1 What's at stake in 'bringing historical sociology *back* into international relations'? Transcending 'chronofetishism' and 'tempocentrism' in international relations

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Introduction: the growing convergence of historical sociology and international relations

Since the late 1970s historical sociology has been implicitly moving towards international relations, while, since the early 1980s, international relations has begun to explicitly move towards historical sociology. Although Theda Skocpol (1979) most famously insisted that the 'international' should be brought into historical sociology, it is clear that such a move was already in the air (e.g., Frank, 1967; Wallerstein, 1974; Tilly, 1975a; Bendix, 1978; Poggi, 1978), and had in fact been waiting in the wings ever since the early 1900s – e.g., Weber (1978, originally published in 1922), Elias (1994[1939]) and Hintze (1975), the last comprising a series of essays which were originally published between 1896 and 1937. Moreover, this move has since gathered some momentum within historical sociology (Giddens, 1985; Mann, 1986, 1993; Tilly, 1990; Goldstone, 1991). And on the other side of the 'border', a few international relations theorists began to look to historical sociology in the very early 1980s, as a means of enhancing and reconfiguring their discipline (e.g., Ruggie, 1983; Cox, 1986; cf. Ashley, 1986); this is a development that has gathered momentum through the 1980s and 1990s (e.g., Halliday, 1987, 1994, 1999; Jarvis, 1989; Linklater, 1990, 1998; Scholte, 1993; Buzan, Jones and Little, 1993; Thomson, 1994; Spruyt, 1994; Rosenberg, 1994; Ferguson and Mansbach, 1996; Frank and Gills, 1996; Hobson, 1997, 1998a; Hobden, 1998, 1999a, 1999b; Reus-Smit, 1999; M. Hall, 1999; R. Hall, 1999). It is both *significant* that historical sociologists working outside international relations have been slow to pick

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up on the complementary developments within international relations, and *unfortunate*, given that such oversight arguably comes at a significant cost (see Hobson, Smith, Halliday and Hobson & Hobden, this volume). Historical sociologists would do well, therefore, to follow the progress of their 'cousins' within international relations. Nevertheless, it seems fair to state that the 'boundaries between those writers in international relations who are interested in taking a historical sociological approach and the macro-sociologists in Historical Sociology are . . . breaking down' (Hobden, 1998: 196).

However, despite this growing momentum of interest in historical sociology within international relations, and despite the fact that historical sociology is often mentioned, or referred to, by international relations scholars, no 'take-off' is as yet in evidence. Moreover, there is as yet only a very rudimentary understanding of what historical sociology is, and what it has to offer international relations – in much the same way that historical sociologists have only a very rudimentary understanding of international relations and what it has to offer them. It is as if historical sociology is *seen* by international relations scholars, but not *heard*. And while international relations is currently undergoing a 'sociological turn', often equated with the rise of constructivism, we argue here that the 'sociological turn' can only be *fully* realised by bringing 'history' back in. Indeed the primary purpose of this volume is its calling for an '*historical* sociological turn' in international relations. The volume, therefore, acts as a kind of *historical sociology manifesto*, which can relay to the wider international relations audience what some of the major variants of historical sociology look like; show how they can be applied to international relations; explain why international relations theorists *should* engage with historical sociology; and demonstrate how historical sociological insight can enhance and reconfigure the study of international relations. In the process, we hope that historical sociology might shift from its current peripheral position closer to the centre of the international relations research agenda. By implication, this volume simultaneously constitutes an *international relations manifesto* which can relay to a wider historical sociology audience what some of the major international relations variants have to offer them, and demonstrate how international relations insight can enhance and reconfigure the study of historical sociology.

This opening chapter has two core objectives: the first part appraises mainstream international relations theory through a critical historical sociological lens, and reveals its ahistorical and asociological biases, while the second part lays out in summary form seven major theoretical approaches which are covered in this volume, all of which suggest ways

to transcend or remedy prevailing modes of ahistoricism and asociologism in international relations. Steve Hobden's contribution to this introduction (chapter 2) then considers how and why mainstream international relations has been *re*constructed in the last fifty years along asociological and ahistorical lines – given his claim that before 1919, international relations comprised a corpus of knowledge which incorporated various disciplines, not least economics, history, sociology, law and moral philosophy. He ends by discussing the contribution that historical sociology can make to enhancing the study of international relations.

Revealing the 'chronofetishist' and 'tempocentric' foundations of mainstream international relations

There is little doubt that much, though clearly not all, of contemporary international relations is 'historophobic', in that it views historical analysis as superfluous, or exogenous, to the subject matter of the discipline (though as Steve Hobden shows in chapter 2, this has not *always* been the case in the history of the discipline). To the extent that contemporary mainstream international relations theorists have concerned themselves with history, they have generally employed what might be called an 'instrumentalist' view of history, where history is used not as a means to rethink the present, but as a quarry to be mined only in order to confirm theories of the present (as found especially in neorealism). As Michael Barnett puts it in his chapter, 'If history mattered at all it was as a field of data to be mined, for cases to be shoehorned in the pursuit of grand theory building, and for evidence of the cycles of history that realists used to mark historical time' (p. 100; also, Cox, 1986: 212). Or as Rosecrance declared, 'history is a laboratory in which our generalizations about international politics can be tested' (Rosecrance, 1973: 25).

By contrast, we argue for the employment of a 'temporally relativist' or 'constitutive' reading of history, in which theorists examine history not simply for its own sake or to tell us more about the past, nor simply as a means to confirm extant theorising of the present, but rather as a means to *rethink* theories and *problematise* the analysis of the present, and thereby to *reconfigure* the international relations research agenda. Ignoring history does not simply do an injustice to the *history* of the international system. Most significantly, it leads to a problematic view of the *present*. Seen through an historical sociological lens, mainstream international relations appears caught within two modes of ahistoricism and asociologism: what I shall call *chronofetishism* and *tempocentrism*.

The first mode of ahistoricism: 'chronofetishism'

The construction of the term *chronofetishism* – *not* to be confused with Powelson's (1994) term 'chronocentrism' – takes as its starting point Karl Marx's concept of 'fetishism'. In *Capital,* Marx argued that liberal political economists fall into the trap of fetishism when they argue that, for example, the commodity has an inherent value that is *autonomous* of class exploitation. In the process, the commodity is reified, and thus 'a definite social relation between men ... assumes in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things' (Marx, 1954: 77). Marx's 'scientific method' remedies 'commodity fetishism' by revealing the exploitative class relations by which the value of a particular commodity is determined. In the process, he shows that the commodity is not autonomous because it does not exist in a sphere that is independent of the relations of production (Marx, 1954: 76–87). More generally, he takes classical liberal political economists to task primarily on the grounds that in *reifying* capitalism as a phenomenon that operates according to its own self-constituting 'laws of supply and demand', and by thereby obscuring the contradictory class relations upon which capitalism is founded, they fall prey to the fetishist illusion that capitalism is 'natural', 'autonomous' and consequently 'eternal'. Marx's project in *Capital* was to remedy this fetishist illusion by uncovering the exploitative and transformative class processes that define capitalism, thereby revealing its unnatural and transient nature.

By extension, *chronofetishism,* the assumption that the present can adequately be explained only by examining the present (thereby bracketing or ignoring the past), gives rise to three illusions:

(1) *reification illusion*: where the present is effectively 'sealed off' from the past, making it appear as a *static, self-constituting, autonomous* and *reified* entity, thereby obscuring its historical socio-temporal context;
(2) *naturalisation illusion*: where the present is effectively *naturalised* on the basis that it emerged 'spontaneously' in accordance with 'natural' human imperatives, thereby obscuring the historical processes of social power, identity/social exclusion and norms that constitute the present;
(3) *immutability illusion*: where the present is *eternalised* because it is deemed to be natural and resistant to structural change, thereby obscuring the processes that reconstitute the present as an immanent order of change.

