1992 article. Wendt uses the term to label a "cognitive, intersubjective" tradition associated with Ruggie's work, which he also contrasts with a competing "rationalist-behavioralist" tradition.[76] In doing so he presents and propounds a constructivist approach to institutions as "fundamentally cognitive entities" and to "institutionalization" as "a process of internalizing new identities and interests."[77] While Wendt draws largely on older sociological work, especially by G. H. Mead, the perspective on institutions that he articulates is also suggestive of that developed since the late 1970s within organizational sociology. In the mid-1990s this incipient connection was fleshed out, bringing a third new institutionalism—sociological institutionalism—into play in political science.

In the mid-1990s, Peter Katzenstein teamed up with Wendt and several other younger scholars to produce the edited volume *The Culture of National Security*. Katzenstein, in his introduction to this volume, spells out disagreements with the path dependency approach of Krasner's punctuated equilibrium and also invokes sociological institutionalism as a key, third angle to the institutionalism debates in political science. He showcases the perspectives on culture and identity associated with sociological

[74] Keohane, "International Institutions," 379, 382.

[75] In the recent *Handbook of International Relations* Beth Simmons and Lisa Martin criticize the regime literature as having given rise to "such definitional confusion that scholars in the 1990s have sought a simpler conception as well as a new label" and claim that "[t]he word 'institution' has now largely replaced 'regime' in the scholarly IR literature." Beth A. Simmons and Lisa Martin, "International Organizations and Institutions," in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth A. Simmons (London: Sage, 2002), 6. There does not, however, seem to be anything more confusing about the definition of regimes than that of institutions, though identifying it in terms of a set of principles, norms, rules, or procedures has proved problematic. See Stephan Haggard and Beth A. Simmons, "Theories of International Regimes," *International Organization* 41, no. 3 (1987): 494–95.

[76] Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 393–94. While Wendt's article was key to popularizing the term "constructivism," he credited it to the earlier work of Nicholas Onuf.

[77] Ibid., 399.

institutionalism as crucial for understanding the causal processes that define interests and "constitute the actors that shape national security politics and global insecurities."[78] One of the contributors to this volume, Martha Finnemore, has not only solidified the use of frameworks and terminology drawn from sociologists, but also contends that the sociological institutionalists' use of the term "institution" is "very different" from that of rational choice and historical institutionalists. For her, "incommensurable definitions mean that despite similarities in labelling, these approaches—all called institutionalist—have little in common."[79] Sociological institutionalism, with its treatment of cultural norms and rules as institutions, is welcomed by Finnemore as more than just a parallel to political science's homegrown constructivism. It is, she holds, compatible with that tradition and yet different enough to offer new resources to improve it. In particular, Finnemore suggests that sociological institutionalism offers "a much richer and more detailed theoretical framework than has constructivism."[80]

Finnemore here displays a concern characteristic of constructivists who seek to engage context without departing from modernist empiricism. In displaying concern about theoretical clarity relative to a longer standing approach—whether that be sociological or rational choice institutionalism—constructivists committed to this stance parallel their similarly committed counterparts in historical institutionalism. Even while these constructivists conceptualize context and institutions in somewhat different ways than do historical institutionalists, their shared concern is emblematic of a broad, but problematic, endeavor of modernist empiricist scholars. They want to emphasize context, but nevertheless remain committed to analytic generalization and, in particular, to the notion that empirical theory is key to achieving this goal.

Conclusion

With the mid-1990s entry of sociological institutionalism into political science's evolving conversations, our account reaches the point in time at which Hall and Taylor crafted their 1996 overview of three new institutionalisms. By highlighting differences between our account and theirs, both in terms of method and results, we seek in this conclusion to

[78] Peter J. Katzenstein, ed. *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 16.

[79] Martha Finnemore, "Norms, Culture, and World Politics: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism," *International Organization* 50, no. 2 (1996): 326.

[80] Ibid., 327.

illuminate distinctive features of the radical historicizing approach we have taken. We want to suggest that the image of the recent past generated by this approach is more historically satisfying and that it better prepares us to engage with the ongoing stream of intellectual shifts within political science.

The difference in method here centers on a contrast between typological and tradition-centered ways of summarizing intellectual debates—a contrast that is emblematic of the general differences between modernist empiricism and radical historicism. Hall and Taylor's typological effort recounts the various new institutionalisms by identifying features meant to pick out each of them as an aggregate type. Our goal in this chapter has not been to propose an alternative set of types—there are perhaps enough typologies already in the literature—but rather to explore what the payoffs are of focusing on traditions instead of types. Aggregation here centers on the intellectual, professional, and conceptual links among individuals found within the shifting patterns of conversation and contestation in any arena of ongoing debate. Typologies cut into these patterns at one point in time, and we can be led astray when a one-off typology is projected backward or forward in time. Such projection makes lines of conversation and disagreement appear static, thereby obscuring shifts in self-understandings, allegiances, and hostilities that have occurred in the past and that are likely to persist in the future. In contrast, it is just such shifts that capture attention in our tradition-centered approach, which tracks scholars remaking their intellectual projects as they renegotiate their engagement and confrontation with others.

