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Edited by Ira Katznelson and Martin Shefter: Shaped by War and Trade

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One

Rewriting the Epic of America

IRA KATZNELSON

“IS THE TRADITIONAL distinction between international relations and domestic politics dead?” Peter Gourevitch inquired at the start of his seminal 1978 article, “The Second Image Reversed.” His diagnosis — “perhaps” — was motivated by the observation that while “we all understand that international politics and domestic structures affect each other,” the terms of trade across the domestic and international relations divide had been uneven: “reasoning from international system to domestic structure” had been downplayed. Gourevitch’s review of the literature demonstrated that long-standing efforts by international relations scholars to trace the domestic roots of foreign policy to the interplay of group interests, class dynamics, or national goals¹ had not been matched by scholarship analyzing how domestic “structure itself derives from the exigencies of the international system.”²

Gourevitch counseled scholars to turn their attention to the international system as a cause as well as a consequence of domestic politics. He also cautioned that this reversal of the causal arrow must recognize that international forces exert pressures rather than determine outcomes. “The international system, be it in an economic or politico-military form, is underdetermining. The environment may exert strong pulls but short of actual occupation, some leeway in the response to that environment remains.”³

A decade later, Robert Putnam turned to two-level games to transcend the question as to “whether domestic politics really determine international relations, or the reverse.” Contrary to Gourevitch, he judged that there is “a theoretical sophistication on the international-to-domestic causal connection far greater than is characteristic of comparable studies on the domestic-to-international half of the loop.”⁴ He cited the important scholarship by Gourevitch, as well as James Alt, Peter Evans, and Peter Katzenstein, that had appeared since the publication of “The Second Image Reversed.”⁵

Today, the pendulum seems to have shifted once again. Momentum has moved to the large and growing body of work by scholars of international relations that has broken with the model of the state as a unitary rational actor to ask when and how domestic factors account for the choices states make in foreign policy. Arguably, this is where the cutting edge of IR scholarship presently is located. Several students of international relations have

been investigating the domestic roots of international geopolitical and economic affairs, seeking to open up the category of “state” by examining the cacophony of national politics.⁶ IR scholars working on subjects as diverse as crisis bargaining, the sources and outcomes of wars, the democratic peace thesis, and trade policy have been exploring how the international behavior of states is influenced by their domestic institutions, decisions, and policies.⁷

Notwithstanding the significant implications of these theory-driven research programs in the subfields of comparative politics and international relations for comprehending distinctive features in American political development, high walls continue to separate studies by Americanists of the U.S. politics at home from their studies of “foreign” affairs.⁸ Outside of IR, the rare exceptions tend to be found in comparative studies that include the United States as one of their cases.⁹ Conspicuously absent are investigations by Americanists either of international sources of domestic politics or the mutual constitution of international relations and domestic affairs. Thus, more than two decades since Gourevitch called for a new research perspective stressing the former, the degree and character of influence exercised by international factors on American political development remains remarkably unprobed, and too tight a restriction of attention to domestic factors continues to produce conclusions biased by an artificially limited universe of variables.

I

Convinced that this division between American politics and international relations is terribly constraining, the contributors to this exploratory volume emphasize the impact international factors have on domestic politics, suggest analytical strategies that borrow from work underway elsewhere, and display examples of scholarship that overcomes traditional barriers and divisions. Though estimable, Putnam’s goal to move immediately and directly to two-level models that encompass influence flowing in both directions seems premature, given the rudimentary state of current knowledge and research. Though some subjects, like the analysis of international bargaining, require simultaneous and interactive treatment, the present situation in the main warrants greater modesty.

Thus, as a heuristic exercise, *Shaped by War and Trade* primarily appraises the ways and extent to which international forces shape domestic outcomes. Seeking to complement the growing body of scholarship on the domestic sources of geopolitics and international economic policies, we focus on how American political development has been influenced by the country’s position in the global military and economic orders. The volume brings together scholars working in international relations, comparative poli-

tics, and American political development who wish not simply to confirm the importance of neglected subjects but also to demonstrate some productive directions that might be taken to move beyond the image of a world consisting of self-contained states. This book, thus, is more than an effort to collect between a set of covers essays that attempt to understand international influences on American political history. We aim to show how work linking American politics to the international economy and state system can be fruitful when guided by a set of broadly common theoretical and substantive concerns.

More particularly, we are searching for terms of partnership with students of war and trade who have been paying attention to politics inside the United States because they seek to address two questions: why a country adopts policies a realist would regard as less than optimal, and how a country's institutions, parties, coalitions, ideology, and other key features of its political life shape its choices in the international arena.¹⁰

Briefly consider three recent examples of this genre.¹¹ Seeking to comprehend why some wealthy countries become great powers while others do not, Fareed Zakaria's *From Wealth to Power* examines the lag in America's propensity to throw its weight around as an assertive international actor. From the end of the Civil War to 1896, the United States abstained from activity that realists would have expected it to undertake and for which it possessed ample material resources. Zakaria's analysis is state-centered and institutional. America's "national power," he argues, "lay dormant beneath a weak state, one that was decentralized, diffuse, and divided." The international ambitions both of presidents and secretaries of state, he argues, were foiled by the combination of a tiny national bureaucracy, a state structure fragmented by federalism, and the power of Congress to deny the executive branch sufficient funding to pursue its goals. Only with the modernization of the American state and the birth of the modern presidency at century's end could foreign policy activism develop effectively.¹²