Table 1 reveals the essence of these two ahistorical modes, chronofetishism and tempocentrism, and juxtaposes them with the historical sociological *remedies* that this book is concerned to develop. We begin by revealing the problems with the three illusions of chronofetishism. The

Table 1. *Conceptualising the two dominant modes of ahistoricism in international relations*

Mode of ahistoricism	Resulting illusions (danger)	Historical sociological remedy (escape)
Chronofetishism	A mode of ahistoricism which leads to three illusions:	Employment of historical sociology to:
	(1) *Reification illusion* where the present is effectively 'sealed off' from the past, thereby obscuring its historical socio-temporal context, and making it appear as a *static*, *self-constituting*, *autonomous* and *reified* entity;	(1) Reveal the present as a *malleable construct* which is embedded in a historical context, thereby serving to unearth the processes of temporal continuity and discontinuity with previous social practices;
	(2) *Naturalisation* where the present is effectively *naturalised* on the basis that it emerged 'spontaneously' in accordance with 'natural' human imperatives, thereby obscuring the historical processes of social power, identity/social exclusion and norms that constitute the present;	(2) Denaturalise the present and reveal that it emerged not in accordance with 'natural' human impulses but rather through processes of power, identity/social exclusion and norms;
	(3) *Immutability illusion* where the present is *eternalised* because it is deemed to be natural and resistant to structural change, thereby obscuring the processes that reconstitute the present as an immanent order of change.	(3) Reveal the present as constituted by transformative (*morphogenetic*) processes that continuously reconstitute present institutions and practices.
Tempocentrism	A mode of ahistoricism which leads to the:	To remedy tempocentrism, historical sociology:
	(4) *Isomorphic illusion* in which the 'naturalised' and 'reified' present is extrapolated backwards in time to present all historical systems as 'isomorphic' or 'homologous', resulting in the *failure to recognise the unique features* of the present (an *inverted* 'path dependency').	(4) Traces the fundamental *differences* between past and present international systems and institutions, to thereby *reveal the unique constitutive features of the present.*

'reification illusion' – the assumption that the present is autonomous and self-constituting – is problematic because it ignores the fact that no historical epoch has ever been static and entirely 'finished' or 'complete', but has been in the process of forming and re-forming. Historical sociological enquiry is able to remedy the 'reification illusion' by revealing the present as a *malleable construct* that is embedded within a specific socio-temporal context. The assumption that the present is autonomous and self-constituting is also a classic sign of the second chronofetishist illusion – the presumption that the present system is 'natural' and that it emerged *spontaneously* in accordance with 'natural' imperatives. This illusion is problematic because it necessarily obscures the manifold processes of social power, identity/social exclusion and norms, which constituted the present system. Thus, for example, Kenneth Waltz assumes that the international system emerged spontaneously through the unintended consequences of state interaction (Waltz, 1979: 91); and that the modern sovereign state is the highest form of political organisation, not least because an alternative world government 'would stifle liberty [and] become a terrible despotism' (Waltz, 1986: 341; 1979: 112). Liberals see in liberal capitalism and the modern democratic state the highest forms of economic and political expression, because they supposedly reflect the impulses of human nature – namely the inherent propensity to 'truck, barter and exchange one thing for another' (Adam Smith, 1937: 13).

Finally, the 'immutability illusion' – the notion that the present is immune or resistant to structural change and thereby 'eternalised' – is problematic because it obscures the *transformative* or 'morphogenetic' (Archer, 1982) processes that are immanent within the present order. Neorealism and liberalism both fall into this trap, though in different ways. Liberalism believes that with liberal capitalism and democracy, history has reached its terminus, with no fundamental change beyond the present being either possible or desirable (Fukuyama, 1992). Neorealism argues similarly that structural change within or beyond the present is impossible. Indeed, Waltz's theory 'contains only a reproductive logic, but no transformational logic' (Ruggie, 1986: 151), in that *systems maintenance* is fundamentally inscribed into the structure of Waltz's theory, given that it is logically impossible for one state to create a hierarchy under the 'balance of power' (Waltz, 1979: ch. 6; see also Hobson, 2000: 26–30). And ironically, Waltz's (1986: 340–1) reply to Ashley – that the balance of power has and always will continue to exist – merely confirms the conclusion that neorealism is, indeed, 'a *historicism of stasis*. It is a historicism that freezes the political institutions of the current world order', thereby ruling out the possibility of future change (Ashley, 1986: 289, 258, 290–1). Thus neorealism's ahistoricism is symptomatic of a 'problem-solving

theory' that is distinguished from an historical sociological 'critical theory' (Cox, 1986). However, chronofetishism does not exist in isolation, and is deeply entwined with a second form of ahistoricism in international relations: what I call *tempocentrism*.

The second mode of ahistoricism: 'tempocentrism'

If chronofetishism leads to a 'sealing off' of the present such that it appears as an autonomous, natural, spontaneous and immutable entity, tempocentrism extrapolates this 'chronofetishised' present backwards through time such that *discontinuous* ruptures and *differences* between historical epochs and states systems are smoothed over and consequently obscured. In this way, history appears to be marked, or is regulated, by a regular tempo that beats according to the same, constant rhythm of the present (reified) system. This is in fact an *inverted* form of 'path dependency'. Tempocentrism is, in effect, a methodology in which theorists look at *history* through a 'chronofetishist lens'. In other words, in reconstructing all historical systems so as to conform to a reified and naturalised present, they tarnish all systems as homologous or 'isomorphic' (i.e., as having the same structure). In this way, the study of international relations takes on a 'transhistorical' quality.

It is *this* tempocentric manoeuvre which leads such theorists to look constantly for signs of the present in the past, and, in a type of self-fulfilling prophecy, come back and report that the past is indeed the same as the present. Thus, for example, the dominant theory of international relations – neorealism – assumes either that history is repetitive such that nothing ever changes because of the timeless presence of anarchy (Waltz, 1979), or that history takes on the form of repetitive and isomorphic 'great power/hegemonic' cycles, each phase of which is essentially identical, with the only difference being *which* great power is rising or declining – i.e., same play, different actors (Gilpin, 1981). In this way, neorealists assume that the 'superpower' contest between Athens and Sparta is equivalent to the recent cold war between the USA and the USSR; or that current US state behaviour is broadly equivalent to that of historical great powers such as sixteenth-century Spain, the seventeenth-century United Provinces (Netherlands), eighteenth-century France, or nineteenth-century Britain (Kennedy, 1988; cf. Gilpin, 1981). Moreover, neorealists assume that ancient imperialism is equivalent to that found in the nineteenth century (Waltz, 1979: ch. 2); or that all great-power wars are rooted in the same causes (Gilpin, 1981); or that European feudal heteronomy is broadly equivalent to the modern system and can be understood in similar ways (Fischer, 1992). At the most general level, neorealists tempocentrically

conclude that 'the classic history of Thucydides is as meaningful a guide to the behavior of states today as when it was written in the fifth century BC' (Gilpin, 1981: 7), or that 'balance of power politics in much the form that we know it has been practiced over the millennia by many different types of political units, from ancient China and India, to the Greek and Italian city states, and unto our own day' (Waltz, 1986: 341). It is this 'trick' to represent all historical actors and systems as isomorphic or homologous that leads neorealists to conclude that world politics *must* always have been governed by the timeless and constant logic of anarchy, which thereby enables them to dismiss the utility of historical sociological enquiry (see Waltz, 1979: 43–9).

What is the matter with this view of international history that Rob Walker (1993) has labelled 'the theme of Gulliver'? Firstly, it presents the whole of international history as a static, monolithic entity that operates according to a constant and timeless logic, such that structural change becomes entirely obscured. The problem here is that this ignores the fact that there has not been one international system but many, all of which are quite different, and all of which are marked by different rhythms or tempos. But more importantly, the fundamental problem with tempocentrism is that in constructing states systems and actors as isomorphic throughout world-historical time, *the theorist fails to recognise the uniqueness of the present system and simultaneously obscures some of its most fundamental or constitutive features*. This 'tempocentric paradox' can be simply expressed: that in extrapolating a reified present back in time, the theorist not only does a disservice to the past, but, more importantly, does serious injustice to understanding the present. Thus mainstream international relations theory (as in neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism) takes for granted precisely those categories about the contemporary era that need to be problematised and explained. Historical sociology's prime mandate is to reveal and remedy the tempocentrism (as well as chronofetishism) of mainstream and conventional international relations theory. Thus, for example, when we show through historical sociological enquiry that the rivalry between Athens and Sparta is *not* equivalent to that between the USA and the USSR (not least because the former rivalry – unlike the latter – existed within a single international society), the problem becomes to refocus our explanation on the unique particularities of the Cold War. Or, when we show through historical sociological enquiry that all historical forms of imperialism have *not* been equivalent, not least because they have been embedded within different normative environments (R. Hall, 1999), we are forced to rethink the specific normative processes that inform the uniqueness of modern imperialism. Or when we show that European medieval heteronomy is

very different to the modern Westphalian system (Hall and Kratochwil, 1993), again because of radically different normative settings, we are necessarily forced to rethink the unique normative constitutive features of the latter. Similarly, when we show through historical sociological enquiry that ancient historical states systems are not equivalent to the modern Westphalian system, either because of different class-based contexts (Rosenberg, 1994), or because of different moral purposes of the state (Reus-Smit, 1999), we are forced to rethink the various social processes which gave rise to, and constitute, the unique qualities of the modern system.

