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REMAKING MODERNITY Politics, History, and Sociology

EDITED BY

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and social variation. The tension with economics has been a healthy and productive one but should not become a defining characteristic. A continued alliance with historical sociology and renewed interchange with the old economic sociology will help keep the new economic sociology from its reactive fixation on economics.

REBECCA JEAN EMIGH

The Great Debates: Transitions to Capitalisms

A volume about historical sociology and modernity is a most appropriate forum for discussing the use of historical referents in contemporary debates. Implicitly, such referents underlie fundamental social science concepts. The modern/post-modern divide is, after all, underpinned by "pre-modern." Arguing that historical referents are important, however, is different from explaining their use. Is history a "distant mirror" (Tuchman 1978) in which contemporary problems are dimly viewed? Are the "lessons" of history forgotten? Does history "repeat itself"?

I explore three possible answers. First, patterns of historical events may be repeated in toto. If so, historical referents apply directly to contemporary conditions. This use draws on a philosophical conception of reality in which there are relatively few differences between physical and social reality because initial conditions do not strongly affect outcomes.[1] The second position is the opposite: historical sequences are entirely unique. It draws on an opposite conception of reality in which the physical sciences and social sciences are fundamentally different because the unfolding of social reality depends completely on unrepeatable initial conditions. Thus, historical referents are useless because they describe events from starkly different social conditions. A third approach, between these two extremes, suggests that even if entire historical sequences are not repeated in toto, certain elements may be, and therefore the theorizable elements can be extracted from the

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1. For a discussion of these philosophical positions, see Steinmetz (this volume).

unique ones (at least in the abstract). A comparative method that looks for similarities and differences in historical sequences may be useful. Philosophically, this view corresponds to a realist position that attempts to theorize history but notes that theories will be underdetermined because social science data are context-specific, because much of the world's causal structure is unobservable, and because knowledge is concept-dependent, so knowledge of reality is different from reality itself (Lloyd 1986: 98, 119). This realist position provides the most powerful role for historical referents because they can be used comparatively to capture and theorize the repeatable dimensions of historical trajectories.

To discuss these possibilities, I review debates on transitions to capitalisms, past and present. Current debates, such as the so-called "market transition" in post-socialist Europe, can illustrate the contemporary relevance of historical referents. There is a common triumphalist reading of modern capitalism in both scholarly and everyday parlance: capitalism is the most efficient economic system and will spread inexorably from individual-level incentives or precipitous institutional arrangements. The collapse of socialism seems to confirm this interpretation (E. M. Wood 1999: 1), and it was explicitly advocated by the economic advisers in Central and Eastern Europe (e.g., Åslund 1995; Lipton and Sachs 1992; Sachs 1992). The first use of historical referents sometimes underlies this argument, emphasizing the inevitable and natural rise of English capitalism. For example, Åslund (1995: 8) suggested the contemporary relevance of historical Britain. This triumphalist reading of the transition to capitalism often emphasizes (1) its economic nature; (2) its inevitability; (3) successful, not failed, cases of it; (4) a normative assumption of its superiority; and (5) the possibility of repeating development models. This neo-liberal rhetoric recalls Rostow's (1960) "stages of history," through which all countries march, following England. The second use of historical referents also can be found. David Stark (1994: 67), for example, argued that general models of capitalism are not useful starting points for understanding the current market transition. Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley (1998: 1–16, 47–52) argued for a variant of this second position; while they emphasized that the current market transition is fundamentally different from the general models of capitalism derived from Marx, Weber, and Smith, they hinted at better historical referents.

Åslund, an economist, suggested the usefulness of historical referents based on a view of the essentially repeatable, and thus completely theorizable, nature of social reality. In contrast, Stark, a sociologist, suggested that historical referents are inapplicable because social change is path-dependent and therefore essentially unrepeatable. The third, comparative use of historical referents goes beyond Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley. In fact, with better historical knowledge of the historic rise of capitalism, it may indeed be the economists who reject historical referents and the sociologists who claim them!

The Playing Field: Classic Analyses of the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism

Debates over the historic rise of capitalist economies in Europe form a well-developed literature that spans sociology, history, economics, and anthropology because the social sciences were largely founded on this topic. Because excellent reviews cover this literature up to the late 1980s (Holton 1985; Lachmann 1989), I review this material quickly. I focus primarily on qualitative shifts in economic forms, not on quantitative changes in growth.

The classic social scientists, such as Smith, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber, struggled to explain what they viewed as a profound shift from pre-industrial to industrial society. In some sense, Marx was reacting to, and building upon, Smith; similarly, Weber followed Marx (Kaye 1986: 172–173). They tended to "read backwards"—that is, to assume that pre-capitalist society was what capitalist society was not. Thus, they often provided better explanations of capitalist, not pre-capitalist, society. They worked in a tradition that assumed progress toward rationality and efficiency; consequently, they assumed that capitalism arose because of inherently advantageous conditions in England (D. Sayer 1992: 1382) and unfolded naturally thereafter. But they also viewed capitalism as inherently contradictory. From the Marxist position, capitalism holds its own demise (E. M. Wood 1991: 164–166). From the Weberian position, religious beliefs that might be necessary for the rise of capitalism might be unnecessary and even meaningless once it is established (Holton 1985: 113; Schluchter 1996: 239–243). Thus, the classics asked the question, "How and why did capitalism first develop in Western Europe (or England)?" (Lachmann 1989: 47). The so-called "second wave" (see the introduction to this volume) developed the classics' implications—the inevitabilities and contradictions of capitalism—producing the great "named debates" (Dobb, Sweezy, Brenner, etc.).

If a "loose third-wave coalition" (again, to borrow from this volume's editors) follows, its strength lies in asking different questions, providing new empirical evidence, using pluralistic theories, and employing new comparisons, thereby undermining the first and second waves' assumption of capitalism's inevitability and their sometimes scant knowledge of pre-industrial society. Relevant questions will generally, even if implicitly (often for the sake of euphony), assume a plural form: "What are capitalisms, were there transitions to capitalisms, and where were they?" (cf. Lachmann 1989: 47). Such work provides the best historical referents.

The View from Economic History

The precursor to much, if not all, of this literature is Adam Smith. His writing is more subtle than is often acknowledged, yet his central theme is still well captured by his phrase about individuals' natural propensity to "truck, barter, and exchange" (1961 [1776]: 13). Capitalism is an economic system that reflects, on an aggregate level, individual-level human nature. It unfolds naturally, following expansions in the division of labor that increase production, and, in turn, trade. Pirenne's (1914, 1952 [1925]) classic work in this tradition links trade and markets to the rise of cities and, eventually, industrial development. Macfarlane (1978) develops the idea of individualism, arguing that thirteenth-century England was largely capitalist, populated by self-interested economic actors.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the transition to be explained was from a preindustrial to an industrial economy. Economic growth theory (classic and neo-classical) emerging from Smith (e.g., Domar 1947; Harrod 1948; Kaldor 1960; W. A. Lewis 1955; Rostow 1960; Solow 1956) merged with Parsonian cultural analysis to produce modernization theory (e.g., Eisenstadt 1964; Hoselitz 1960; Inkeles and Smith 1974; Lerner 1958; see critiques in Apter 1987 and Binder 1986; for a positive reevaluation, see Inglehart and Baker 2000). The cultural dimension resonated with Durkheim's distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft;* the emphasis on the division of labor, with Smith and Marx.