Helen Milner takes up many of Zakaria's themes but seeks to elevate them to the level of systematic, portable theory. Starting from the position "that domestic politics and international relations are inextricably interrelated," her *Interests, Institutions, and Information* is grounded in the various bureaucratic, marxist, psychological, game-theoretic, and liberal (democratic peace) traditions that "have tried to explain state actions in foreign policy as a result of internal variables." Its main contribution is the development of a strategic causal theory assessing the influence of domestic on international affairs. Milner focuses on bargaining in specific institutional settings by actors with distinctive preferences and divergent information. Linking the domestic and international domains in her story are elite actors (individuals, groups, legislators) who participate in both settings (that is, in both games) concurrently. The probability that states will coordinate, as well

as the terms of their coordination, varies in time and place, she argues, depending on the play of this two-tiered game and on the effects of such factors as the balance of capacities between legislatures and executives and the distribution of imperfect information. Her “central argument is that cooperation among nations is affected less by fears of other countries’ relative gains or cheating than it is by the *domestic distributional consequences* of cooperative endeavors.”¹³ Both to test and to show the power of the model, Milner develops a number of cases within which the United States played a central role in the making of the postwar world, including Bretton Woods and the International Trade Organization, the never ratified Anglo-American Oil Agreement of 1944, and the 1992 North American Free Trade Agreement, ratified only after much controversy in 1993.

John Owen studies ten diplomatic crises spanning an even longer period, from the Jay Treaty of 1794 to the Spanish-American War of 1898, in order to identify the domestic mechanisms that reduce the chance that liberal states will make war on one another and increase the likelihood that they will take up arms against illiberal adversaries. *Liberal Peace, Liberal War* uses fine-grained case studies of the interplay of elite and public opinion, Congress, and the presidency in order to move beyond treatments of states as unitary, rational actors. The centerpiece of this effort is his serious treatment of liberalism as a body of ideas, as a worldview, and as a set of institutions. Owen underscores the significance, both within and outside the American state, of the ways in which liberal elites characterize other states. The international behavior of the United States in the nineteenth century, he argues, may be inexplicable in purely realist terms, but is much more intelligible when one takes account of the interplay of actors, institutions, and ideas on the domestic scene.

These studies embody the trend of boundary crossing we wish to emulate, although we will be moving mainly in the other causal direction. They operationalize state-society linkages institutionally. Milner is attracted by the deductive reasoning, explicit models, and systematic analysis of rational choice institutionalism. Zakaria is drawn to historical institutionalism, persuaded that relations among variables are transformed by their particular configuration in time and space. Owen focuses on distinctive American institutions and ideologies as complements to rational-actor and historical-institutionalist analysis. This volume is principally, though not exclusively, oriented to the second and third of these programs, the ones most closely identified with the main themes of American Political Development (APD) as a field. The essays collected here probe how the international situation of the United States has molded the character of the American state and the ideas and institutions underpinning its liberalism. These essays echo Gourevitch’s plea to transpose the causal direction of inquiry in order to better understand the issues APD has pressed to the fore. Like Zakaria,

Milner, and Owen, the scholars who contributed to this volume treat the state not as a unitary macrostructure that is simply either weak or strong¹⁴ but as a multidimensional conceptual variable.

II

The neglect of international factors is pronounced in the subfield of APD. Even outstanding works that deal with such manifestly international subjects as the role of tariffs in American industrialization¹⁵ overlook these concerns.¹⁶ More than a small irony is at work. In a programmatic essay that played a large role in the emergence of APD, Theda Skocpol urged her colleagues to produce “solidly grounded and analytically sharp understandings of the causal regularities that underlie the histories of states, social structures, and transnational relations in the modern world.”¹⁷ The first part of her agenda helped push forward the then still-nascent work of APD by promoting studies that overcame the conventional separation of American from comparative politics. By contrast, her call for attention to the international dimension, like Gourevitch’s proposal a half-dozen years earlier, has gone largely unheeded.

Students of statemaking in Europe, building on the landmark scholarship of Max Weber and Otto Hintze, have been attentive to the constitutive impact of the global economy and of international geopolitics in shaping domestic politics and institutions. Charles Tilly’s work explaining the emergence and character of states in early modern Europe, for example, has stressed how the preparation for and conduct of war affects the development of regime types, tax systems, fiscal policy, armed forces, patterns of bargaining between groups and classes, the mix of repression and rights, and the configuration of political institutions. Hendryk Spruyt has drawn attention to the ways trade patterns transformed the probabilities of success for such competing forms of rule in Renaissance Europe as city states and trading leagues. Thomas Ertman has accounted for variations in state infrastructures and political regimes in early modern Europe by the way geomilitary competition entwined with the organization of local government.¹⁸ The macroanalytical tradition in historical sociology also has focused on the impact of other cross-border processes, including the flows of people and ideas.¹⁹ By contrast, APD scholars have been attuned almost exclusively to internal processes and developments, such as electoral realignments, sectionalism, the changing balance within the federal system, and the extension of welfare state activity.

Thus, despite its resonant and relevant intellectual lineage, APD has continued to pay nearly exclusive attention to domestic institutions and policies. Its most influential journal, *Studies in American Political Development*, now

approaching nearly two full decades of publication, has published hardly any articles exploring the influence of international factors on domestic processes and behavior. With the exception of one article on immigration policy, a second on the ideas composing Charles Beard's approach to foreign policy, and a third on the role of the Council on Foreign Relations, *Studies* has assayed American political development in a wholly internalist manner.²⁰ Moreover, none of this subfield's landmark books, including Stephen Skowronek's *Building a New American State*, Richard Bense's *Yankee Leviathan*, and Theda Skocpol's *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers*, has made international subjects integral to its analysis, even though each prominently discusses the military, the preeminent hinge institution between domestic politics and international relations.²¹ Unlike IR's recent theory-oriented efforts to understand these linkages,²² APD largely remains bereft of such guides. The loss to intellectual vibrancy has been considerable. We have missed many opportunities to see how propositions that sprang from the increasingly robust alliance between international relations and comparative politics hold up when tested against the history of American politics or to use an American focus to bring together studies of international strategy and political economy.