Tempocentrism is also fundamental to the neorealist theory of hegemonic stability. Thus when we show through historical sociological enquiry that Britain in the nineteenth century either had a very different foreign policy to that of the United States between 1945 and 1973, or was *not* actually a hegemon (Schroeder, 1994; Hobson, 1997: 199–204; Mann, 1993: ch. 8), it becomes apparent that hegemony is unique to one country (the United States) at one particular time in history. Here neorealists err by drawing out some of the basic features of US foreign policy, which are equated with hegemony as a generic phenomenon, and then, in typical tempocentric fashion, extrapolating this conception back in time to 'fit' the British case. Given also that Japan turns out to be a poor candidate for future hegemony, as most Japan specialists conclude (Inoguchi, 1988; Taira, 1993; Katzenstein, 1996a), we are left with only one example of a hegemon (at least within the neorealist canon), a conclusion which logically undermines this cyclical theory of hegemony. But the key point is that such tempocentrism not only does a disservice to understanding Britain in the nineteenth century, but also renders problematic our understanding of US hegemony in the twentieth century, as well as the question of a future hegemony. The problem then becomes *not* to analyse American *hegemony*, but to rethink the specific origins of *American* hegemony (Ruggie, 1993b, 1998b: ch. 4) – a project which requires historical sociological insight. Finally, when we show that the free trade regimes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were radically different from each other, so we need to rethink the specific and unique social processes that enabled the modern free trade regime (Hobson, this volume, pp. 78–80).

Tempocentrism is also found in neoliberal institutionalism and its theory of international regimes (e.g., Keohane, 1984). Neoliberals assume that states have fixed identities and interests; that they are rational egoists that seek to maximise their long-term utility gains, and that this can best be achieved when states harness themselves to co-operative norms that are embodied within state-constructed international regimes. While arguably

there is much in the theory forwarded, nevertheless, it is not enough to assume that co-operation and international regimes are brought into play simply because of the timeless assumption that states are rational egoists. For if this assumption is correct, then why did multilateral economic institutions and international economic co-operation only come into existence in the nineteenth century (and only fully after 1945)? Put simply, *if* the rational egoistic sovereign state has existed since 1648 (a problematic assumption in itself), why did we have to wait at least two hundred years for such institutions to appear? Thus in typical tempocentric fashion, neoliberal institutionalism fails to recognise that international multilateral economic co-operation is *unique* to the late-modern era, which suggests that it cannot be explained as a simple function of rational state behaviour. Accordingly, neoliberalism not only does a disservice to understanding state behaviour prior to 1945, but also renders problematic our understanding of contemporary co-operative relations between states. The problem then becomes *not* to analyse multilateral *institutions*, but to rethink the origins of *multilateral* institutions and international economic co-operation – a project which can only be achieved through historical sociological analysis (cf. Reus-Smit, Barnett, and Hobson, ch. 3, this volume; also Ruggie, 1993, 1998b).

Finally we can present the formal definitions of chronofetishism and tempocentrism, which are entwined together, as follows. Chronofetishism is a mode of ahistoricism which conveys *a set of illusions that represent the present as an autonomous, natural, spontaneous and immutable system that is self-constituting and eternal, and which necessarily obscures the processes of power, identity/social exclusion and norms that gave rise to, and continuously reconstitute, the present as an immanent order of change.* Tempocentrism is a mode of ahistoricism which conveys *the illusion that all international systems are equivalent (isomorphic) and have been marked by the constant and regular tempo of a chronofetishised present, which paradoxically obscures some of the most fundamental constitutive features of the present international system.*

In sum, therefore, the main limitation with mainstream international relations is not simply that it problematically flattens out international *history* (tempocentrism), but that it problematically flattens or smooths out and thereby naturalises the *present* (chronofetishism). Accordingly, both modes of ahistoricism have effectively written the issue of 'change' off the international relations agenda altogether. Indeed neorealists, such as Gilpin and Waltz, do not even try and hide from their conclusion that 'the fundamental nature of international relations has not changed over the millennia. International relations continue to be a recurring struggle for wealth and power among independent actors in a state of anarchy' (Gilpin, 1981: 7, 230), or that, 'the texture of international politics

remains highly constant, patterns recur, and events repeat themselves endlessly. The relations that prevail internationally seldom shift rapidly in type or quality. They are marked by a dismaying persistence' (Waltz, 1979: 66, 67; 1986: 341, 342–3). All in all, neorealists have effectively engaged in a fascinating conjuring trick, in which we have been fooled by an adept sleight-of-hand into believing in the naturalness of their totalised picture. Our task then is to reveal this sleight-of-hand and to overcome the illusions of ahistoricism that have duped us for too long. Reintroducing historical sociological enquiry, therefore, enables us to bring into focus the rocky and mountainous landscape of continuity, discontinuity and contingency that actually constitutes past and present international relations. This argument clearly presupposes a definition of historical sociology that has underpinned our analysis so far, but which can now be formally presented.

The extreme claim that history and sociology are incompatible (e.g., Goldthorpe, 1991), no less than the extreme claim that international history and international relations are incompatible (Sked, 1987) and occupy radically different worlds, is usually justified on the epistemologically spurious ground that *history* is founded upon the search for 'empiricist particularity' of the past, whilst *sociology* is based on theory and the quest for 'theoretical generalisations' of the present. It is 'spurious' because historians always implicitly make theoretically loaded assumptions about the world, based on their own experience in a particular time and place. To acknowledge this *should* be the first task of the historian – not just the sociologist (see especially Carr, 1961). As Hobden argues, what ultimately *links* history and sociology is the study of 'time': 'Social relations do not stand apart from time. All social interactions are affected by what has gone before, and in the understanding of the present the past cannot be avoided' (Hobden, 1998: 24; cf. Scholte, 1993: 7). The 'artificial divide' between the past and present that chronofetishism and tempocentrism create is artificial precisely because

> The 'past' is . . . never really 'past' but continuously constitutive of the 'present', as a cumulatively and selectively reproduced ensemble of practices and ideas that 'channel' and impart directionality to ongoing human agency. The present, in other words, is what the past – as received and creatively interpreted by the present – has made it (Bryant, cited in Hobden, 1998: 24).

Thus we may define 'historical sociology', or what we term 'world sociology' (see chapter 13), as *a critical approach which refuses to treat the present as an autonomous entity outside of history, but insists on embedding it within a specific socio-temporal place, thereby offering sociological remedies to the ahistorical illusions that chronofetishism and tempocentrism produce.*

The extreme paradox here is that such a definition would be at fundamental odds with the more conventional definitions implicitly used by Skocpol, Tilly and other neo-Weberians working within historical sociology. This is because such writers reproduce the chronofetishist and tempocentric fallacies that are found in mainstream international relations (see Hobson, ch. 3, this volume), thereby denying the *raison d'être* of historical sociology in the first place. Accordingly, it should be clear that we are not simply transplanting an unproblematised historical sociological approach into the study of international relations. Instead, we have sought to reformulate the definition of historical sociology in order to historicise international relations; paradoxically, this leads to an approach that is no less critical of mainstream historical sociology. This provides one of the most compelling reasons why we believe historical sociologists working outside of international relations (no less than mainstream international relations scholars) *should* also engage in the project outlined in this volume if they are to enhance their own discipline.