Neo-institutionalist theories also emerged from this tradition. North and Thomas (1973) argued that states' enforcement of property rights facilitated the transition to capitalism by assuring that individuals who undertook risky or expensive innovations that eventually increased productivity benefited from them. In contrast to this thin view of the state, Polanyi (1957c) argued that the state's redistributive capabilities compensated for the self-destructive, commodifying effects of capitalism, thereby essentially allowing markets to operate.

Duby (1968), Habakkuk (1958), Le Roy Ladurie (1974), and Postan (1937, 1966) combined an emphasis on markets with demographic theory. Their explicitly neo-Malthusian and neo-Ricardian argument posited a homeostatic mechanism that regulated demographic and economic growth (Le Roy Ladurie 1985: 102). As population expanded, so did economic production, creating economic growth. But population growth generally outpaced

economic resources, leading to eventual population collapse and a corresponding economic decline. Each cycle dissolved feudal relations, created a more efficient use of land and labor, and thus in the long run led to capitalism.

Another impulse from economic history—proto-industrialization theory—combined Marxism and demography (Mendels 1972). Rural proto-industry, often in the form of putting-out, was an important precursor to industrial and capitalist development (see also Kriedte, Medick, and Schlumbohm, eds. 1981 and review in Mastboom 1996). Proto-industry provided wages to supplement farm income, thereby altering demographic patterns by allowing offspring to marry earlier and without waiting for access to their parents' land. Another variant of demographic theory, following Hajnal (1965: 450; 1982), suggests that small, nuclear European families characterized by a relatively late age at marriage facilitated the rise of capitalism by limiting fertility or encouraging individualism (Hanley and Wolf, eds. 1985; P. Laslett 1988; D. Levine 2001: 14; for critical reviews see Goldstone 2000a: 177 and Goody 1996a, 1996b: 167–170). In contrast, Grassby (2001: 412) argued that family businesses and extended kinship networks facilitated market culture.

Marx and the Marxists

Though Marx did not fully develop his transition theory, it is clear that the central mechanism, class conflict, was generated through the increasing complexity of property relations (K. Marx and Engels 1970) or primitive accumulation (K. Marx 1964, 1977 [1894]: 873–930). This conflict allowed one class to secure a set of property rights that allowed it to extract surplus from some other class. If successful, it gained control over additional resources, allowing it to extract additional surplus, creating, eventually, a capitalist class. If not, it became part of the class from which surplus was extracted. Fully capitalist production required, first, that all individuals be separated from the means of their own reproduction (or subsistence) by becoming either capitalists or workers, and, second, that capitalists realize profit through surplus extraction via the sale of commodities produced by workers. These two requirements set the terms of Marxist debates. Starting from the requirement of separation from the means of reproduction, the "relations of production" school focused on social processes that transformed customary peasants and lords into wage laborers and capitalist tenants (R. Brenner 1985a; Dobb 1947). The "relations of exchange" school, starting from profit realization, focused on market expansion (Sweezy 1976; Wallerstein 1974). The latter thus had many affinities to Smith and Weber and therefore sparked debates across these paradigms (R. Brenner 1977, 1985b). Wallerstein (1974) shifted the unit of analysis to the "world system" by considering national and global profit realization.

These debates also had contemporary implications (Kaye 1986). Wallerstein (1974) and Frank (1966a) explicitly linked the historical rise of a capitalist world system to economic stagnation in the so-called Third World. Laclau (1971) retorted that, paradoxically, capitalism could create noncapitalist forms, giving rise to the "modes of production" literature (drawing heavily from Althusser and Balibar 1970) and unequal exchange (Amin 1976; Emmanuel 1972). Dobb (1947: last chapter; 1963: 387–393) referred to the economic conditions of the 1920s and 1930s and the rise of communism.

Weber and the Weberians

In *The Protestant Ethic*, Weber (1958) argued that the preconditions for capitalism were omnipresent, but the Calvinist doctrine of predestination sparked the transition only in Western Europe. Through hard work and frugality, Calvinists demonstrated their salvation, rationally reinvesting their profits and inadvertently creating perfect conditions for capitalism. Weber's idea is endlessly reevaluated (e.g., Barker and Carman 2000; Jere Cohen 2002; Delacroix and Nielson 2001; Innes 1995; Lachmann 2000: 204–227; Lessnoff 1994; J. F. Martin 1991; Newell 1998; Schluchter 1996). Much of this work shows that economic and religious actions are linked, but not in any singular direction.

Like Marx's, Weber's (1981) mature theory was incomplete and subject to multiple interpretations. While Marx emphasized class conflict, Randall Collins (1980, 1997a) argued that Weber focused on institutions that created the possibility of calculable actions. Universalistic religions, including Judaism, Christianity, and Buddhism, broke down barriers for economic participation and introduced disciplined religious practices. Weber also stressed the institutional preconditions—the military, coins, literate administrators, transportation, communication, writing, and record keeping—of what would become nation-states. These preconditions (Collins called them "ultimate conditions") set the stage for further institutional developments that facilitated rational economic action: a methodical, nondualistic economic ethic, calculable law, citizenship rights, and a bureaucratic state. In turn, these institutions enabled the rise of the elements of rational capitalism: the entrepreneurial organization of capital, rationalized technology, free labor, and unrestricted markets (R. Collins 1980: 931). Thus, for Weber, capitalism is an orientation toward profit-seeking behavior in markets. While it may have religious origins, once established, capitalism can operate independently.

Schluchter (1996: 179–243) used a different form of explanation to interpret Weber, based more on historical narrative than on separable factors (J. R. Hall 1999a: 217–218). He analyzed three historical transformations that produced capitalism (defined as formally free labor, the modern market economy, and a bourgeois mode of conduct). The first transformation consisted of three subsets of interrelated changes: a papal transformation that rationalized the church hierarchy; a feudal revolution that created systematically decentralized domination and a constant struggle between the central and local authorities; and an urban revolution that created new industry, commerce, and legal institutions (bonds, stocks, deeds, etc.). The second transformation created the bourgeois mode of conduct through the Protestant Ethic, which joined asceticism to rational, inner-worldly action. The third transformation was the objectification of economic life and social relationships. Schluchter's first transformation largely corresponds to Collins's institutional analysis, though Schluchter (1996: 325) maintained a unique role for the Protestant Ethic that Collins (1980) downplayed.

Chirot (1985: 181–190) developed a similar Weberian synthesis. He argued that the West had multiple advantages, including a geography that included a favorable climate and a land/labor ratio and relative freedom from war and other disasters. Political decentralization was related to geography. Unlike in China, where control of a few central river valleys virtually guaranteed political control, European political power was always fragmented, generating competition. Cities were also independent political and economic entities, fostering trade and economic activity. Finally, legal and religious rationality were important. Clearly defined laws, procedures, and stable property rights existed, and governments were bound by them.