III

These ambitions are not new. The range of such issues and the promise of such a venture were charted, if not attended to, quite some time ago. In 1931, the noted amateur historian, James Truslow Adams, published a widely read book, *The Epic of America*.²³ The following year, the presidential address to the American Historical Association by Berkeley historian Herbert Bolton advocated "a broader treatment of American history, to supplement the purely nationalistic presentation to which we are accustomed." Calling his own address "The Epic of Greater America," Bolton strongly advocated a research program to situate the United States, and the Americas more generally, in global perspective. He argued that the price of scholarly provincialism had been high: "the study of thirteen English colonies and the United States in isolation has obscured many of the larger factors in their development."²⁴

As a remedy, he proposed shifts in scale and content. Familiar aspects of American history, he submitted, should be rethought and conceptualized as international subjects. Treating, for example, Britain's settlement of thirty (not just thirteen) colonies in North America, from Guiana to Hudson Bay, within the larger context of the geopolitical and economic rivalries among Europe's leading powers, and taking slavery in the United States into account as part of a worldwide pattern, Bolton sought to show how the myopia

inherent in the traditional country-centered approach to history might be overcome by conceiving “domestic” variables as conjointly domestic and international. Research conducted on this broadened basis and from this reoriented perspective, he believed, would encourage new comparisons and make it possible to enlarge the character of causal accounts by historians and social scientists.²⁵

Bolton’s lecture is more than a period piece. Confining his examples mainly to the pre-Civil War experiences of settlement and expansion, he stressed the international jostling for territory in the New World among Spain, Portugal, Holland, France, England, Sweden, and Denmark, thus casting the contest for North America in far broader terms than the conventional way dates and locations are treated. Bolton underscored the interpenetration of sovereignty, space, boundaries, administration, empire, center-periphery relations, trade, production, war, demography, and culture. Further, he invited attention to fresh comparisons between the westward movements of Mexico, Canada, and the United States in North America and Brazil’s drive to the Andes. He highlighted contingent ties joining language, identity, nation, and state. He urged that the American Revolution be understood as having lasted nearly a half-century, arguing that in a wider context it is clear that American sovereignty was not secured until the 1820s, after a long period of menace to the north, west, and south. He recalled how the white-Indian story was always simultaneously a tale of relations with foreign states, since Indian country was the outpost of four different empires. He made conflict between the United States and Canada and on the Spanish and Mexican borderlands central to the antebellum period’s key “domestic” stories of statebuilding and economic development. He restored the themes of coercion and strong stateness to the making of the early American republic. And he showed how European capital and immigration, interacting with boundless natural resources and commercialization, contributed toward shaping what more recently has been called the market revolution.²⁶

Alas, Bolton’s bracing call to overcome the artificiality of the line separating domestic and international subjects mainly fell on deaf ears. The costs in unrealized prospects for studies in American political development continue to be paid. He rightly had observed that we cannot write credible American history without a supranational dimension any more than we can write credible European history without one. Here, too, frontiers and processes have had shifting boundaries, and the internal and external operations of power have been shaped, limited, and determined by mutual interaction. From the initial moments of European settlement to the post-Cold War epoch, America’s story has been shaped by its location and participation in an array of global relations and processes, including the country’s origins at the nexus of competing empires, its early struggles to secure and

extend sovereignty against multiple adversaries, recurrent wars (hot and cold), cross-national elements of its expansion westward, cross-border movements of capital and labor (both free and slave), the significance of trade (not least as a source of government revenue), and the geopolitical and economic global leadership roles the United States has assumed in this century, especially since the Second World War.

IV

Might the epic of America be rewritten in the spirit of Bolton by incorporating war and trade as key generative features of American political development? With respect to which hallmark issues studied by APD would attention to an international dimension be significant, and how should the character and extent of such international effects be studied and understood? Obviously, efforts to specify the key elements of the domestic explanandum and the international explanans as a contribution to APD must be central aspects of this enterprise. What do international explanations of domestic affairs consist of? How important are international, as compared to more confined, factors in explanations of outcomes in the American experience? What are the mechanisms that link international relations, broadly conceived, to domestic institutional and political affairs? How, exactly, do these causes shape these results? These questions cannot be answered if we do not know what an international explanation is. What, in short, does it mean to say that international influences fashion American political development?²⁷ How, in sum, do systematic considerations of international influences—especially war and trade—mold and constrain American political development?

Let's return to Gourevitch's foundational paper. He observed that apart from invasion and occupation, the aspects of the international system that most affect domestic politics and policy are "the distribution of power among states, or the international state system; and the distribution of economic activity and wealth, or the international economy." It is the task of analysis, he counseled, to explore the magnitude of influence exerted by these aspects of international affairs on domestic politics. Quickly noting that the phrase "Impact on domestic politics" could include a variety of effects: specific events, specific decisions, a policy, regime type, and coalition pattern," he decided to focus, for reasons of parsimony, on the latter two.²⁸ He asked, specifically, how choices between regime types—such as constitutional versus authoritarian, liberal versus totalitarian, and presidential versus parliamentary—are shaped by war and trade and how these external influences help determine the character and social base of political coalitions. By reviewing extant literatures, he demonstrated that others had

begun to ask these questions, and that they could be answered in quite satisfactory ways.