The remainder of this section applies our historical sociological conception to reveal the tempocentric biases of the 'commonsense' assumption, widely held in international relations (best represented by neorealism), that the *anarchic* international system represents a single *distinct, autonomous and self-constituting* realm which comprises *sovereign* states (*like-units*) that are neatly *separated* by *distinct sovereign* borders – and simultaneously shows how historical sociology can remedy the problems that are contained therein. But before I do so, it is important to clarify one point here. For it might be argued that focusing on neorealism in such detail is a somewhat pointless task because neorealism is 'either past its hegemonic peak', or because it is only one of the mainstream theories that needs to be considered. I have three responses. First, pick up any issue of one of the leading international relations journals, *International Security*, and one would be hard-pressed *not* to find at least one realist contribution. Moreover, even if neorealism is past its 'hegemonic peak', it is impossible to pick up any of the leading international relations theory journals and *not* find neorealists constantly referred to, even if it is in the form of a critical debate. Second, my major task here is not simply to critique neorealism *per se*, but rather to use it as an example of tempocentrism in international relations theory, in order to show how historical sociological enquiry can transcend the limits of tempocentrism more generally.

The third, and possibly the most urgent reason why I choose to critique neorealism is because it is the Waltzian version that has done more than any other theory to mark out the borders of international relations so as explicitly to exclude and marginalise historical sociology from what

constitutes 'real international relations' (see Waltz, 1979, chs. 2–5, esp. pp. 43–9). Indeed it has been the obsessive quest for scientific certainty, and a celebration of positivism which sees 'legitimate international relations enquiry' as defined *only* by the acquisition of objective knowledge, that prompted Waltz and others to find in international politics 'law-like patterns' of recurrence and continuity, patterns which could *not* be revealed through an historical sociological lens. In short, this quest for 'scientificity' necessarily dictated the exclusion or dismissal of historical sociology from the ever-narrowing borders of 'legitimate' international relations. And while not all mainstream international relations theorists are neorealists, it *is* clear that neoliberal institutionalists, and indeed many international relations scholars for that matter, have accepted the current positioning of the mainstream borders that *exclude* historical sociology from engaging in the 'legitimate' purposes and tasks of international relations. It is as if historical sociologists, according to mainstream international relations scholars, *can* be seen but must *not* be heard. I, therefore, see it as a first-order objective to undermine the popular belief that 'historical sociology is simply *not* international relations', if historical sociology is to have any success at all in gaining entry into what constitutes 'legitimate international relations enquiry'.

Problematising the notion of 'like-units' under anarchy

Waltz's fundamental claim is that international politics has never changed but is repetitive, in that the international has always been a realm of competition between political forms (units) (Waltz, 1979: 66, 67). He observes that the domestic aspects or identities of states cannot affect the international realm because all states (liberal or authoritarian, capitalist or communist), or all political units (empires, city-states or nation-states), behave *similarly* in the international system (i.e., conform to the logic of competitive survival). In order to explain 'continuity', Waltz sought to ignore or bracket the specific features and identities of the domestic realm. The units must *not* be included in a 'theory of international politics' (Waltz, 1979: ch. 5), because if they were, the 'continuity' aspect of international relations would necessarily give way to the notion of constant and immanent change (because the units themselves are constantly changing through time); 'if changes in international outcomes are linked directly to changes in actors, how can one account for similarities of [international] outcomes that persist or recur even as actors vary?' (Waltz, 1979: 65; 1986: 329). Rather, he argues, states are the pure product of anarchy. Anarchy (that is, a multistate system in which there is no external authority that stands above the sovereign states) *socialises* states

into 'like-units' (by which he means that the political units all perform exactly the same survival function, and that they have a dual monopoly of the means of violence and rule such that no alternative or competing forms of domestic political authority exist). It should be noted that neo-liberals also implicitly view states as 'like-units'. But the key point here is that in creating a parsimonious 'systemic' theory which brackets (or ignores) the importance of domestic politics in the international system, Waltz explicitly *dismisses the relevance of sociological and historical sociological analysis* (Waltz, 1979: chs. 2–6, esp., pp. 43–9), precisely because such an approach would produce a picture of constant international change as opposed to continuity. In short, Waltz's whole theory, along with his efforts to marginalise historical sociology, rests on the assumption that states are 'like-units'. Demonstrating that such an assumption might be false or problematic would necessarily jeopardise his whole theory as well as his justification for the necessary exclusion of historical sociology from the 'legitimate' international relations research agenda.

One of the most striking insights of historical sociology is the point that the presence of *unlike* or *functionally differentiated* units (i.e., where there are competing sources of political authority at the domestic level) under anarchy has not only occurred in world history, but, above all, has taken precedence over the existence of 'like-units' for something like 99 per cent of world history (cf. Ruggie, 1983; Mann, 1986; Tilly, 1990; Buzan, Jones and Little, 1993; Spruyt, 1994). Such a point strikes at the very heart of Waltz's project, because it shows that the existence of 'like-units' is anomalous or exceptional. This has three major ramifications: first, that we urgently require a renewed focus on accounting for the *uniqueness* of modern 'like-units'; second, that anarchy cannot adequately explain their presence, given that anarchy has (at least according to Waltz) always existed in world history; and third, that only an historical sociological analysis can perform this sensitive task.

Problematising the notion of a 'distinct self-constituting' international realm

Historical sociology reveals as highly problematic the seemingly innocent claim that international relations can be understood by omitting the impact of the domestic realm. Historical sociologists in particular have shown that the domestic and international realms are thoroughly interpenetrated and mutually constituted. Societies and international societies are not unitary but are 'constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting socio-spatial networks of power' (Mann, 1986: 1; cf. Elias, 1978; Giddens, 1985; Runciman, 1989). This poses a major problem for

Waltzian neorealism because if neither the international nor the national are 'self-constituting entities', then the assumption of a separate discipline of international relations divorced from historical sociology cannot logically hold.

Problematising the sovereign spatial relations between units (spatial differentiation)

Historical sociological insight is also important in that it draws our attention to thinking about the varying historical forms of spatial relations that separate political units (i.e., *spatial differentiation*), which in turn requires us to theorise the specific *emergence* of modern sovereign borders – a point that Ruggie (1983) originally made. A major aspect of Ruggie's critique of neorealism was that systemic analysis is insensitive to changes in the spatial relations between the units. Drawing on historical sociological insight, he argued that under European heteronomy (800–1648), the feudal units were spatially arranged according to overlapping jurisdictions and overlapping loyalties. By contrast, the spatial relations between modern sovereign states have been strikingly different, and entail a radical jurisdictional and spatial separation between independent units. Though he did not put it as such, the most profound insight that Ruggie brought us in this article was the claim that Waltz committed the *tempocentric error*, since he mistakenly took the Westphalian moment as typical of inter-state spatial relations and then extrapolated it back in time to encompass all previous states systems. Waltz's theory leads to a problematic understanding of pre-modern international relations, in which non-sovereign conceptions of territoriality predominated (Anderson, 1974; Poggi, 1978), where loose boundaries rather than borders 'separated' societies (Giddens, 1985), and where fluid conceptions of political space often prevailed – e.g., nomadic migrations (Lattimore, 1962). More importantly though, because Waltz fails to treat inter-spatial relations between units as historically variable, he is thereby robbed of the capacity to explain the emergence of modern sovereign borders. Given that this is no small lacuna because the issue of sovereign borders remains a major one in contemporary international relations, this must constitute a serious flaw not just in neorealism but in all tempocentric international relations theory. As Ruggie put it, 'without the [historical sociological] concept of spatial differentiation . . . it is impossible to define the modern era in international politics – modes of [spatial] differentiation are the pivot in the epochal study of rule' (Ruggie, 1998b: 180, 193; cf. Agnew, 1994, 1999; Brenner, 1999). The issue here is not simply to point to the need for explaining different forms of spatial relations in history, but more

importantly, to point out that Waltz is unable to explain one of the most fundamental aspects of the modern world – the existence of sovereign spatial relations between states.

Problematising anarchy as a 'differentiated' structure

Historical sociology problematises Waltz's view that 'international anarchy' (i.e., a system of competing sovereign states with no higher external authority) and international 'hierarchy' (e.g., empires, hegemonies), are mutually exclusive (Waltz, 1979: 114–16). Historical sociological insight reveals firstly that these categories are 'ideal-types', and have never existed in pure form; and secondly, that they are not mutually exclusive. Particular hierarchies (or what Martin Wight (1977) called 'suzerain states systems') – e.g., ancient Rome, imperial China, the Mongol and Habsburg empires have *co-existed* at different times with other hierarchies as well as with decentralised anarchic multistate systems – e.g., warring-states China, ancient Greece, ancient India and the Italian city-state system. And within feudal Europe, although the continental system was anarchic, it was at all times cross-cut by various hierarchies (e.g., the papacy, the Holy Roman Empire and the Merovingian and Frankish empires, as well as the Mongolian and Habsburg empires). Moreover, this is no less true of the modern world, where hierarchies (e.g., Warsaw Pact, US hegemony/NATO, British and French empires, etc.) have co-existed under anarchy (see also Watson, 1992; Wendt and Friedheim, 1996; Ruggie, 1998b; Paul, 1999).