A main substantive payoff to this approach lies in its sensitivity to the sequencing of past developments and its attentiveness to processes of shifting interaction and debate. We have approached the typology of rational choice, historical, and sociological institutionalism not as a static grid applicable at anytime since the late 1970s, but as the articulation of a distinctive mid-1990s perspective offered from within political science's ongoing conversations. Before the mid-1990s sociological institutionalism was not invoked as a player in those conversations. It only became so when political scientists like Katzenstein and Finnemore began to look outside their discipline for alternatives to the perspectives then dominating its discussion of institutions. The framing of that discussion as a rivalry between historical and rational choice institutionalism had itself only crystallized a few years earlier in the early 1990s, and it remained unpersuasive to some. The concern with defensively differentiating between variants of new institutionalism that underlay this framing had in turn developed only after the spread of institutionalist discourse in the mid-to-late 1980s. During this period, the neostatist and the regime literatures of the late 1970s and early 1980s were recast as examples of institu-

tionalism. But prior to the mid-1980s, the notion of a new institutionalism had, among political scientists, been found only among rational choice scholars. None of these points about sequencing finds their way into Hall and Taylor's typological account, but they are essential components of any historicized account of the new institutionalisms in political science.

In addition to overlooking details of sequencing, a typological perspective on the new institutionalisms also downplays interactions between contending approaches and changes within them over time. Our account suggests that we cannot understand the articulation of a self-proclaimed historical institutionalism outside of the process of interaction in the late 1980s through which some scholars came to believe that their intellectual agenda needed to be rearticulated to better engage the perceived threat of rational choice. The failure of this new articulation to win universal acclaim, even among those who might have been expected to coalesce around it, reminds us, moreover, that scholars in a tradition need not react uniformly to interaction with other traditions, but rather that each reacts to her own interpretation of any such interaction. With regard to change over time, an assertion that historical institutionalism is peculiarly sensitive to the role of ideas makes sense only if one also refuses to retrospectively project this term too far into the past. Hall and Taylor's static approach leaves their reader potentially unaware that attentiveness to ideas marks a significant departure from the structuralist tendencies of much of the late 1970s and early 1980s neostatist literature in which they locate the early exemplars of historical institutionalism. By noting this change, a radical historicist stance helps us to recognize a point of tension differentiating those historical institutionalists who favor this attentiveness, such as Hall, from those whose intellectual positions remain marked by the legacies of an earlier structuralism, such as Skocpol.

A review of the contrasts between rational choice and historical institutionalism explored in this chapter can in turn suggest how our radical historicizing perspective goes beyond the goal of better remembering the past to also orient us in relation to developments ongoing today. The rational choice institutionalism revolves around a well-articulated and developing body of microtheory. This theory makes it possible to identify rational choice institutionalism as a distinctive neopositivist approach that is, for better or worse, clearly novel with regard to political science's longer-standing approaches to institutions. There are several notable contrasts here with historical institutionalism. In the absence of a coherent shared theoretical core, it is difficult to conclude that the "historical" label identifies one distinctive approach, rather than simply jumbling up an eclectic range of modernist empiricist efforts, some of which are perhaps incompatible. Moreover, under either interpretation, it is harder to iden-

tify here the kind of novelty that the label "new institutionalism" stakes a claim to than it is to do so for rational choice institutionalism.

Recent developments suggest that these contrasts have continuing legacies. Rational choice theory's highlighting of questions about the motor of change in macrohistorical studies challenges the conceptual vagueness of punctuated equilibrium, critical junctures, and path dependence. Increasingly aware that their approach lacks the microlevel grit demanded in the wake of rational choice theory, some historical institutionalists recently have sought to unpack such concepts on the microlevel. In doing so they draw on older economic theories and end up rediscovering perspectives that rational choice scholars have worked with for years.[81] Such moves further problematize efforts to identify historical institutionalism as a distinct approach. As with the earlier neostatism, efforts to define and promote historical institutionalism continue to rely largely on reactive, rhetorical forms of self-identification. For example, in their chapter in the recent *Political Science: State of the Discipline* volume, Skocpol and Pierson define historical institutionalism in contrast to rational choice and to survey-based behavioral work, asserting three features meant to pick out historical institutionalists: (1) they are concerned with "big, substantive questions"; (2) they "take time seriously"; and (3) they pay "attention to contexts and configurations."[82] These assertions are made in the absence of criteria for their application, arguments in defense of such criteria, or much evidence that other scholars are in fact very different from historical institutionalists in these regards. Attention to context here again functions as a rhetorically essential but vague middle ground staked out by the conjunction of a hostility to universalizing theoretical efforts and a fear of "getting mired in thick description,"[83] but lacking an account of what "context" is and how attention to it squares with a belief in analytic abstraction as essential to explanation and generalization.