Much as Gourevitch proposes, the essays in this volume explore the impact that war and trade have had on the political regime and on political coalitions in the United States. Regimes and coalitions, however, take distinctive shapes in this liberal and democratic setting. APD scholars long have emphasized how the question of “regime” in the United States is best apprehended as a set of puzzles about the contours and particularities of the country’s liberal state. Since the founding, the main American regime issues have been concerned less with the existence of a liberal constitutional regime than with its scope and character. Likewise, the subject of political coalitions is closely tied to distinctively American situations, characterized, among other factors, by federalism, the separation of powers, and a profound history of sectionalism, especially North/South. It is not enough, in short, to identify regimes and coalitions as broad spheres of dependent variables; they need to be specified more precisely as objects of analysis.

A good starting point for these efforts is J. P. Nettl’s approach to the modern state developed in his 1968 article “The State as a Conceptual Variable,” where he sought to offer “a means of integrating the concept of state into the current primacy of social science concerns and analytical methods.” This volume’s attempt to assign a central role to transnational factors and processes in the development of the country’s distinctive regime can be pushed forward, we believe, by revisiting Nettl’s article and, especially, by attending to his analytical agenda’s unrealized or neglected dimensions. His conceptual “brushstroke configuration” of the state proved more influential than might have been expected, given the degree of silence he then addressed.²⁹ But Nettl’s main analytical move, the effort to parse the state into four distinctive dimensions, each of which he proposed to treat as a separate variable before probing their interrelationships, was not heeded by scholars, who conflated these dimensions into a single continuum, along which states were ranked from weak to strong based on measures of autonomy and capacity. This way of reading Nettl (and it is the dominant one) contributes little to our understanding of the distinguishing features of the American regime, except to show that it is relatively weak and permeable to societal influences. By contrast, this book suggests returning to the full multidimensional complexity of Nettl’s theoretical scheme as a means of specifying a regime-focused object of analysis.³⁰ As we soon will discover, one dividend this approach yields is an ability to transcend simplistic depictions of the American national state as extremely weak.

“The State as a Conceptual Variable” made two provocative moves. Explicitly distinguishing its approach from prebehavioral treatments of the state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Nettl proposed institutional and behavioral measures for degrees of “stateness.” He hoped

thereby to consolidate the gains political science had achieved in dealing with concepts as variables. In this way, he guarded against any return to metaphysical treatments of the state in the Hegelian tradition, and he made it possible to treat stateness as a concatenation of processes, sites, and outcomes, each of which possesses qualities of variation and contingency. Any given state at any specific historical moment thus is conceptualized configurationally. Nettl identified the central analytical dimensions of the state that interrelate contingently and distinctively in space and time. While resisting any general theory of state formation, he also refused to decompose the state into numerous variables treated in isolation from one another.

To overcome both “the all too general notion of state” and the tendency to slice and dice political analysis into distinctive variables as if they were unrelated to each other, Nettl arranged the concept of state into a limited number of distinct, but not hermetically sealed, domains of stateness, each ranging from weak to strong. Their combined features and relationships of these domains characterize particular historical states.

Nettl proposed four such dimensions. In the first, he treats the state as a “summing concept.” This aspect of stateness connotes “the institutionalization of power,” incorporating the state’s claim to sovereignty over people and territory and its superordination over less inclusive and less coercive associations. Nettl notes that this understanding of the “state” is akin to other abstract and inclusive concepts, such as “nation” and “society.” Notwithstanding the generality of the concept, the integrative abilities and sovereignty of states, he insists, vary in particular historical settings and always are shaped and contested within them.

A second component of stateness—its “inside” component—is institutional. The state is associated with a public sector characterized by a complex ensemble of authorities, organizations, and rules distinguishable from “private” domains. The state produces regulations and develops policies that transact with the economy, civil society, and other states. This aspect of the state varies in terms of its organizational complexity, its autonomy, and the scope of its regulative capacity. Nettl notes that the “autonomy of the state vis-à-vis other associations or collectivities becomes an empirical question for each individual case,” and it is from here that there are potential “inroads on external autonomy involved in international systems and pressures for political unification.”³¹

The state also is a cultural construct. This “cultural disposition to allot recognition to the conceptual existence of a state” is a reflection of historical traditions signaling the “existence, primacy, autonomy, and sovereignty of a state”; intellectual traditions based on the role that the prevailing political ideas and theory assign to the state; and cultural and cognitive processes that provide the mechanisms by which individuals incorporate, generalize, and ascribe a role and status to the state. Stateness, from this perspective, is

not only macrostructural or institutional; it possesses, crucially, a set of microfoundations.³²

Finally, there is the state's "outside" face. The modern sovereign state, Nettl avers, is the "basic, irreducible unit" of international relations. Within the global arena, the state is akin "to the individual person in society." Even where a state is otherwise weak, in this dimension its autonomy usually is unquestioned. Here, Nettl took up the banner of realism, locating the state as a unitary, rational, strategic actor in a global system of states. "In this international context the concept of the state," he noted, "in addition to being a unit also generates the almost exclusive and acceptable locus of resource mobilization," because in this sphere the state is considered to be acting *for* society. In this treatment, Nettl comes close to asserting an invariant structural truism. While doing so, however, he draws attention to the hinge role played by the state as "the gatekeeper between intrasocial and extrasocial flows of action." In the international arena, states may vary in their degree of strength according to their place and integration in the global system of power, parallel to the variations in "stateness" along the other dimensions he identifies.³³

One way to treat the international dimension as causal is to work from a neorealist model and project the likely impact of the place of the state within the global system on its domestic regime and political coalitions. Another way of doing this is to broaden the notion of international determinants to include a wider array of factors than Nettl's realism easily can accommodate. Each essay in this volume makes one or the other of these choices, either deducing the likely impact of international factors from lean, largely rationalist models of international geopolitics and political economy or assessing international factors more thickly, with more taste for variation and historical particularity. But all the essays treat outcomes to stateness in the manner of Nettl's multidimensional approach to sovereignty, institutions, and political culture.