Analysing the different historical forms that international relations has taken in the past enables us critically to rethink the particular forms that it has taken in the last three hundred years. As we note in the subsequent discussion of Buzan and Little's 'structural realist' historical sociology, the key point here is that anarchy is not a pure self-constituting monolith but is itself *differentiated*, in that it almost always exists in conjunction with various cross-cutting subsystem hierarchies. Rather than imagining a contemporary world covered in a pure blanket of anarchy, historical sociology reveals it as one that comprises an extremely delicate mosaic or patchwork of intersecting anarchies and subsystem hierarchies. Accordingly, it should be the task of historical sociologists to tease out the various processes that create this continuously changing mosaic.

Problematising 'inter-systemic' and 'inter-societal' relations

Assuming the world to be a monolithic anarchy is problematic not least because it fails to recognise that there has not been just one international

system throughout history, but many (as noted above). Having recognised this point, we should consider how their boundaries have contracted and expanded over time, both historically and contemporaneously. It is important to differentiate the boundaries of international *systems* (which are territorial) from those of international *societies* (which are moral). Thus in breaking with tempocentrism, historical sociology offers us new ways of thinking about and theorising 'inter-systemic' and 'inter-societal' relations, and enables us to begin charting the expansion and contraction of the territorial boundaries of international systems, and the moral boundaries of international societies, something which is raised in the works of various historical sociologists (e.g., Mann, 1986; Watson, 1992; Linklater, 1998, and this volume; Buzan and Little, 2000, and this volume).

So to sum up the arguments of this section: the view that the international is an anarchy comprising territorially demarcated sovereign states is less the product of common sense and more the result of an intellectual construction. Historical sociological insight reveals that mainstream international relations theorists have in effect taken a chronofetishist 'snapshot' of the present Westphalian system at a particular moment, from which its most basic features were extracted without regard to its specific historical setting, in order to derive a 'scientific' theory of international relations. This can only be problematic because the Westphalian 'moment' is *precisely* that: it is the temporal exception rather than the norm in international history. The next move by mainstream international relations theorists was to take this exceptional 'moment' and then tempocentrically extrapolate it back in time so as to tarnish *all* historical systems as isomorphic or homologous, thereby imposing an historically sanitised and totalised character to past and present international relations, and obscuring the significant differences and discontinuities between historical systems. Indeed, 'Waltz (mis)takes the Westphalian moment for the ontology of the international system' (Spruyt, 1998: 19). But it is also clear from the above discussion that this chronofetishised snapshot failed to pick up some of the most fundamental constitutive features of the present system, features that can only be brought into focus through a more sensitive historical sociological lens.

In short, historical sociological insight is significant not simply because it tells us new things about previous historical international systems. More importantly, it is significant because, firstly, it forces international relations theorists to move beyond chronofetishism and tempocentrism, and thereby problematise the most basic institutional, moral and spatial forms that constitute modern international relations; and, secondly, it provides

new ways of theorising and explaining the emergence and development of the modern international system/society in its multiple dimensions. Thus our project necessarily entails a rejection of the mainstream project, which unwittingly seeks to impose a totalising logic of continuity and regularity upon a temporally protean past and present international relations. In this way then, there is clearly a great deal at stake in 'bringing historical sociology back into international relations' for the discipline as a whole.

Transcending chronofetishism and tempocentrism in international relations: seven major historical sociological approaches in international relations

I now turn to a discussion of the seven major historical sociological approaches that are covered in this volume. My task here is twofold: firstly, to provide an outline of what each of the theories looks like; and secondly, to show how each approach overcomes either chronofetishism or tempocentrism, or both. The chosen format is *not* meant to convey seven mutually exclusive approaches; nor does it convey *all* the various historical sociological approaches that are presently on offer within international relations – two of which are the English School and feminism. The omission of the former is partially made good by the fact that both Linklater and Buzan and Little explicitly draw on the English School. Unfortunately, we have not covered feminism. While this is regrettable, we do insist that a feminist approach would have a great deal to offer the historical sociological project outlined here.

Neo-Weberian historical sociology in international relations

Of all the historical sociological approaches on offer in international relations, the neo-Weberian is ironically one of the most famous, with references to Mann, Giddens, Skocpol and Tilly appearing frequently; 'ironically' because it is equally apparent that within the international relations community as a whole, there is as yet very little understanding of what neo-Weberianism comprises and above all, how it can be applied to international relations – Hobden (1998) is a notable exception. The approach has been summarised elsewhere through 'six principles', which amount to the fundamental commitments to ontological complexity (see Hobson, 1998a: 286–96) and an historicist approach.

In his chapter, John Hobson argues that there have been two waves of Weberian historical sociology within international relations: a 'first wave', which adopts a neorealist and reductionist theory of the state and international relations – found typically in Skocpol (1979), Collins (1986) and

Tilly (1990) – and a 'second wave', which seeks to develop a more complex or methodologically pluralist, *non*-realist approach. Hobson argues that the adoption of a neorealist definition of the international by first-wave Weberians necessarily leads them unwittingly to contradict the basic objectives that their explanatory model seeks to realise. It causes them to: 'kick the state back out'; produce a sociologically *reductionist* account of social change; and posit a distinct separation between the national and international realms. The deepest irony, though, is that in the process, they become incapable of overcoming chronofetishism and tempocentrism, and accordingly deny their commitment to *historical sociological* enquiry.

To solve these problems, Hobson calls for the need to develop a 'second-wave' Weberian historical sociology approach, which breaks with neorealism, and adopts a *non*-realist conception of both the state and the international. To achieve this, he argues for a *structurationist* approach, which notes that state–society complexes are agents that both constitute, and are constituted by, socio-domestic and international/global structures. Borrowing the phrase from Buzan and Little, he argues that we need a 'thick' conception of the international, and by extension, a thick conception of the state–society complex, which implies that international and domestic structures are co-constituted and are fundamentally embedded within a series of social relationships. This is necessary because it is the prevailing thin conceptions of the state and the international that have led to chronofetishism and tempocentrism. To develop and *illustrate* this model he draws on the case study of trade regime change in late-nineteenth-century Europe.

In essence, he begins by bracketing state–society agency and focuses on the international and domestic structural forces that pushed continental states to shift from relatively free trade back to tariff protectionism after 1877. In particular, all states faced fiscal crisis owing to the fact that the second military revolution increased the costs of war at the same time that economic depression led to a contraction of government revenues. Domestically, most states faced social pressures to move towards protectionism, mainly from their dominant classes. Weak states – those that were isolated from society and had low amounts of infrastructural power – chose to increase indirect taxes and, therefore, shifted to tariff protectionism (tariffs are an indirect tax). The strong British state – which was broadly embedded in both the working and dominant classes, and had high levels of infrastructural power – was able to avoid tariff protectionism because it could resort to the income tax. Accordingly it maintained free trade until the First World War. But, he argues, if we left it here, we would end up with a structuralist approach, in which states simply respond or conform to international and domestic structural constraints.

The second part of the argument brackets structure and focuses on the agency of state–society complexes. Here governments dipped into the domestic and international 'resource pools' in order to push through domestic reforms – reforms which had nothing to do with conforming to international structural requirements. Thus the German government dipped into the international economic realm and raised tariffs so that it could enhance its despotic power over the lower classes (as did the Russian government), as well as to enhance the power of the dominant Junker class. The British government, by contrast, maintained free trade and used this in order to push through the income tax to court the working classes, while simultaneously catering to the trading needs of the dominant classes. In sum, trade regime change was informed by a complex mixture of variables – domestic, national and international. And moreover, he argues, only an approach which focuses on structure *and* agency can provide a sufficient explanation of trade regime change.