Michael Mann (1986: 500–517), working in this broad Weberian perspective, considered how overlapping networks entailing the sources of social power—ideological, economic, political, and military—reinforced each other in the West, creating capitalism. Mann argued that comparative methods (e.g., R. Brenner 1985a) started too late in history and missed the links among power networks. Like Mann, John A. Hall (1986) and Jean Baechler (1988) made the essentially Weberian point that European advantage lay in relatively small political units, without the assurance of absolute internal power and arranged in conflictual and competitive (although diplomatically linked) international relations. Consequently, they analyzed the "European miracle" and downplayed English uniqueness. Because of the competition among states, economic changes spread quickly in Europe (Snooks 1994b: 18). Thus, if the Industrial Revolution had not occurred in Britain, it would have happened elsewhere in Europe (Snooks 1994b: 15). It also may have been focused within a few relatively advanced regions in England, France, and Belgium (Mokyr 1999: 30).

Perry Anderson (1974b) combined the Marxist ideas of a mode of production and social formation with a Weberian emphasis on the state's role in establishing preconditions for capitalist development, including civil law and property rights (see reviews in Holton 1985: 91–99; Lachmann 1989: 62–63; Mooers 1991: 37–40). The absolutist state protected aristocratic property and privileges but also simultaneously ensured the interests of the nascent mercantile and manufacturing classes (P. Anderson 1974b: 40). Marxist and Weberian combinations inspired a range of development literature connecting state strength and economic development, in particular suggesting that strong, developmentalist states produced capitalist development while predatory states produced economic stagnation. (For examples from varying viewpoints, see Amsden 1989; P. B. Evans 1995; O'Donnell 1978. For more general combinations of Marx, Weber, and Smith in the development literature, see Barrett and Whyte 1982; Cardoso and Faletto 1979 [1971]; Deyo, ed. 1987; Hirschman 1968; Shin 1998.)

Of course, my review cannot completely reconstruct the entire body of work in this field, which is undoubtedly much less schematic and more comprehensive. Nevertheless, these exemplars of second-wave work on historic transition debates shared a focus—though of course not exclusively—on working out the often underdeveloped classic theories. To a large extent, they stayed within these theoretical paradigms (sometimes by combining them) and were guided by the question of the classic authors that often assumed the inevitability and superiority of capitalism: "Why did capitalism arise in Europe?"

Recent Work

Since recent work on historic transition debates answers different questions than the classics posed, it falls less easily into standard theoretical camps, so I organize the review topically.

Capitalisms, Not Capitalism

There is an increased tendency—reflecting the influence of post-modernism—to use the plural forms "transitions" and "capitalisms" to emphasize their variability and complexity. For example, Radice (2000: 721–722) distinguished between contemporary national capitalisms, such as the liberal capitalisms of the United States and Britain, and the institutionalized capitalisms of Japan and Germany. Similarly, Blim's (2000: 28, 30) review of contemporary capitalism considered global capitalism, diaspora capitalism, *comprador* capitalism, bureaucratic capitalism, political capitalism, and booty capitalism. With respect to historic works, the terminology "the transition from feudalism to capitalism," which signals a single, replicable event, is usually changed to some indeterminate, plural form (Duplessis 1997; J. R. Hall 1999a; see my title of this essay). John R. Hall (1999b) suggested abandoning the transition terminology, arguing that it described a change in a "thing" and that neither feudalism nor capitalism was a single "thing." He argued for the term "recomposition"—that is, the adjustment and interpenetration of disparate and causally independent phenomena. Recomposition falls under the practice of "configurational history," which takes as its central task the description and decomposition of the object of inquiry into a series of historically emergent components that are contributory or necessary, but not sufficient, for that object (J. R. Hall 1999a: 217).

The recognition of multiple capitalisms calls for revisiting the multiple definitions of "capitalism" that were so central to the theoretical debates discussed above. Grassby (1999: 1–2) argued that so many definitions heralded a meaningless term. Furthermore, capitalism tends to be defined only by what it is not: a traditional, collective economy or a command-oriented socialist one. Because it arose in a particular historical context, it is not a universal, neutral descriptor. While Grassby called into question the coherence of the social science literature that cannot agree on the definition of its central term, it is also possible that the multiple definitions illustrate that capitalism has multiple forms or is a highly local, uneven process. Biernacki (1995: 2) made a similar point by arguing that taking the terms "the rise of market culture" and "the commodification of labor" out of context falsely objectifies their meaning. Wage labor, for example, meant embodied labor in Britain but labor power in Germany.

Duplessis (1997) emphasized multiple European transitions to capitalism, carefully pointing out the slow forward and backward trends toward full-scale industrial capitalism and arguing that the outcome was nowhere (including England) inevitable. Large, enclosed capitalist tenancies were characteristic of England, while small family farms predominated in the Low Countries, though both were highly productive and set the stage for further growth (p. 185). France was characterized by small-scale, labor-intensive industry and a strong high-quality sector (p. 243). English manufacturing was more industrialized, and because of higher agricultural productivity, more individuals were employed in industry, though it was not always more productive than elsewhere (p. 248). Bernstein (1994), following Byres (1991), outlined multiple paths of agrarian development alternatively based on capitalist farming, family farming, a continuation of peasant farming, petty commodity production, variants of large estates (feudal landholding, colonial or industrial plantations), or a strong state. Of course, it is not an entirely new idea that capitalism takes different forms in different places and times. Gerschenkron's (1962) argument that late developers followed different paths from early developers is just one classic example. Taken together, however, this recent work goes a step beyond Weber's recognition that capitalism is an ideal type (i.e., that it is a single phenomenon that looks different in different places) and calls into question the idea of a single ideal type. It moves away from second-wave debates, which suggested there should be a single definition, even if no one could agree what it was, toward the recognition of multiple forms.

Capitalism as a Political Agenda

If capitalism is assumed to be an efficient economic form that will unfold naturally, its failure to develop can be blamed on deficient cultural or political environments (E. M. Wood 1991: 163). Recent work suggests otherwise: capitalism is centrally a political and cultural creation. For example, Lachmann (2000) argued that conflicts among elites (not Marxist classes) within political units determine where and when capitalism arises. To transform economic relations, elites must have the capacity vis-à-vis other elites to exploit direct producers, and then they must create—unintentionally—capitalist relations. The English gentry created capitalist agricultural relations, thus laying the groundwork for the Industrial Revolution, by attacking peasants' rights to communal land and customary holdings to gain tactical advantages against other elites, the crown and the clergy. In France, endemic elite conflict and constantly shifting alliances never gave a single elite the capacity to transform agricultural relations extensively. The Habsburg political elite ruled the Spanish empire by allying with local aristocrats, thereby maintaining the existing pre-capitalist system. In the Netherlands, the lack of a clerical or noble elite created a strong and united urban elite that produced the Dutch Golden Age. Nevertheless, once these urban merchants gained power, they crystallized into a rigid, oligarchic class, thereby delaying a full-scale transition to capitalism. In Florence, though a single urban elite eventually triumphed, it refeudalized economic relations instead of creating capitalism.