In other words, Nettl invites us to approach the state as a complex construct. He provides guidelines for establishing analytic equivalence between instances in spite of substantial variation, introduces a normative dimension into positive theory, and refuses to choose between domestic and international approaches to stateness. Moreover, his distinctions and categories, and the relations among them, can help us construct a complex dependent variable. Within Nettl's summing dimension, we can distinguish the degree of effective domestic control over land and population; overarching constitutional arrangements; membership rules governing citizenship, immigration, and political participation; and the competitive place of the state vis-à-vis the macrostructures and integrating ideas offered by the economy and civil society. For institutions, we can bear in mind their formal qualities, including federalism, separation of powers, and rights-based rules of the

game; informal and semiformal instantiations, such as sectionalism, parties, opinion, interest groups, and coalitions; and policy content with respect to regulation and redistribution. For the culture of stateness, we can take up a wide variety of ideas, symbols, and representations. And for international participation, we can distinguish between aspects of participation in the global economy and in geopolitical engagement, dealing with them in our inquiries as independent variables. Indeed, by treating each of Nettl's sites of stateness as variables, it becomes possible to begin to ask with some precision how international influences have affected and molded outcomes at his other three levels of stateness.

Brought to Bolton's unrealized agenda, Nettl's matrix thus can help make the international dimension a constitutive part of analyses of American political development. It redresses the division of labor that leads scholars of international relations to focus mainly on Nettl's dimensions of sovereignty and international power and students of American political development to analyze his more institutional and cultural domains. A marriage between Bolton and Nettl, as it were, can enrich our historical and empirical understandings of the American state, permitting us to transcend simple portraits of a nineteenth-century state of great modesty only partially strengthened by episodes of twentieth-century statebuilding, most notably in the Progressive Era and the New Deal. Conceiving the state as a configuration of Nettl's dimensions can improve understandings of American institutions by placing them in a comparative and historical frame.

Nettl's model also helps us to make sense of two other entwined themes that have been at the substantive core of the APD field from the start: the status of the United States as a liberal regime and the related subject of American exceptionalism. For both, the pivotal text has been Louis Hartz's vexing *The Liberal Tradition in America*, which claims that the most important underlying force in American history has been its unchallenged political liberalism. This, Hartz argues, is explained by the absence of feudalism on American soil.³⁴ Lacking an adversary, the contractual, individualist, and constitutional liberalism fashioned by John Locke gained free sway in the United States and was able to snuff out pre- or antiliberal impulses of diverse kinds. Hartz argued that all significant features of the American regime are contained within the boundaries of this exceptional history and situation.

Hartz's non-narrative version of American exceptionalism has been robustly criticized for refusing to credit the significance of multiple ideologies or changes to the regime. Hartz's contention about "the moral unanimity" of American liberal society certainly overstates the uncontested quality of America's "nationalist articulation of Locke,"³⁵ and fails sufficiently to recognize the depth of conflict over the deep illiberalism of race.³⁶ Despite flaws, there remains a great deal of power to Hartz's analysis, especially if we

follow David Greenstone and regard liberalism as a “boundary condition” embodying norms of speech and action in American politics. A boundary condition, Greenstone observes, is “a set of relatively permanent features of a particular context that affect causal relationships within it” even as it remains subject to dispute.³⁷ As just such a boundary condition, liberalism’s grammar of rules — its bundle of institutions and norms — was never settled once and for all. Liberalism has been consistently dominant in America, but not unchanging or unchallenged.

Hartz’s account of the ascendancy of liberalism in the United States includes a comparative dimension (the United States versus Europe) and a strong causal dimension (a country without a feudal past lacked the fissures of class generated by struggles against feudalism). But, like the larger APD tradition, *The Liberal Tradition in America* contains no international dimension. Nor is there room for periodization in an account that downplays the moments when debate about liberalism’s rules has been most vigorous. Once we introduce conflicts over liberalism’s grammar at key moments of indeterminacy into the story of American political development, we can see that there is not a genuine contradiction between the claim that the United States is the West’s most durably liberal regime and the view from the inside that stresses conflict in constitutional jurisprudence, the politics of social movements, electoral mobilizations, and recurring discord about language and culture. None of these sites of conflict, instability, and crisis ever is detachable from international contexts and causes in time and in space. Thus, only by fully restoring American political history to its international context can we come to know what is distinctive about it.

V

This volume’s inquiry into how war and trade shaped American sovereignty, domestic institutions, and the political culture of stateness necessarily is open and exploratory, given the current state of knowledge and research. There is no single approach or answer to the puzzle of the importance of international affairs. But despite the particular and often preliminary character of the chapters below, there are recurring broad moves at work, at times in the same paper. The essays consider international influences in two main ways: as specific pressures and restraints that help to constitute particular historical situations and as relatively constant causes operating in broadly similar ways across time because of systemic pressures immanent in the logic of geopolitics and the global political economy.