Finally, this approach enables a break with prevailing chronofetishist and tempocentric theories of the rise of free trade after 1945. He argues that the mid-nineteenth-century free trade regime was different from the post-1945 regime, not least because the former was far less robust and far less 'free' than the latter. The differences are explained by the presence of two radically different constellations of social power forces, comprising international normative environments, international institutional architectures and the social embeddedness of the state–society complex. The earlier regime was based on a *neo-mercantilist* international norm, a *bilateral* international institutional architecture, and a *socially disembedded* state–society complex which, once the costs of government rose, turned immediately to tariffs to secure the required revenues. Accordingly, the regime was both weak and temporary. By contrast the post-1945 regime was based on an *embedded liberal* set of international norms, a *multilateral* international institutional architecture, and a *socially embedded* state–society complex which relied on the income tax and could therefore drop its earlier dependence on tariffs for fiscal revenues. Accordingly, the convergence of these three social power configurations enabled a much freer and more robust trade regime in the post-1945 era. In this way, he argues, only an historical sociological analysis of state–society relations that breaks with chronofetishism and tempocentrism can reveal the unique social forces that underpinned and enabled the seemingly 'natural' post-1945 free trade regime.

I include Martin Shaw's piece in this section because it draws on neo-Weberianism, even though it does not fit the pure label, given that he also seeks to draw on Marx. Critical of prevailing sociological models of globalisation, he argues that they exaggerate the importance of economic and, especially, technological forces, at the expense of the political and

military dimensions of globalisation. His argument begins with the claim that '1945' represents the major discontinuity or historical turning point in world development – one which witnessed a transition from a state system based on 'imperial nation-states' to one based on a single Western state 'conglomerate', where the component states have pooled their 'monopolies of violence'. The Western states no longer confront each other as potential military enemies but form one large internally pacified conglomerate, which has been territorially demarcated as such since 1945. Its relative strength derives from its unrivalled economic and military resources as well as its strong authoritative resources. These authoritative resources are based on the 'democratic revolution', which now defines the principal axis of world politics – between a democratic Western state conglomerate and a non-Western system of 'quasi-imperial patrimonial states'. As a direct challenge to 'first-wave' Weberian historical sociology, Shaw claims that 'to try to understand "international" relations in exclusively, or principally, geopolitical terms goes against much that has been gained in the "new" international theorising of the last decade, and much of what historical sociology is placed to offer' (p. 92). He goes on to argue that *international* relations among Western states has now given way to *internal* relations within the conglomerate, thereby fundamentally breaking with chronofetishism by revealing the present system as open to change. He simultaneously breaks with tempocentrism in so far as he is able to delineate fundamental breaks or discontinuities between traditional and modern international relations.

Shaw argues that the case study of revolution provides a useful means for rethinking international relations (cf. Halliday, 1994, 1999). Halliday has analysed the international forces that led to domestic revolution, which then led back to inter-state conflict (i.e., an international–national–international chain). Shaw extends this approach by effectively conceptualising a set of transnational linkages that flow across global society. Specifically, he notes a linkage between global revolution, democratic revolution and genocidal war. The democratic revolution is radically different from previous notions of revolution in so far as it: represents the end of the linkage between centralised revolutionary parties and the seizure of political power; creates a link with universal standards of democracy and human rights; and establishes a link with the state-building activities of oppressed minorities. This has two ramifications for global politics: it strengthens the international bureaucracy of the UN system, and it enables the expansion of the Western state, which is increasingly involved in humanitarian intervention in the old imperial-patrimonial states. This enables him to locate a fundamental change in the mode of warfare.

Following Mary Kaldor, he argues that modern warfare can no longer be understood as a 'socially neutral' means of resolving issues between

states (as in traditional *realpolitik*), but is fundamentally based on the internal conflicts that emanate within the old patrimonial states. These conflicts appear as ethnic in nature, but are in fact political conflicts between patrimonial elites that are seeking to suppress democratic (or counter-revolutionary) movements, often through genocide within their own countries. As these local conflicts spread across the old patrimonial world, so they draw in the Western state, in turn promoting the coherence of the conglomerate as well as enhancing the bureaucratic layer of the UN. In this way, he adapts Halliday's argument and shows how global democratic revolutionary norms impact upon the populations of the patrimonial states, which then engage in the struggle for reform domestically. As the patrimonial elites fight back with genocide, so the Western state and the UN become involved in warfare. Thus the dialectic of international war and domestic social revolution continues but in an historically new form, which not only changes the mode of warfare, but fundamentally enhances the emerging supranational political structures that emerged after 1945.

Constructivist historical sociology in international relations

As with Weberian historical sociology, constructivism began life within sociology, but has in the last decade diffused across into international relations. While there are a variety of constructivist approaches (see Price and Reus-Smit, 1998; Hobson, 2000: ch. 5), I begin by setting out four general principles that lie at the base of constructivism, and then consider how our constructivist contributors develop an historical sociology of international relations.

(1) *The primacy of ideational factors.* Constructivists argue that mainstream international relations theory is excessively materialist (or 'rationalist'), and fails to capture the autonomy of norms that guide and shape state behaviour. In their parlance, norms are 'constitutive' rather than simply 'regulatory'.

(2) *Agent interests are derived from identity-construction, which is constituted in the course of social interaction.* Rationalism views agent preferences as unproblematic – that they are exogenously formed prior to social interaction. Rather than beginning with an inherent portfolio of interests which agents seek to maximise on the international stage through an 'instrumental rationality', constructivists insist that state interests are derived from agents' identity, which is in turn derived by the process of 'normative socialisation'. Michael Barnett and Chris Reus-Smit both argue that constructivists are inherently structurationist: that constructivists 'are just

as concerned with the role of agents' practices in the production and reproduction of social structures, as they are with the way those structures shape agents' identies and interests (Reus-Smit, p. 132).

(3) *Communicative action and moral norms specify 'appropriate' behaviour.* Actors tend to follow behaviour that is deemed to be morally appropriate or legitimate. As Reus-Smit points out, in those instances in which agents pursue behaviour that does not comply with these moral norms, so they will have to justify their behaviour. And they justify their behaviour by appealing to established codes of social conduct in the 'linguistic court of appeal'. The upshot of this is that justifying behaviour in terms of moral norm compliance acts as a constraining force upon actor behaviour. Failure to comply is punished by 'shame' and, at the extreme, by sanctions or even war.

(4) *The importance of historical international change.* Agent identities are highly malleable and change as normative structures change. Because identities change as normative and moral structures change, so the process of international change becomes a fundamental aspect of the constructivist project. It is mainly at this point that constructivism overlaps with historical sociology, because by charting changes in actor behaviour, constructivists examine the changes in norms through historical time and how these impact differently upon inter-state relations (see especially, Hall and Kratochwil, 1993; Ferguson and Mansbach, 1996; R. Hall, 1999; Reus-Smit, 1999). And as Michael Barnett argues in his chapter, constructivism overlaps with historical sociology in so far as it: seeks to recover the roots of social constructs over time; examines the role that individual acts and events play in producing international change; and notes the path-dependency associated with the impact of previous historical events. More specifically, he argues, constructivism shares with Weberian historical sociology the desire to: overcome mono-causal theory; examine the direction of historical change; chart the changing social properties that structure social interaction; and engage in case-based research especially through the comparative method.

Concerning the fourth point, our two constructivist contributors between them pose an interesting conundrum. Barnett argues that while there is much potential overlap between constructivism and historical sociology, it remains largely unexplored at present. The reason for this, he argues, concerns the specific moment of constructivism's birth within international relations. In seeking to gain 'disciplinary legitimacy', constructivists had to take on neoliberalism and neorealism, both of which are, as we noted above, 'historophobic'. In meeting them on their

own grounds, many (though clearly not all) constructivists have tended to focus on rethinking the present. By contrast Reus-Smit argues that constructivism is inherently historical sociological (though paradoxically, Barnett would not disagree). As he puts it, 'norms change over time, making historical process and change central constructivist concerns'. Either way though, the central questions to be answered here are: how does constructivism develop the historical research agenda within international relations; and how does constructivism overcome chronofetishism and tempocentrism?