[81] Paul Pierson, "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics," *American Political Science Review* 94, no. 2 (2000): 251–67; James Mahoney, "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology," *Theory and Society* 29, no. 4 (2000): 507–48.

[82] Pierson and Skocpol, "Historical Institutionalism," 695–96. Compare with Mark Blyth, "Institutions and Ideas," in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, ed. David Marsh and Gerry Stoker, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2002), 292–310.

[83] Pierson and Skocpol, "Historical Institutionalism," 710–11. Hostility to universal theory sometimes takes the specific form of noting apparent similarities between rational choice theory and behavioral era structural-functionalism, with the assumption evidently being that pointing out such a similarity somehow constitutes a critique of rational choice theory. Hence Skocpol emphasizes apparently similar beliefs in "One True and Unified Theory," and even, at times, suggests that the structural-functionalists were "forebears" of rational choice theory and rational choice theorists, their "successors." Theda Skocpol, "Theory Tackles History," *Social Science History* 24, no. 4 (2000): 675–76.

As the ambiguities of historical institutionalism have persisted unabated, doubts about the value of the defensive distinction that the category was initially intended to embody have also persisted, or even spread. For example, when Kathleen Thelen recently returned to the task of considering historical institutionalism alongside rational choice, she raised doubts about aspects of her and Steinmo's earlier characterizations and placed new emphasis on the potential compatibility of rational choice with macroqualitative work.[84] If the contrast between historical and rational choice institutionalisms is thus perhaps in decline as a way of narrating approaches, other previously underplayed differences may be becoming the focuses of new lines of intellectual contestation and identity. One particular candidate for such a role is the difference within historical institutionalism between more structuralist and more ideational approaches. In light of the continuing vibrancy of constructivism in international relations, and the attention to the sociological institutionalism associated with it, there are plenty of discussion partners to provide the basis for the articulation of an ideational institutionalism in comparative politics, American political development, and international relations.[85]

While we would welcome the articulation of just such an ideational institutionalism, we would like to close by expressing our reservations about the proclamations of novelty and progress all too likely to accompany it. As several chapters in this volume attest, a focus on the interplay of ideas and institutions is the longest-standing approach within American political science. Given such a background, prospective proponents of an ideational institutionalism might be better advised to narrate themselves as inheriting a long-standing tradition, and thereby avoid the disciplinary forgetting and pseudonovel reinventions all too pervasive in political science. The trumpeting of novelty in the name of progress has been, however, ~~been~~ one of the most pervasive features of political science since the 1950s, and the emergence of a self-narrative that does not trumpet such novelty would probably presuppose a break with the beliefs about how and why we do social science around which modernist empiricism and neopositivism have cohabited for half a century.

[84] Kathleen Thelen, "Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2 (1999): 369–404.

[85] For some examples of what this conversation might look like, see Sheri E. Berman, "Ideas, Norms and Culture in Political Analysis," *Comparative Politics* 33, no. 2 (January 2001): 231–50; Robert C. Lieberman, "Ideas, Institutions, and Political Order: Explaining Political Change," *American Political Science Review* 96, no. 4 (2002): 697–712; and Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, "Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (2001): 391–416.

The odds against such a break are suggested by developments within the constructivist tradition with which the more ideationally inclined scholars of comparative politics and American political development may enter into conversation. Constructivism in the 1990s has been marked by increasing divergence regarding allegiance or hostility to such beliefs. Already articulated as a distinction between "modernist" and "postmodernist" variants of constructivism in Wendt's classic 1992 article, this differentiation has recently been rearticulated by the elder statesman Ruggie in his *Constructing the World Polity*. Ruggie here presents the strand of constructivism in which he locates his own work—and that of Haas, Kratochwil, Finnemore, and the later Katzenstein—as maintaining "a commitment to the idea of social science," as remaining "rooted in the classical tradition of Durkheim and Weber," and as exhibiting an "epistemological affinity" to pragmatism, speech-act theory, and the work of Searle. He contrasts this strand to an alternative postmodernist constructivism—associated with Foucault and Derrida—in which "little hope is held out for legitimate social science."[86] Such distinctions by necessity elide the parallels between pragmatism and postmodernism argued for by contemporary scholars like Richard Bernstein and Richard Rorty. Bypassing such arguments serves to reinforce modernist empiricism by evading the anxieties that an open-minded engagement with postmodernism might induce. Engagement of this sort might be one route by which an emergent ideational institutionalism could come to adopt the radical historicism that is noticeably absent from any of the new institutionalisms to date. But such a novel new institutionalism is perhaps far less likely an outcome than another rearticulation of the old, rhetorically wrapped up as yet another break from a misremembered past into the ever hopeful light of progress.

[86] John G. Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalization* (London: Routledge, 1998), 35–36.