While Lachmann argued that capitalism was a political agenda of the English gentry, Perelman (2000) claimed it was an agenda of the classic political economists. While economists such as Smith and Ricardo were on a theoretical level advocating laissez-faire policies, on a political level, they championed actions that actively deprived peasants of their livelihood. The creation of wage labor, far from being natural, was an outcome of their political agenda that favored the interests of capitalists above smallholders. Perelman (2000: 2–3) called this process the "secret history of primitive accumulation" to emphasize the similarity between these economists and Marx. Furthermore, capitalism was not necessarily efficient or rational, especially at its beginning. Subsistence or self-provisioning was often cheaper and more reliable for most peasants, who therefore had little incentive to shift to wage labor unless forced to do so. Thus, like Lachmann, Perelman argued that capitalism was more rational and efficient for particular individuals given concrete historical circumstances, not universally so. Similarly, Espeland (1998: 252) suggested emphasizing the process of rationalization—that is, the reinterpretation and reconstitution of interests and identities, not absolute levels of rationality. Carruthers (1996: 206) made the related point that markets do not simply coordinate the actions of self-interested actors but are created by political agents seeking multiple ends (political, ethnic, economic, etc.).

Robert Brenner (1985a, 1985b, 1993) developed his earlier argument about agrarian capitalism to highlight politics. He argued that an alliance between rural capitalist landlords and colonial merchants facilitated the rise of a strong, unified national state, based on parliamentary rule and control of taxation, that protected private property and monopolized force, therefore creating the basis of the commercial revolution (1993: 709, 713–715). Brenner then reversed the historical order of North and Thomas's (1973) argument by claiming that capitalists created a state capable of enforcing their property rights. In general, this work on capitalism as a political agenda, regardless of its historical ordering of the creation of classes and states, sees politics as actively creating capitalism, not simply establishing a few capitalist preconditions, as in the neo-institutionalist model.

Capitalism as Cultural Agenda

Weber's Protestant Ethic is commonly taken as the quintessential cultural theory of capitalism. Randall Collins (1997a) expanded on Weber by identifying a "Protestant Ethic" in Buddhism that contained the framework for shifts in agricultural production that led to Japanese industrialization. Collins extracted the generalizable elements of the Protestant Ethic, including ethical universalism; ascetic restraint on consumption; and an ethic of self-discipline that promoted economic activity, investment, and saving. By locating an Asian "rise of capitalism," Collins broke with the first and second waves' European (or English) focus. He also broke with Weber's assumption that many elements of Confucian culture were not conducive to capitalism (cf. Weller 1994: 313–314). Weller also argued that Confucian culture can contribute to capitalist practices. Family ties encouraged strategies of economic diversification and pooled resources, while filial piety encouraged hard work and cooperation. This echoes other research showing that the family is an asset to capitalist development, not its antithesis (see review in Creed 2000; Bruun 1993 and Farquhar 1994 highlight the importance of family entrepreneurship in China; see Whyte 1996 for a less enthusiastic assessment). Goldstone (1996: 7) noted one specific element of classical Chinese culture that may have discouraged industrialization: the division of labor that kept females inside the household.

While evaluating Weber's Protestant Ethic is important, it too often overshadows cultural studies of capitalism. The influence of culture cannot be understood through the examination of a single ethic or even through religion. For example, Biernacki (1995: 59, 479) demonstrated that a different cultural understanding of labor as a commodity in Britain and Germany had concrete social consequences. In Britain, employers treated labor in terms of what it produced—that is, as "embodied labor." In Germany, employers gauged labor by the amount of effort expended—that is, as "labor power." The daily German experience of buying and selling labor power led to an increased receptivity to Marxist economic theory's orientation toward the necessity of relieving the subordination of living labor. In contrast, in England, the focus on embodied labor meant that socialist unions emphasized the need to redistribute capital and access to labor. In Germany, women with family care responsibilities were allowed to leave earlier in the day, as German employers were accustomed to dividing labor power into units. In England, however, women were allowed to send substitutes to complete their shifts, since workdays were blocks that produced a set amount of goods.

Another important but underexplored avenue is the role of consumerism in the rise of capitalist economies. McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb (1982) and Sidney Mintz (1985) showed that consumption is not inherent; English consumers, like workers (Thompson 1963), had to be made before consumerism could contribute to economic processes. Pendergast (1998: 26–29) reviewed work on consumerism, especially its relation to class and colonial identity, in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England and the United States during the Industrial Revolution. Ruane (1995) showed how the adoption of Western dress in imperial Russia and the consumer culture that accompanied it were gendered, as women were the targets of fashion dictates that required several changes of clothing each day. But much research could be done, especially historically. For example, studies developing empirically grounded historical referents for Baudrillard's (1981) post-modern political economy of consumption or Hebdige's (1979) idea that the alteration of the use and exchange value of commodities constituted social protest would make valuable contributions. Research could also contribute historical referents to the Marxist genre of cultural studies examining reification and capitalism.

The relationship between knowledge and capitalism is also an underexplored Weberian topic. Clearly, there is some interplay among capitalism, numeracy, and literacy (Burke 1987; Carruthers and Espeland 1991; P. C. Cohen 1982: 41, 210; Crosby 1997; Starr 1987: 20–23), but the direction and the nature of the relationship can be further explored. For example, numeracy may have been widespread before capitalist markets in Tuscany (Emigh 2002). The cultural creation of states and markets is another useful research site, cutting across Weberian and Marxist research paradigms, following Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer's (1985) and Sayer's (1992) argument that the English state and capitalism were cultural accomplishments. Similarly, the replacement of the local peasant markets by the Florentine market was not the result of the spread of rationality or efficiency but largely a result of political, personal, and cultural, as well as economic, domination (Emigh 2003: 1100–1102; cf. Raymond Williams 1975). The expansion of these research topics on historic capitalisms and culture would be useful redresses to a field dominated by Weber's Protestant Ethic.

Gradual Growth, Not Sudden Change

A central tenet of social science theory—stemming from Marx, Weber, and Durkheim—is that the transition to capitalism was sudden and dramatic. Recent work on the Industrial Revolution and economic growth, however, suggests the opposite—that it was slow and gradual. Furthermore, it challenges the assumption that capitalism and economic growth are synonymous. Like Smith's work, this work views economic growth as natural and, at least in the long run, inevitable (although it may be unpredictable in the short run). While a full review of economic growth and industrialization is beyond the scope of this essay, I will review a few recent developments directly related to capitalisms.

Economic growth is an increase in real per capita income (sometimes measured in Gross Domestic Product, or GDP). Moykr (1990: 4–6) distinguished among four sources of growth: (1) Solovian growth from increased capital stock; (2) Smithian growth from the expansion of trade, markets, and the division of labor; (3) scale effects from population growth (drawing on Malthus); and (4) Schumpeterian growth from technological innovation and increases in knowledge. The last, when financed through credit, is often associated with capitalist expansion (W. N. Parker 1984: 191, 211–213). Economic growth is thus conceptualized as broader than capitalism or industrialization because all four forms are genuine growth, but the first three do not necessarily lead to the fourth (W. Parker 1984: 212).