Michael Barnett argues that there are at least three possible research areas that constructivists should develop in order to advance historical sociology in international relations: first, the need to develop better analyses of state–society relations (an area that, he argues, Marxist and Weberian historical sociologists have pursued for a long time); second, the need to examine political economy issues – which constructivists, he argues, have hitherto largely conceded to rationalist approaches (but see Burch and Denemark, 1997); and third, the need to consider the overlap between state-formation, bureaucratisation and international organisations (IOs). The second part of his chapter develops this third area in some detail. Here he draws on Max Weber's account of bureaucracy and uses it to demonstrate the autonomy and importance of IOs within contemporary global society. In this analysis, Barnett draws close to what I have called an 'international society-centric' constructivist approach (Hobson, 2000: ch. 5), which focuses primarily on the importance of international norms and international organisations in the shaping of state identities, interests and policies.

Barnett begins by noting Weber's four defining criteria of modern bureaucratic organisation: hierarchy, continuity of functions, impersonality of procedures, and specialist knowledge or expertise of officials. The key point that he makes concerns the power or autonomy that bureaucracies derive from these norms. Following Weber (1978), he argues that bureaucratisation introduces new forms of *authority* – specifically 'rational-legal' authority – which modernity views as 'legitimate' and 'good'. Independence is also generated by the procedural form that bureaucratic organisation entails. Thus, first, bureaucrats have technical and specialist knowledge which generates considerable 'authority'. Second, bureaucratic power is 'cloaked power': it paradoxically emerges through the discourse of rationality, impartiality and objectivity. Third, bureaucracies are not neutral regulatory institutions, which enable actors to overcome co-ordination problems; they also instruct actors as to what their 'proper' goals and activities should be. From here, Barnett suggests that bureaucratic norms empower IOs in the international realm. As he puts it, 'IOs

have a distinct [bureaucratic] organisational culture, [their] officials have autonomy and [they] can act without the permission of states, and in opposition to state interests' (p. 113). Thus IOs gain authority through their role as experts, working within a so-called neutral, apolitical and technocratic environment. IOs do not simply solve co-ordination problems that confront states, but also wield authoritative power, which enables them to specify the normatively desirable means and ends for such problems to be solved. This enables him to overcome the chronofetishist 'naturalist illusion', firstly, by showing how international bureaucracies are not apolitical and neutral, but are fundamentally 'implicated in power politics' and, secondly, by showing how IOs are transforming the present international realm. He also provides a way of overcoming the tempocentric 'isomorphic illusion' by demonstrating a radical discontinuity between present and past world politics in terms of the emergence of IOs and new patterns of authority relations.

One of the most interesting linkages between the constructivist analyses of Barnett and Reus-Smit concerns their treatment of Max Weber's classic definition of the state: 'A compulsory political organization with continuous operations . . . will be called a "state" insofar as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force [violence] in the enforcement of its order' (Weber, 1978: 54, 56; Weber 1948: 78). Reus-Smit, in particular, takes neo-Weberians to task for their materialist reading of Weber's theory of the state, and seeks rather to emphasise the constructivist dimension of the theory: namely, that part which emphasises 'legitimacy' and 'authority'. He notes that there are at least two cues for a constructivist theory to be found in the works of Max Weber – that his theory of the state emphasises legitimacy and that Weber's 'switchman metaphor' is suggestive of the role that ideas can play in international change (Weber, 1948: 280; Weber, 1926: 347–8). Nevertheless, he concludes that in the end, both Weber and neo-Weberianism fall short of producing a full 'history with ideas', because ideas are treated only as 'intervening', rather than 'full', independent, variables. However, though such a claim is forcefully and well argued, it glosses over some constructivist strands found in the works of Mann (also Hobson, this volume, pp. 78–80). Nevertheless, it would be entirely fair to conclude that neo-Weberians need to draw out the constructivist strand more fully. Either way though, Reus-Smit seeks to explicitly resuscitate the constructivist cue in Weber's work, in order better to account for both epochal change and changing international institutional architectures. Here he places prime focus on how domestic conceptions of the moral purpose of the state affect the conduct of international relations.

He begins by arguing that the common equation of the birth of the modern international system with the emergence of sovereignty in 1648 is problematic for three main reasons: first, sovereignty is not the only aspect of the modern system, but is one of three core principles that define the modern – the other two being a 'hegemonic conception of the moral purpose of the state' and a 'norm of procedural justice'. Second, sovereignty itself needs to be problematised given that its meaning changes through time. And third, while sovereignty existed from the fifteenth century to the early nineteenth century, the period saw two different conceptions of sovereignty at different times. Moreover, the core features of the modern international institutional architecture – contractual international law and multilateralism – were not established until the mid-nineteenth century. As Reus-Smit puts it, 'Why did the paired institutions of contractual international law and multilateralism – which together provide the basic structure of governance in the modern international system – not take off until after the age of revolutions?' (p. 135).

In order to rethink epochal change, Reus-Smit proposes two new conceptions of change: first, 'purposive change', which involves a redefinition of the moral purpose of the state, in turn leading to shifts in the meaning of sovereignty and procedural justice; and second, 'configurative change', which entails a shift in the moral purpose of the state, as well as a shift in the spatial configuration of international politics – or what Ruggie (1983) describes as 'systems change'. The period between 1555 and 1815 was an example of configurative change, in which the moral purpose of the state changed and the spatial configuration of inter-state politics shifted. But the key point is that the new system was *not* modern: states enjoyed 'dynastic' sovereignty, which implied an 'authoritative' conception of procedural justice, where 'the standards of right and wrong were dictated . . . by a supreme authority – God in the first instance, monarchs by deputation' (Reus-Smit, p. 138). Here law was 'law as command'. And because international law came to reflect this reconceptualisation of the moral purpose of the state, it came to be understood as an expression of God's law, as opposed to one based on reciprocally binding contracts between sovereigns. This, he argues, explains why modern multilateralism did *not* emerge under dynastic sovereignty.

The most important shift in international politics came not in 1648 as is conventionally thought, but *after* 1789, when the new principles associated with the French Revolution led to a 'purposive change' – to new conceptions of sovereignty and procedural justice. Only after 1789 did the fundamental institutional aspects of the modern system emerge. The moral purpose of the state was redefined by new *individualist* norms,

based around a broader conception of citizenship rights. This in turn affected international law and procedural justice, such that the former came to express the notion of reciprocal accord (in which new domestic conceptions of the general will were internationalised into contractual international law), and the latter took the form of multilateralism. Accordingly, multilateralism took off in the nineteenth century.

In sum, Reus-Smit produces an important contribution to an historical sociology of international relations, by linking moral changes in domestic state behaviour to changes in international law and forms of international procedural justice. He is able to break with chronofetishism by denaturalising the present as well as by tracing its historical origins, and simultaneously breaks with tempocentrism by revealing the present system as fundamentally different to that of the past.

World systems historical sociology in international relations

Most international relations theorists associate world systems theory with Immanuel Wallerstein. What this misses is that in the last decade, world systems theory has progressed into a new form which shares some commonalities with Wallerstein, but also makes some radical departures. To capture the differences, I refer to *classical* world systems theory (associated with the likes of Immanuel Wallerstein and Samir Amin), and *neo-classical* world systems theory (associated with the recent work of André Gunder Frank, Barry Gills and others) (for a full discussion, see Hobson, 2000: ch. 4). Wallerstein's approach is well known in international relations, though for the most part, he is most closely associated with his theory of *dependency* (known as the 'layer cake model'). International relations scholars, however, are much less familiar with his historical sociological approach.

Wallerstein's historical sociology advocates a strong break between the modern world system and the pre-modern, where the former is based on a world-economy founded on the 'law of ceaseless accumulation', and the latter was based on world empires and a 'tributary mode of production' (Wallerstein, 1974: 15; Amin, 1996; Wallerstein, 1996). By contrast, neo-classical world systems theorists do away with the 'great discontinuity' and the related assumption of historical 'dichotomies', and in their place posit, in Gills's words, a 'continuity thesis'. Arguably (though Gills denies this), the approach tends to repeat the tempocentric mistake that mainstream international relations theory makes, since the past is made to look the same as the present. Such writers insist that the rise of the West did not occur because of the rise of a modern world system/economy *after* 1500;

it was merely the latest phase or shift *within the pre-existent world system* (see the contributions in Frank and Gills, 1996). As Frank puts it, 'the world system was not born in 1500; it did not arise in Europe; and it is not distinctively capitalist' (Frank, 1996: 202). In strict contrast, they trace it back some 5,000 years to 3500 BC – although Abu-Lughod (1989) traces it back to AD 1250. Thus there has been not many, but only one world system, which has existed for 5,000 years and has been governed by the timeless and regular beat of a series of about ten 500-year 'long-wave cycles'.