The first approach treats international causes as shaping outcomes at specific historical junctures but recognizes that the resulting pattern may be reproduced subsequently without the continuing presence of the formative

causes. Approached this way, the subject of international influences intersects key issues in periodization. At relatively indeterminate moments, whether caused by “shocks” like depression and war or by endogenous processes, new configurations of sovereignty, institutions, and political culture may be fashioned.

The second approach is composed of probabilistic understandings about how a given cause is likely to shape outcomes, irrespective of the particular moment or event. Thus, some authors approach the task of assaying the effects of international engagement by starting with a set of expectations about how armed conflict (and preparation for it) and cross-border commerce might influence outcomes in each of Nettl’s domestic domains, without anticipating that these factors would be equally influential in each dimension. It would be reasonable, for example, to hypothesize that sovereignty would be heightened by military pressure but undermined by trade; that participation in international relations would be advanced by military pressure and often by trade; that institutions of executive power would be enhanced by war and corporatism by trade; that the regulative and redistributive activities of the state would expand under the impact both of trade and military pressure; and, that a sense of stateness would become more pronounced as military pressures increase but would diminish with the interdependence of trade. Each of these propositions is underpinned by immense literatures, but few have been investigated systematically for their effects on American political development.

Aristide Zolberg closes the introductory section of *Shaped by War and Trade*, while opening the book’s substantive treatment of international influences on American political development by providing a synoptic and comparative view of “International Engagement and American Democracy.” At the heart of his chapter lies a reformulation of Tocqueville’s assertion that American distinctiveness lies in the absence of neighbors: “the singularity of the United States arose from that fact that it did not yet exist as an actor during the global wars of the early modern era, which shaped the structure of the major European states, and that it participated only marginally in the global war of 1792–1815, which further stimulated the development of state structures among the European belligerents. This allows for a developmental pattern that diverged sharply from the European norm.”

Zolberg develops this insight by surveying more than two centuries of U.S. engagement in global geopolitics and in the process accomplishes two vital tasks. First, he reminds us that international influences are not independent of specific circumstances. Second, he demonstrates that the manner in which factors hold sway is the result not only of such “objective” features as the location of the country in geopolitical space but also of decisions taken within its domestic institutions about how to act and maneuver in such space.

The book then divides into three main sections. The first reviews America in the antebellum period, presenting two views which probe the impact of international pressures on domestic statebuilding in a period usually stylized too simply as one in which the American state was weak. Robert Keohane's "International Commitments and American Political Institutions in the Nineteenth Century" argues that it is necessary to do more than contrast the relative capacities of the antebellum and postbellum American national state as a foreign policy actor. Surveying five treaty commitments undertaken by the United States before the Civil War and one following it, he seeks to explain how "the American state was dynamically responsive to pressures to increase its capacity to fulfill commitments" and cautions that to stereotype "it as a 'weak state' for the entire antebellum period obscures the dynamics of statebuilding." In carrying out this project, he also seeks to remedy what he believes to be the weakest part of Nettl's analysis, its treatment of the international dimension of stateness.

My own essay, "Flexible Capacity: The Military and Early American Statebuilding," is the second in the section and complements Keohane's by reevaluating the distinctive status of public authority before the Civil War and by underscoring how a liberal regime with a federal system came to terms with security requirements by building a military peculiar to and characteristic of the United States, an "expansible" one, in John Calhoun's term, geared to flexibly expand during times of stress and war and rapidly contract in peacetime. Read together, these two chapters recast not only Nettl but Hartz, because they emphasize the ways that the country's distinctive political order responded to the particular security challenges that it faced.

The second section of the book, "War and Trade," is oriented less to a single period than to institutionalist accounts of international-domestic linkages in specific domains. Martin Shefter's "War, Trade, and U.S. Party Politics" distinguishes among changes in the party system caused by three major international forces. He notes that mass immigration has influenced the balance of power and the structure of cleavages in the party system but devotes the bulk of his chapter to an analysis of how international economics and geopolitics have had a differential impact on different segments of the electorate, thus "generating cleavages that the nation's parties have represented"; and how the reshaping of domestic institutions during times of international stress has changed interactions between the state and the party system.

In "Patriotic Partnerships," Theda Skocpol, Ziad Munson, Andrew Karch, and Bayliss Camp take note of the dramatic impact large-scale wars have had on the landscape of organized voluntarism in the United States. Focusing on organizations with large memberships, they map the ways the Civil War and World War I proved highly favorable to civic development and to

the growth of associational partnerships with government. Their analysis proceeds to explain why wars had such a vitalizing effect and why specific wars produced different results with respect to the pattern of organizational formation. Wars, they observe, affect voluntary organization by their patterns of mobilization, the manner in which the line between friends and enemies is defined and redefined, and by the character and impact of victory and defeat. By incorporating war so directly into a treatment of civiness—long thought to be a distinctive hallmark of America’s liberal regime—these authors demonstrate, by contrast, the limits of exclusively internalist treatments of social capital.

Ronald Rogowski and Judith Goldstein turn to trade. Both pose a similar puzzle: Why has American trade policy been less protectionist than might have been expected, given both the distribution of preferences and power of, in the House of Representatives, an institution based on small districts likely to amplify parochial interests? Rather than being content with the stipulation that open trade regimes are in the interest of the United States, these two authors work their way through the problem of resistance to this putatively national interest. Rogowski’s “Trade and Representation” argues both deductively and empirically that domestic political outcomes with respect to international trade are greatly influenced by the geographic concentration of particular kinds of economic activity. The more key activities cluster, he argues, fewer districts will dominate and the less likely are the restrictive efforts of these districts to prevail. By contrast, when economic concentration diminishes—and this is the direction in which the country’s economy has been tending since the 1920s—protectionist pressures tend to increase.