E. L. Jones (1994, 2000 [1988]) distinguished between extensive growth (rise in incomes) and intensive growth (any of the above four types that increases per capita income). There were multiple historical waves of intensive growth: in China from the tenth through the thirteenth centuries, in Japan in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and in Western Europe in the medieval and early modern periods (Jones 2000 [1988]: xxxv). Jones (2000 [1988]: 189–191) located a political cause of these periods of Smithian growth: the dispersal of power among multiple rulers created competition. He therefore criticized advocates of dramatic, discontinuous growth and obsessions with the "great discontinuity paradigm" of "the unique European breakthrough" (1994: 25; 2000 [1988]: 188). Similarly, Snooks (1994a: 47–48; 1994b: 6) argued that the uniqueness of the Industrial Revolution was not in exceptionally high rates of economic growth; there were periods of rapid growth in pre-modern England. Hoffman (1996: 201) also emphasized the slow and gradual nature of the transition to capitalism by noting that traditional French agriculture had considerable dynamism and that peasants were actively engaged in markets. Some farming regions were highly productive, especially around Paris, the Beaujolais, and in Normandy, rivaling English farms. Such growth was largely Smithian—it occurred through trade and specialization (Hoffman 1996: 202–204).

De Vries and van der Woude (1997: 693) boldly argued that the Netherlands from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries had a fully modern economy characterized by (1) markets for commodities and factors of production, (2) a level of agricultural productivity high enough to support an extensive division of labor, (3) an effective state to enforce property rights and contracts, and (4) a level of technology capable of sustained development supporting market-oriented consumerism. Thus, they also dislodged the English Industrial Revolution from its pivotal place. Although the Industrial Revolution was important, it was only part of a larger process of modern economic growth in which the Netherlands was central (pp. 716–717).

Goldstone (2002: 333) claimed that Schumpeterian and Smithian economic growth occurred, usually together, throughout history. These outbursts of growth—"efflorescences"—were not usually self-sustaining but often lasted for generations. He distinguished this growth from modern, Kuznetzian economic growth, the continual and conscious application of scientific and technological progress to economic activity (p. 334). Such growth, located in England, driven by technology and science, produced the Industrial Revolution (p. 375). This emphasis on technology is distinct from

the typical sociological emphasis on social relations (cf. Mokyr 1999: 39–45). Mokyr (1990: 6) detached technological growth associated with Schumpeterian growth from capitalism and industrialization in a different way by noting that technological growth predated capitalism. He characterized the Industrial Revolution not as a world-changing "macro-economic event" but as a series of small inventions with many historical continuities and precursors (1990: 82; 1994; cf. E. L. Jones 1994: 21). A related perspective, "endogenous growth theory," examines forces within an economy—often technology, research and development, and innovation—that produce sustained economic growth (see reviews in Pack 1994; Romer 1994; Solow 1994). The extent to which the British Industrial Revolution can be characterized by such endogenous growth is debated (Crafts and Mills 1997; Greasley and Oxley 1997a, 1997b).

The reevaluation of the Industrial Revolution also challenges the assumption that capitalism represented a dramatic rupture. Some historians argue that there was no industrial revolution; others downplay the scale of change (see reviews in Harley 1999; D. S. Landes 1999; Mokyr 1999: 1–6). One debate centers on whether the Industrial Revolution affected most of British society (Ashton 1997 [1948]; D. S. Landes 1969; Temin 1997, 2000) or just a few industries, such as cotton, wool, iron, and machinery (Cameron 1993; Crafts and Harley 1992; Harley and Crafts 2000). These debates seem far from settled; more important, however, is that they shift the question from "Why did dramatic change occur in England?" to "Did dramatic change occur in England?"

Contingency or Causality?

Like Duplessis (1997) and Lachmann (2000), who argued that the rise of capitalism was not a foregone conclusion, and John R. Hall (1999b), who argued for recomposition instead of transition, others highlight the contingent or conjunctural (perhaps even accidental) rise of capitalism, thereby diverging from an earlier emphasis on finding the finite "causes" of the transition (singular emphasized here) to capitalism. Such work invokes dramatically expanded comparisons, new empirical evidence, or synthetic theories. The comparisons, expanding earlier suggestions to look for "failures" (Krantz and Hohenberg 1975), often include cases in which the transition to capitalism did not occur, even in the presence of many capitalist preconditions (Aymard 1982; Emigh 1997a; Hopcroft 1999; E. L. Jones 2000 [1988]; Lachmann 2000; Pomeranz 2000; Wong 1997). As in much of historical sociology (Sewell 1996b: 272), there has been an increasing emphasis on primary sources and archival research (e.g., Biernacki 1995; Carruthers 1996;

Emigh 1997b) because such material can be directed toward the theoretical debate at hand more easily than secondary material, which might have been produced to answer second-wave questions or different historiographical debates. Primary material makes it much easier to investigate the pre-modern part of the modern/post-modern conceptual apparatus for underpinning more accurate historical referents, which were more often assumed than empirically researched in first- and second-wave research.

Tuscany, for example, is an important negative case in which many of the preconditions for capitalism were present in the Middle Ages, but capitalism came relatively late to the region (Aymard 1982; Jere Cohen 1980, 1983; Holton 1983; Lachmann 2000). I have shown, using extensive archival evidence (Emigh 1998, 1999, 2000, 2003), that standard interpretations of the "failed Tuscan transition to capitalism"—stemming from a lack of capitalist tenants (Marx) or from the lack of a state-like political unit (Weber)—are largely inaccurate. If in the end sharecropping did not support the transition to capitalism within the Tuscan territorial state, it was not because it was inefficient, but because of sectoral relations that shaped its use in that political context: landlords were urbanites, while tenants were rural inhabitants (Emigh 2003). Thus, sharecropping tended to reproduce urban capitalism, not rural capitalism, because the economic interests of the more powerful, urban landlords were paramount.

Robert Allen (1992) and Rosemary Hopcroft (1994, 1999) questioned the standard Marxist interpretation that large tenant farmers formed the basis of English agrarian capitalism by showing that smallholders were more productive than large landholders. P. K. O'Brien and D. Heath (1994) concurred by comparing France and England. Howkins (1994) argued that the large numbers of small farmers and farm servants fundamentally blurred the standard Marxist distinction among landlords, tenants, and laborers. Hopcroft (1999) used an impressive range of comparisons: England, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and Sweden. Her primary argument was that field institutions (how individuals held land rights and the physical organization of the fields) shaped the transition to capitalism. When land was held communally, difficulties and uncertainties in the enforcement of property rights decreased agricultural productivity. In contrast, in less communal regions, fewer difficulties in enforcing property rights allowed individuals to focus on the efficient cultivation of their property. Although Hopcroft argued primarily from the neo-institutionist tradition, she drew in theoretically diverse factors to explain that rural development occurred where there were fewer communal field systems, little feudal control, favorable ecologies, dense population, access to markets, impartial legal institutions, little rent seeking, and little warfare.

Other work, especially following Wallerstein (1974), shifts the temporal comparison. Arrighi (1994: 5–6, 86), instead of considering a shift from feudal to capitalist production, considered long-term cycles of capitalist expansion. Expanding Marx's analysis of the capitalist production process, in which capitalists use money to buy capital, which allows them to produce goods to make more money (i.e., Marx's general formula of capital: MCM', in which M stands for money capital and C stands for commodity capital), Arrighi analyzed alternating capitalist cycles of either material expansion (MC) or financial expansion (CM') historically and globally. Drawing on Abu-Lughod's (1989) idea of a pre-modern world system, Arrighi (1944: 87, 109) located the beginning of these cycles in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Genoa. Frank (1998: xxii, 5) considered an even longer—five-thousand-year—world system in which Asia, not Europe, was usually at the center. European hegemony is, therefore, largely a myth, certainly before 1800, and is unlikely to continue. The temporary rise of the West was largely conditioned by the fall of the East through the coincidence of long-run economic and demographic cycles and the discovery of American gold and silver (pp. 276–277). The use of 1800 to periodize world history (Goldstone 2001a) breaks with Robert Brenner's (1985a, 1985b) use of the European Black Death in the 1350s as the point of divergent capitalist development within Europe or Wallerstein's (1974) dating of the world system to the end of the sixteenth century. David Levine (2001: 1) argued that Europe diverged from the rest of the world around the date 1000.