The key point here is that in positing a 'continuity problematic', Gills seeks to make a series of adjustments to some of the familiar concepts that are employed by most Western social scientists. In claiming that capitalism has been around for some five millennia, *neoclassical* world system theory effectively suggests that the 'pre-modern' needs to be economically upgraded, while the modern needs to be economically downgraded. Or as Barry Gills puts it in his chapter here, 'In general we have tended to view the "pre-modern" as being too primitive, and the "modern" as being rather too modern' (p. 143). The dismissal of the '1500 discontinuity' necessarily requires us to do away with the prevailing dichotomous concepts of developmental history: between 'feudalism and capitalism', 'free and unfree labour' (Marx), '*oikos* and bureaucratic capitalism', 'merchant capitalism and rational capitalism' (Weber), or '*gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*' (Toennies). Smoothing out these differences necessarily requires a rethink of these fundamental 'dual' categories that have long dominated historical sociology. This is one of the major tasks that preoccupies Gills in his chapter in this volume.

Because the relations of distribution rather than the relations of production were central for Wallerstein, he was able to argue that since 1600, the world economy has been capitalist, even though the social relations of production across the world system took on a variety of forms of free and unfree labour. Gills applies a similar logic but effectively extrapolates it back to 3500 BC. Thus he argues that free and unfree labour, as well as '*oikos* and capital', have *always* co-existed in a dialectical relationship. Moreover, he argues that even in the contemporary world system, a variety of forms of social relations continue to exist; so much so that he argues that slavery has been instrumental in the rise of the modern phase of the world system, and that it is even now re-emerging in large parts of the world.

Even if Gills's approach does not fully succeed in overcoming tempocentrism, I believe that he is partially correct to point out that capitalism is not entirely new and unique to the modern West, and that Eurasia rather than solely Europe was the creator of modern capitalism. And in

this respect his approach most definitely overcomes chronofetishism in so far as he is able to problematise the 'orientalist' assumptions of much of the developmental theory literature.

Critical historical materialist historical sociology in international relations

A fourth major historical sociological approach which has recently emerged in international relations is that of critical theory. Though critical theory is a complex body of thought with many different variants, what unites all critical theorists is a rejection of what Cox (1986) calls 'problem-solving theory'. Rather than search for ways to manage the present system as smoothly as possible, critical theory is not only *critical* of present structures and institutions, but also *emancipatory* in that it seeks to find, and make possible the construction of, a new society – in both the domestic and international realms – that is free of social exclusion (Cox, 1986). Two of the leading writers in this field are Robert Cox and Andrew Linklater, who develop complementary but ultimately different approaches. This volume displays both variants, with Linklater setting out his own version (discussed in the next section), and A. Claire Cutler setting out a version which leans heavily on Cox's Gramscian theory. It is worth noting that Gramscian analysis has been utilised by a growing number of scholars within both international relations and international political economy, and within an historical sociological context (see, especially, Murphy, 1994).

Cutler's central task is to rethink the role of international law and to show how it has played a vital constitutive role in the determination of economic social relations. She begins by claiming that the study of international law in international relations is in 'crisis' – a crisis that originates with the tendency of mainstream international relations and international law theory to utilise a state-centric and ahistorical 'instrumental' framework. Such mainstream approaches are 'instrumental' because they posit international law to be a mere instrument of states, to be used, or neglected, in the furtherance of states' goals. And they are simultaneously ahistorical because they focus only on 'positive' international law (which is determined by states) and necessarily obscure the degree to which 'customary' international law empowers a range of non-state actors, which challenge the statist orthodoxy. Cutler's *remedy* for the chronofetishist and tempocentric illusions with which international law is understood within the mainstream, rests on the theme of a dialectical process that constitutes international law, which is intimately connected with reconceiving international law as praxis. This dialectical

process begins with the formulation of formal positive law, created by and for states, but which necessarily gives voice to anti-statist non-state actors which harness potentially emancipatory and liberating practices. And praxis embodies the notion that law (traditionally assigned to the 'superstructure') can come to constitute social relations and simultaneously enable the contestation of the power of the dominant hegemonic bloc by the marginalised.

In developing her preferred critical historical materialist approach, Cutler begins by rejecting 'crude' (or 'vulgar') Marxist materialism, which operationalises the traditional 'base–superstructure' model (outlined in Marx, 1976). In this model the 'independent' base, comprising the class struggle within the 'mode of production' (i.e., the social relations of production), determines the form and function of the 'dependent' superstructure (i.e., everything that lies outside of the mode of production – in this case, international law). In consigning state behaviour and international law to the superstructure, such a 'vulgar' Marxist approach views them as 'epiphenomenal' (i.e., wholly determined by the class struggle), and accordingly denies such 'superstructural elements' any effectivity as an historical-social force. In turn, because Cutler's prime objective is to restore the role of international law as a social force that does not simply reflect class imperatives, but also constitutes the social relations of production, she necessarily seeks to find a critical alternative to the traditional base–superstructure model. In this task, she joins the majority of neo-Marxists whose dissatisfaction with this model is aptly conveyed in Ellen Wood's words: 'The base/superstructure model has always been more trouble than it is worth. Although Marx himself used it very rarely . . . it has been made to bear a theoretical weight far beyond its limited capacities' (Wood, 1995: 49).

Her solution to this is to go beyond the famous 'relative autonomy of the state' approach of the French structuralist school (which still in fact operationalises a base–superstructure model), and effectively to *collapse* the distinction between the base and superstructure altogether, thereby in effect positing international law as constitutive of the base. In the process, she draws from two main currents of neo-Marxism which have invoked this solution to the problem of the base–superstructure model, namely Gramscian theory (Gramsci, 1971; Cox, 1986) and Political Marxism (e.g., Thompson, 1975; Wood, 1995) – the latter finding its 'international relations voice' in the work of Rosenberg (1994). She draws on Gramsci's notion of hegemony, in order to reveal the 'mechanisms by which laws become internalised in the consciousness of people', which enables her to then consider how 'we might begin to theorise law as an effective agent in history' (p. 197). This also enables her to consider the

ways in which 'counter-hegemonic' forces pursue their various emancipatory political projects. Thus she is able to reveal the emancipatory processes that remain obscured by mainstream chronofetishist analyses of international law.

In breaking with chronofetishism, she seeks to allow a plethora of hidden voices to be heard, not least those of women and indigenous peoples as well as those of the working class. More generally, her critical analysis enables the theorist to examine the ways in which various aspects of international law have 'historically operated to exclude marginalised and repressed peoples and developing countries by favouring existing positive law over potentially destabilising, if not revolutionary, customary law' (p. 199). By breaking with the rigidity of traditional Marxist approaches and simultaneously conceiving international law as informed by dialectics and praxis, she is thereby able to reveal the counter-hegemonic forces that are presently destabilising the international order. Moreover, her approach also breaks with tempocentrism in so far as she is able to reveal fundamental differences in the constitution of international law over time, something which she develops elsewhere (Cutler, forthcoming).

Critical historical sociology of international relations

All versions of critical historical sociology are especially strong both in their ability to overcome tempocentrism, by revealing the radical breaks between the past and present, and in their ability to overcome chronofetishism by denaturalising existing structures and institutions, and thereby revealing the present as an immanent order of change. Echoing Cox's clarion call, Linklater begins his recent book *The Transformation of Political Community* by arguing that 'social investigation reveals that present structures are not natural and permanent but have a history and are likely to be succeeded by different arrangements in the future. Identifying the seeds of future existing social orders is a key feature of [historical] sociological enquiry' (Linklater, 1998: 3). Unlike critical Marxists such as Cox and Cutler, Linklater does not advocate revolution and the overthrow of the mode of production as the means of achieving the universal society, ultimately because he sees the problem of 'social exclusion' as something which cannot be reduced only to class factors or the mode of production. Instead he emphasises the importance of 'praxeology', which refers to the process of 'reflecting on the moral resources within existing social arrangements which political actors can harness for radical purposes. It is preoccupied not with issues of strategy and tactics but with revealing that new forms of political community are immanent within existing forms of life and anticipated by their moral reserves' (Linklater, 1998: 5).