This analysis lends urgency to Judith Goldstein’s institutionalist account. Drawing on formal theory concerned with the problem of reneging, her chapter, “International Forces and Domestic Politics: Trade Policy and Institution Building in the United States,” argues that politicians favoring liberal trade can deploy international solutions to constrain domestic institutions, in order, in turn, to bind their potentially protectionist constituencies. This chapter identifies two mechanisms of international influence: (1) international engagement changes group preferences, and (2) “international politics alters the ‘tool kit’ of options available to leaders for making policy.”

The third section investigates American stateness from the Second World War through the Cold War to the post–Cold War period. Aaron Friedberg’s “American Antistatism and the Founding of the Cold War State” seeks to understand how America’s historical preference for a lack of engagement in international politics collided with hot and cold warfare in the 1940s and 1950s to produce “pressures for the construction of a powerful central state.” Surveying policy with respect to manpower, armaments, and strategy, among other subjects, he argues that key outcomes stressing private-public

partnerships and flexibility can only be understood in the context of strong international pressures engaging antistate cultural preferences, themselves the products of past international situations.

Bartholomew Sparrow's "Limited Wars and the Attenuation of the State" pushes further along these lines. He traces "the apparent paradox of the enhancement of state capacity . . . coincident with a weakening of the attachment that Americans have to their government" by examining limited war, taxation, and political communications and builds a complex model of international influence on postwar America, as favoring both the extension of state capacity and resistance to it. Further, he proposes a modification of Nettl's approach to stateness by downplaying state autonomy and underscoring the importance of social ties and governmental legitimacy.

Peter Gourevitch's "Reinventing the American State: Political Dynamics in the Post-Cold War Era" highlights an underattended feature of his 1978 essay. As he notes, international factors will affect national behavior in a liberal democracy when they shape the preferences of domestic actors, who, apart from cases of extreme duress, must decide whether, and how, to respond to international pressures. Arguing much as Shefter does in his chapter on parties, Gourevitch stresses that international forces appear in domestic politics by generating cleavages and influencing the development of the national state's institutions. What is most striking in these respects, he maintains, is that the configuration of institutions, policies, and preferences that at midcentury had produced the New Deal/Cold War policy system have now broken "into component pieces, each floating autonomously, like electrons in a chemical soup . . . available for new forms of linkage and attachment into new compounds."

Shaped by War and Trade concludes with Martin Shefter's survey of its arguments concerning how international factors have been constitutive of the political regime in the United States. Like the volume as a whole, his "International Influences on American Political Development" uses historical evidence and analysis to take up Herbert Bolton's call to rewrite the epic of America.

Notes

1. Examples he cited include Richard H. Snyder, H. W. Bruck, and Burtin Sapin, *Foreign Policy Decision-Making* (New York: Free Press, 1962); Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War* (New York: Random House, 1968); and Stephen D. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

2. Peter Gourevitch, "The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics," *International Organization* 32 (Autumn 1978): 881, 882. His

“perhaps” was more optimistic than Gabriel Almond’s assertion earlier in the decade that “Political Science has tended to neglect serious empirical study of the interrelations between national politics and international politics.” Gabriel A. Almond, “National Politics and International Politics,” in *The Search for World Order: Studies by Students and Colleagues of Quincy Wright*, ed. Albert Lepawsky, Edward H. Bucharig, and Harold D. Lasswell (New York: Appleton-Crofts, 1971). In a later review, Almond took note of the growing body of work crossing this divide. Gabriel A. Almond, “Review Article: The International-National Connection,” *British Journal of Political Science* 19 (April 1989). An important tandem effort to Gourevitch’s was Peter J. Katzenstein, ed., *Between Power and Plenty: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), which stressed comparative historical analysis of international-domestic linkages. For an earlier statement announcing the end of the separation of domestic politics and international relations, see Emile Lederer, “Domestic Policy and Foreign Relations,” in *War in Our Time*, ed. Hans Speier and Alfred Kahler (New York: Norton, 1939).

3. Gourevitch, “Second Image,” 900.

4. Robert D. Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games,” *International Organization* 42 (Summer 1988): 427, 433. A slightly earlier call for an interdependent research program looking at links between the two level game of international and domestic politics is Stephan Haggard and Beth A. Simmons, “Theories of International Regimes,” *International Organization* 41 (Summer 1987).

5. James E. Alt, “Crude Politics: Oil and the Political Economy of Unemployment in Britain and Norway, 1970–1985,” *British Journal of Political Science* 17 (April 1987), 149–99; Peter B. Evans, *Dependent Development: The Alliance of Multinational, State, and Local Capital in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); Peter J. Katzenstein, *Small States in World Markets: Industrial Policy in Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985); and Peter Gourevitch, *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986). On the other side of the coin, for the same period one might record as key examples, Aristide Zolberg, “Origins of the Modern World System: A Missing Link,” *World Politics* 33 (January 1981); Aristide Zolberg, “Beyond the Nation-State: Comparative Politics in Global Perspective,” in *Beyond Progress and Development*, ed. J. Berting, W. Blockmans, and U. Rosenthal (Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit, 1986); and Ronald Rogowski, *Commerce and Coalitions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

6. See James D. Fearon, “Domestic Politics, Foreign Policy, and Theories of International Relations,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998): 289–313.