This comparison between European and East Asian history leads to another third-wave question: "Did capitalism arise in Western Europe?" The comparison itself is not new. Japan, probably because of its feudal past, was incorporated explicitly in second-wave debates (Takahashi 1976). Now, however, the East/West comparison is used not in the Weberian sense to explain causally the rise of the West (as among the second wavers), but to downplay Western predominance and highlight its contingent nature. Drawing on classics such as McNeill (1971) and Wolf (1982), world history is being rewritten from a non-Eurocentric view to stress global interconnections, the contributions of other regions to European culture, and comparisons not implicitly based on Europe (Pomeranz 2000; Alan Smith 1991; Wong 1997). This new version of world history argues against common historical themes, the "diffusion of European culture," or the "expansion of Europe" (Blaut 1993). For example, Goody (1996b) argued that Europeans had few cultural, familial, or economic advantages compared to Asians; furthermore, Eurasian societies diverged from a common base. Blaut (1993: 1–2) agreed that European civilization had no unique or internal historical advantage (except perhaps geographical), especially before 1492.

Wong (1997: 278), through careful comparisons that do not take European developments as the standard, showed that China and Europe, up to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, shared similar patterns of preindustrial Smithian growth, including increased rural industries, increased agricultural productivity, and expanded commercial networks. There were, however, different political economies. China was an empire, constituted by a vertically integrated and unitary state aimed at spreading rule across a vast area. Thus, there was a continuum between state and society and an alliance between state officials and other elites. In contrast, Europe was characterized by the separation of state and society and the elaboration of functionally distinct and institutionally independent levels of government in which state officials and elites were forced to negotiate both with each other and with other states (pp. 280–283; cf. Zanden 2000). Wong argued that the clustering of inventions between 1780 and 1880 set the stage for the Industrial Revolution and interacted with this political and social context, but he argued that these were largely contingent events that cannot be explained causally. In the nineteenth century, economic development fit well with the European social context; in the twentieth century, industrialization fit the Chinese context (Wong 1997: 280). This provides a strong motivation for the argument that Asian and European capitalisms are different and that Asia is more "resurgent" than "newly industrializing" (Maddison 2001: 128). Thus, while Wong shares with second-wave Weberians an emphasis on the importance of state structure, he diverges from them by pointing to multiple transitions to capitalism.

Sanderson (1994) focused on a comparison between Japan and Europe and emphasized many of these same factors, but he argued that by the end of the Tokugawa period (1600–1868), Japan was capitalist. He stressed the similarities between medieval Japan and medieval Europe that allowed capitalism to develop in both places, including relatively small size, geography, climate, and political decentralization, as well as the context of the larger historical trend, expanding world commercialization that made it possible to capitalize on these advantages.

Pomeranz (2000) drew together these world history themes by arguing that there were few differences between Asia (primarily China and Japan) and Europe with respect to agriculture, industry, technology, population dynamics, and commerce before 1800 and that their subsequent divergence was explained by their interaction, not factors intrinsic to Europe (or England). European dominance stemmed from subtle interactions among small differences, including outlets for European population growth in the New World, the solution to energy shortages (coal supplies), and other geopolitical factors. By the eighteenth century, Europe had outpaced China and Japan with respect to labor-saving technologies, although not land-saving techniques. Without Europe's possibilities of overseas expansion and access to overseas resources (often through coercion), Europe and Asia might not have diverged. Thus, Pomeranz also emphasized the highly contingent rise of the West.

Goldstone (2000) has perhaps taken this argument the farthest, suggesting that England had no inherent advantages over Asia and was the first to industrialize mostly because of a series of accidents, including political compromises in 1689 between the Anglican Church and dissenters and between the Crown and Parliament; the adoption of Newtonian science; and technical developments in water pumping near coal mines. This new world history literature also echoes the work on the Industrial Revolution by stressing the technological roots of the divergence of East and West (Goldstone 2000; Pomeranz 2000; Vries 2002; Wong 1997). Vries (2002: 125–126) discounted even the differences in Eastern and Western state systems and emphasized that industrialization was driven by a set of technological and scientific breakthroughs. Thus, through new evidence and comparisons, as well as theoretical pluralism, this new work in world history calls into question the assumption that the rise of capitalism is an event that can be explained by a small set of causal factors.

The Market Transition

While the fall of socialism seems to reinforce the view that capitalism is natural, the recent work on the historic transition debates suggests that the "capitalism as triumph" lesson cannot be distilled from history. The economic literature suggests that privatization—the establishment of North and Thomas's (1973) neo-institutional preconditions, secure private property rights—is the path to post-socialist economic growth (Åslund 1995; Blanchard, Froot, and Sachs 1994; Kuboniwa and Gavrilenkov 1997; Lipton and Sachs 1992; S. Parker, Tritt, and Woo 1997: 4; Sachs 1992; Sachs and Pistor, eds. 1997). Privatization, however, is not a single phenomenon, nor is it easily established (Brada 1996; Clarke 1993b; D. Stark 1996; Verdery 1996: 135). Indeed, Kovács (1994: xi–xvii) argued that most reformers and politicians overestimated how easily capitalist economies could be erected. As David Stark (1994: 64) noted, the historic rise of capitalism was not designed; thus, it is unlikely it can be introduced exclusively by plan in post-socialist Europe. The historical literature illustrates these same points—the rise of capitalism was a slow, local, and highly contingent development even in the presence of multiple capitalist preconditions, and it had many cultural and political dimensions. As Cynthia Morris (1995: 223) noted, optimism about widespread and speedy returns from capitalist transformations cannot be based on Western history, where such changes were slow. One central task then, as Pickles and Smith (1998: xvii) have argued, is to understand this emerging triumphalism and universalism of transition theory. Historical sociology's complementary task is to examine both historic and contemporary transition debates.

Like John R. Hall (1999b), Kovács (1994: xiii–xv) and Gal and Kligman (2000: 10–12) pointed out that the word "transition" implies a common destination of Western capitalism and noted the use of the plural "transitions" to imply multiple paths. "Transformations" is often preferred to describe changes without direction and to suggest a variety of changes (cf. Böröcz 2001: 1157; Burawoy and Verdery 1999: 16; Róna-Tas 1997: 9; Adrian Smith and Pickles 1998: 15–16; Verdery 1996: 15–16). This idea of multiple paths to capitalism or multiple capitalisms is popular in Central Europe, with its "third way" tradition, once designating a route to modernization between socialism and capitalism (Burawoy and Lukács 1992: 168–173; Róna-Tas 1997: 184–185).

Similarly, the term "path dependent" describes how initial conditions shape outcomes (Mahoney 2000). Socialist society and class structure, for example, shape contemporary economic outcomes (Adrian Smith and Pickles 1998: 15). Adrian Smith and Adam Swain (1998) argued for the adoption of regulationist theory to understand these multiple paths out of socialism. The regulation of capitalist accumulation occurs not just through state and market, but through a variety of social mechanisms that arose historically and intersect in multiple ways. Thus, their change will be path dependent. David Stark (1994) showed how different models of privatization corresponded to different political paths during the market transition in the former East Germany, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Nee and Cao (1999) highlighted a path-dependent effect of property rights on stratification in China.

Because of path dependency, David Stark (1996: 993) argued that different forms of capitalism would emerge in Eastern Europe, Western Europe, and East Asia. He thus echoed the historical arguments, such as Duplessis's, about multiple forms of capitalism. He reinforced the points of Wong, Frank, and Pomeranz, suggesting that China's path to a market economy may be quite different from that of Russia or Eastern Europe. Economic growth in China, far from being a paradoxical accompaniment to its socialist government, may be a relatively continuous historical development, especially in contrast to East European post-socialist countries, where underdevelopment or peripheral status seems to be relatively constant (cf. for Russia, see Derluguian 2001 and Adrian Smith and Pickles 1998: 9; for China and Russia, Lupher 1996; Burawoy and Lukács 1992: xi suggest comparisons to Latin America and Africa). The contemporary Asian/East European comparison is important (e.g., Burawoy 1997: 1434; Oberschall 1996; Szelényi and Kostello 1996; W. T. Woo, Parker, and Sachs, eds. 1997) and could be valuably informed by further, and more explicit, historical comparisons.

The debate over the role of politics and culture often follows the same lines of the historic transition debates; while economists tend to view politics and culture as exogenous forces that disrupt marketization, sociologists view them as intrinsic to capitalism. This debate has been particularly vivid with respect to Russia. Sociologists are deeply cynical of shock therapy (the extremely rapid, planned implementation of market institutions, such as privatization and the removal of price restraints) and dismiss economists' suggestions that failures of this policy occur only when it is implemented incorrectly or because culture and politics interfere (Burawoy 1997; Gerber and Hout 1998). Sociologists do often highlight the role of politics in Russia, especially in contrast to Central Europe (Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley 1998: 4). Staniszkis (1991) used the term "political capitalism" to denote the use of political connections and offices to gain control of wealth and resources and to generate profit, especially in Russia. Drawing on Burawoy and Krotov (1992), Gerber and Hout (1998: 36–37) and Gerber (2002) argued that Russia is characterized by "merchant capitalism," the pursuit of short-term, windfall profits, instead of investment in productive enterprises.

The political nature of Russian capitalism, however, can be seen as the result of shock therapy, not the cause of its failure. Burawoy and Krotov (1992: 21) defined economic systems by examining, first, the relations of production (the mechanisms through which goods and services are appropriated and distributed); second, the relations in production (mechanisms that describe the production of these goods); and third, whether these are characterized by planning or lack thereof (that is, anarchy, the lack of any agent of superordinate control). State socialism is characterized by planning with respect to the relations of production and capitalism is characterized by planning in the relations in production. Russian merchant capitalism is characterized by neither, because the removal of the state simply eliminates planning at the level of relations of production but does not produce a market that would rely on coordinating the relations in production (i.e., there is no Polanyian state). Thus, Burawoy and Krotov (1992: 35–36) argued that the global market cannot compel a transition to capitalism in the absence of national agents who have both the interest and the capacity to create capitalism (cf. Burawoy 1997: 1442). Similarly, Nee (2000) outlined the Chinese state's role in creating positive economic reform, in sharp contrast to Russia, where the state has little ability to do so. As Woodruff (1999) pointed out, shock therapy created its own demise in Russia, because price liberalization essentially eliminated the opportunities to use financial instruments, forcing managers to use barter. Kogut and Zander (2000: 169) argued that technologically viable firms failed during the transition to capitalism because of the brutal shocks to the macroeconomic system; far from being a cure for the inefficiencies of socialism, rapid change was simply disruptive. Thus, like the historic transition literature (R. Brenner 1993; Lachmann 2000; Perelman 2000), this work on the contemporary market transition illustrates that markets are necessarily intertwined with, not divorced from, politics.

This invocation of merchant capitalism is a clear reference to historical transition debates, drawing on Marx's idea that increased trade was insufficient to bring about a transition to capitalism and that changes in the sphere of production were also necessary. Another use of historical referents might draw on insights of work stemming from Smith and Marx, which point out, respectively, that slow gradual growth and sudden dramatic change may both contribute to the rise of capitalism, although in different ways and in different places. Other interesting comparisons could be made by using Lachmann's elite theory as an alternative to class theory, perhaps in combination with the varieties of elite theory used in market transition debates (e.g., Szelényi and Szelényi 1995).

Like much of the third-wave literature on historic capitalisms—and in contrast to the neo-liberal economists Åslund, Sachs, and Lipton—Róna-Tas (1997: 9) argued that capitalist economic transformations were gradual, contingent, and deeply influenced by political, social, and cultural factors. In particular, they stemmed from political contests among social groups (cf. Gerber 2002). Róna-Tas called the market transition the "Small Transformation" with respect to the "Great Transformation," thus using Polanyi to invoke the historical referent. He envisioned the collapse of socialism as the end of a modernist project of industrialization in which communist planners attempted to establish large-scale factory production, thereby modeling the capitalist industrial revolution. Thus, he views historic transitions as sudden and dramatic, in comparison to the slow and gradual post-socialist ones. The literature on the Industrial Revolution reviewed above, however, illustrates the smallness of this "Great Transformation," again suggesting the need for better historic referents.

Like Perelman (2000) and Lachmann (2000), Róna-Tas (1997: 180–181) denied that capitalism was inherently efficient. Socialism brought about, at least for a time, rapid growth. Thus, like the economic history literature, his work pointed to multiple processes of economic growth. Similarly, Burawoy (2001) pointed out that a transition from socialism to capitalism does not necessarily occur because the latter is more efficient but when the interests of political actors who can implement it are realized. Burawoy concurred that capitalism was initially less efficient than subsistence production. Thus, while it is common to assume that socialism collapsed because it was economically inefficient in comparison to capitalism or because of the economic pressures of globalization, this contemporary and historic evidence suggests otherwise. Clarke (1993a: 42), drawing on the Marxist idea of the contradictions inherent in capitalist production, argued that the collapse of the Soviet Union stemmed from the world capitalist system, of which it had been a part. Verdery (1996: 34–37) also argued that politics and culture were crucial to socialism's collapse; some international groups wanted to reduce the political power of socialist states through privatization. Capitalism and socialism collided because of two essentially different temporal orders, with corresponding notions of person and activity.

More generally, Burawoy and Verdery (1999: 2, 14) argued against the idea that culture and politics merely interfere with marketization by noting that on the micro-level, individuals' responses to new market initiatives often employ a language and symbols adopted from socialism, albeit to new senses and new ends. Thus, they explicated another mechanism by which the market transition is path-dependent. Verdery (1999: 50) argued that the reburial of bodies during the market transition illustrated how individuals reconfigure mea[illegible] during times of dramatic upheaval and disorienting change. Dead bodies are pressed into political service as cultural symbols for property restitution, political pluralization, religious renewal, and nation-state building. Individuals make claims to power and resources through these symbols (p. 52). Property restitution, for example, is a struggle of certain groups and persons to tie property down, against others who would keep it amorphous (Verdery 1996: 135).