7. See, for example, Susan Peterson, *Crisis Bargaining and the State: The Domestic Politics of International Conflict* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996); Richard N. Rosecrance and Arthur A. Stein, *The Domestic Bases of Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and David Lalman, *War and Reason: Domestic and International Imperatives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Bruce Russett, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); Jack Snyder, *Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Helen V. Milner, *Resisting Protectionism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); and

Sharyn O'Halloran, *Politics, Process, and American Trade Policy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994). While stressing the domestic sources of international processes and decisions, these works stop short of the claim that all politics ultimately are domestic in nature. The latter position is characteristic of the British sociological institutionalist theorists of IR surveyed in John Kurt Jacobsen, "Are All Politics Domestic? Perspectives on the Integration of Comparative Politics and International Relations Theories," *Comparative Politics* 29 (October 1996).

8. Although some international relations specialists have been crossing the IR-American political development divide in the direction charted by Gourevitch, Americanists have failed to make the reciprocal move. For examples, see Robert O. Keohane, "Associationist American Development, 1776–1860: Economic Growth and Political Disintegration," in *The Antinomies of Interdependence*, ed. John Ruggie (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); and Robert O. Keohane and Helen V. Milner, eds., *Internationalization and Domestic Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

9. A significant instance is Margaret Levi, *Consent, Dissent, and Patriotism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

10. For this distinction, see Fearon, "Domestic Politics."

11. Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Helen Milner, *Interests, Institutions, and Information: Domestic Politics and International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); John W. Owen IV, *Liberal Peace, Liberal War: American Politics and International Security* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

12. Zakaria, *Wealth*, 11.

13. Milner, *Interests*, 3, 9.

14. This, though, is a tendency in Zakaria's work.

15. Richard Bense, *The Political Economy of American Industrialization, 1877–1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

16. There are exceptions, to be sure, to this general rule. On the impact of war, for example, see Bartholomew H. Sparrow, *From the Outside In: World War II and the American State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); and Daniel Kryder, *Divided Arsenal: Race and the American State during World War II* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

17. Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in *Bringing the State Back In*, ed. Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 28.

18. Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990–1990* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and its Competitors* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Also see Brian M. Downing, *The Military Revolution and Political Change: Origins of Democracy and Autocracy in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

19. Aristide R. Zolberg, "International Migration Policies in a Changing World System," in *Human Migration: Patterns and Policies*, ed. William H. McNeill and Ruth S. Adams (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1978); Dietrich Ruesche-

meyer and Theda Skocpol, eds., *States, Social Knowledge, and the Origins of Modern Social Policies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

20. Peter H. Schuck, "The Politics of Rapid Legal Change: Immigration Policy in the 1980s," *Studies in American Political Development* 6 (Spring 1992): 37–92; Clyde W. Barrow, "The Diversionary Thesis and the Dialectic of Imperialism," *Studies in American Political Development* 11 (Fall 1997): 248–91; and Inderjeet Parmar, "Mobilizing America for Internationalist Foreign Policy," *Studies in American Political Development* 13 (Fall 1999): 337–73.

21. Stephen Skowronek, *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Richard Bense, *Yankee Leviathan: The Origins of State Authority in America, 1859–1877* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

22. A useful overview of the field with respect to these matters can be found in the special issue "International Organization at Fifty: Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics," *International Organization* 52 (Autumn 1998). For an attempt to integrate across subfields using rational choice theory, see that issue's article by Helen Milner, "Rationalizing Politics: The Emerging Synthesis of International, American, and Comparative Politics," 759–86.

23. James Truslow Adams, *The Epic of America* (Boston: Little Brown, 1931).

24. Herbert E. Bolton, "The Epic of Greater America," *American Historical Review* 38 (April 1933): 448.

25. Bolton, "Epic," 454.

26. Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815–1846* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Melvyn Stokes and Stephen Conway, eds., *The Market Revolution in America: Social, Political, and Religious Expressions, 1800–1860* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1996).

27. Here, deliberately, I am repeating Fearon's language almost verbatim, with only an inversion of the words "international" and "domestic"

What exactly is a domestic-political explanation of foreign policy? What things have to be present for us to call an explanation of some foreign policy choice a domestic-political explanation? The question turns out to be surprisingly tricky, but it deserves an answer. Consider the two linked research questions that animate much of this literature. First, how important is domestic politics, relative to systemic or structural factors, in the explanation of states' foreign policies? And second, how, exactly, does domestic politics shape foreign policy? Neither question can be answered if we don't know what a domestic-political explanation is. (Fearon, "Domestic Politics," 291)

28. Gourevitch, "Second Image," 882–83.

29. J. P. Nettl, "The State as a Conceptual Variable," *World Politics* 20 (July 1968). Much influential work in comparative history, sociology, and political science has stood on his shoulders. Examples include the SSRC volumes on *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* and *Bringing the State Back In*, as well as leading state-centered scholarship in American political development, including Skowronek, *State*; Bense, *Leviathan*; and Skocpol, *Protecting*.

30. Nettl's elusive and opaque exposition and his explicit decision to put the international aspects of his formulation to the side make it challenging to draw on his work. Still, more than three decades later, his suggestive article provides a useful guide to linking institutional and behavioral scholarship on the state.

31. Nettl, "State," 565.

32. *Ibid.*, 566.

33. *Ibid.*, 563–64.

34. Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1955).

35. Hartz, *Liberal Tradition*, 10–11.

36. See Rogers M. Smith, "Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal, and Hartz: The Multiple Traditions in America," *American Political Science Review* 87 (September 1993); and Rogers M. Smith, *Civic Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S. History* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 1997.

37. J. David Greenstone, *The Lincoln Persuasion: Remaking American Liberalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 42, 45.