Kennedy (2002: 272) also took a cultural approach, arguing that transition (from plan to market, from dictatorship to democracy) is about transition culture, which is undergirded by values and competencies centered in transnational organizations and national bodies. Thus, markets are discursive sites for identity construction: the rhetoric of markets signals a shift in identity for markets that need entrepreneurs and consumers (Kennedy 1994: 6). Kennedy echoed the historical point about the historical construction of workers and consumers (Biernacki 1995; McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb 1982; S. W. Mintz 1985). Gal and Kligman (2000: 59–62) noted that economic changes also entail gender changes: men more than women are associated with the capitalist economic sector, thereby necessitating a reconstitution of socialist meanings of public and private space and gender.

Like Randall Collins, Eyal (2000) explicitly generalized Weber's argument about an ethical or ascetic spirit of capitalism. Eyal argued that there was an unlikely elective affinity coalition between dissident intellectuals and technocrats, who together bore the spirit of capitalism in the Czech Republic and therefore led the transition to capitalism. Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley argued that contemporary Eastern Europe has "capitalism without capitalists" (1998: 1–2). While there is no capitalist class or economic bourgeoisie (nor a political elite), a cultural bourgeoisie, an intelligentsia that formed under socialism, is now developing capitalism. Thus, they argued that the current market transition was unlike the one analyzed by the classic authors, Marx, Weber, and Smith, who suggested that capitalists had to exist before capitalism.

Conclusions

Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley's (1998: 16) call for a "neo-classical sociology" suggested that the classic sociologists, Weber, Marx, and Smith, analyzed a single, inevitable rise of capitalism (see comments by Böröcz 2001; Burawoy 2001; Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley 2001; Kennedy 2001; D. Stark and Bruszt 2001). In contrast, neo-classical sociology would look at multiple transitions to capitalisms. Thus, Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley (1998: 3) noted the need to shift away from the questions of the classics, which is also characteristic of third-wave research on historic transition debates like those reviewed above. They also suggested the need to develop further historical referents (pp. 47–54) that analyze the historic rise of capitalism without assuming the bourgeoisie's role. Yet to a large extent, they focused on the differences between the current market transition and historic transitions to capitalisms, thereby reinforcing the idea that historic debates provide relatively little information about contemporary ones. As Böröcz (2001: 1165) noted, their neo-classical sociology explores relatively little historical terrain. Therefore, Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley follow, at least in large part, the second of the three uses of historical referents I outlined at the beginning of this essay, which emphasizes differences between past and present. While their call to revive topical interest in transitions to capitalism is important and timely, it could be more effective if the emphasis on first-wave work were supplemented with more recent, third-wave work on historic transition debates that is already oriented toward multiple historic transitions to capitalisms.

This third-wave literature is reorienting the classic authors' questions with new comparisons, new evidence, and new theories. In the recent wave of theorizing, the "transition to capitalism" is rarely discussed as a singular, inevitable event to be explained by a single theory. While historic transition debates draw on standard social science perspectives derived from Smith, Marx, and Weber, most recent work combines these perspectives in innovative ways or goes beyond them and uses a variety of comparisons (or draws out the implications of cases discussed less frequently in the past), often based on new archival evidence. Much effort is spent asking what capitalism is, analyzing if and where it arose, and explaining the contingent nature of transitions to capitalisms. It emphasizes the political and cultural constitution of capitalisms. Furthermore, it employs, at least in large part, what I call the third use of historical referents, which draws on comparisons using both similarities and differences across time and space and between past and present. Such a method rejects the first use of historical referents—that history can be repeated in its entirety—but also rejects the second use—that historical sequences are entirely unique. Third-wave uses of East/West comparisons (e.g., Pomeranz 2000; Wong 1997) and comparisons within Europe of negative and positive cases (Emigh 2003; Hopcroft 1999; Lachmann 2000) carefully look for regional and temporal similarities and differences without assuming capitalism's inevitability.

A better understanding of the contemporary market transition can be developed through this third-wave research on historic transitions to capitalisms with this third use of historical referents. Much is certainly different about the historic rise of capitalist economies and the current market transition, including the degree of intentionality and planning, the level of technology, and global economic conditions. Nevertheless, as the preceding review shows, much is also similar. In fact, the similarities between past and present provide the sharpest critique of the neo-classical economic advice often implemented in Eastern and Central Europe and the common American cultural parlance that capitalism is the most efficient and rational economic system.

Indeed, the literature on historic capitalist economic change suggests that the contemporary market transition is unlikely to be a sudden, purely economic affair with a certain and inevitable outcome, swept into place because of a few capitalist preconditions. Instead, it suggests that transitions to capitalisms are highly local and gradual affairs, with different outcomes in different places, influenced by politics and culture. Perelman and Lachmann's work suggests—and Burawoy; Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley; Gal and Kligman; Kennedy; and Verdery all confirm—that analyses should consider in whose interest it is to make capitalism. Far from being a neutral or efficient allocation mechanism, the market is generally advanced by those who find it to be in their short-term interest. Other work, such as that of E. L. Jones and Kenneth Pomeranz, suggests that sudden dramatic changes are rare indeed. While there is no denying the changes that occurred in Eastern Europe in 1989, in hindsight, the continuities may be more dramatic than the changes, as Róna-Tas suggests. To know for sure, however, how much change is a lot, historical sociologists must redouble their efforts to study historic transitions empirically, for it is the historical rise of capitalisms that provides the referents for the understanding of current market transitions. It is to be hoped that such work will continue to be diverse theoretically and empirically and to use multiple comparisons, moving away from the specific questions and assumptions of the classic authors while retaining their topical focus and ideas. By providing a better empirical understanding of what pre-modern is, historical sociology can provide a better understanding of what modern and post-modern are.

MING-CHENG M. LO

The Professions: Prodigal Daughters of Modernity

The history of the sociology of professions can be told as a tale about the contestation of modernity. Many scholars have long regarded professions as a form of institutionalized rationality and thus one of the designated carriers of modernity. Other studies of professions, however, challenge the assumed equation between rationality and modernity and question the role of professions in the social formation of modernity. The unsettled relationship between professions and modernity is not only central to the question of what professions are and how to theorize them in sociological writings, but is also symptomatic of certain contradictions in our discipline's formulation of the notion of modernity. This chapter is an attempt to draw a conceptual map for navigating through this unsettled relationship.

A map is by necessity incomplete—details are omitted, interesting background may be obscured, and important landmarks are not always incorporated, not because these things are deemed unimportant by the map maker, but rather because a map can serve only particular and limited purposes. My purpose here is to provide a framework for understanding the development of the sociology of professions in the past two decades by delineating the underlying debate regarding the nature of modernity. In this vein, I will start with a brief review of the frustrated conversations between the sociology of professions and historical sociology. I will then review the contributions of these writings to our understanding of the structural intersections of modern institutions. I suggest that as the field developed, a shift occurred from a focus on the professions' links to other modern institutions to their embeddedness in a broader array of (sometimes not so "modern") categories of identity. The recognition of the professions' social embeddedness presented