

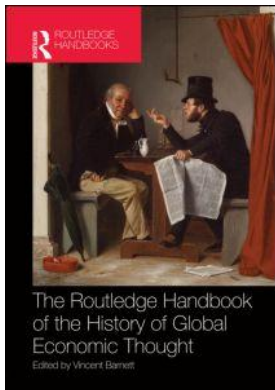
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Russia and Ukraine

François Allisson

Russia and Ukraine, although they are now politically independent of each other, share a long common history. The first state of Rus' was established in Kiev between the ninth and the twelfth centuries, and ruled the territories of today's Ukraine, Belarus and Western Russia. The city was entirely destroyed in the thirteenth century by a Mongol invasion. The capital of the state accordingly moved from Kiev to Moscow: Muscovy succeeded Kievian Rus'. From this moment and periodically, there were demands for the return of the capital to Kiev, as well as separatist movements. Moscow managed to remain the capital of this new state until the early eighteenth century. In 1713, Peter the Great transferred the capital of his Empire to Petersburg (later known as St. Petersburg, Petrograd, Leningrad and back to St. Petersburg). The capital was transferred back to Moscow in 1918 by Soviet leaders.

In the meantime, from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries, the territory of Ukraine underwent several foreign dominations: Polish, Lithuanian, Ottoman, Tatar and eventually the Russian tsarist regime. Ukraine was thus under Russian hands before the 1917 revolutions and soon engaged in a war of independence, and was run by several independent Ukrainian governments from 1917 to 1920. Eventually, Soviet Russia took Ukraine back and, at the birth of USSR in 1922, Russia and Ukraine both became Soviet Socialist Republics: Moscow was the capital of Soviet Russia, and Kiev of Soviet Ukraine. But Moscow remained the capital of the USSR. After the fall of the USSR, Ukraine regained its independence vis-à-vis Russia. Although it was not perceived alike, Russia also gained its independence in 1991 (see Plokhly, 2010).

A key difference between contemporary Russia and Ukraine is their external orientations. Russia has always been torn between the West (Europe) and the East (Asia). If the Western turn, initiated by Peter the Great, has tipped the balance (at least that of the government) in the last three centuries, it can still change. The current strength of the Eurasian movements recalls the unique position of Russia: neither Europe, nor Asia. On its side, Ukraine is in Europe. But Ukraine hesitates about its relationships with Western Europe on one side, and with Russia on the other. The versatile reactions of Europe and of Russia towards Ukraine explain these hesitations. It should be remembered that many Russians live in Ukraine, and that many Ukrainians live in Russia. Both languages are similar, and the cultures are as well. Having this in mind, the present study considers Russia and Ukraine together, as having a common tradition of economic thought, even if we are aware of the shortcomings of such approach.

The Russian and Ukrainian economies

The Russian and Ukrainian economies have long been peasant economies characterised by inefficient paths of communication, which restricted trade to major cities, where markets were held (once a year in the biggest of them, Novgorod). Cities were not industrial centres; small handicraft work was done in the countryside. The numerous enemies of the state (Tatars, Mongols) rendered both money and taxes necessary, either to pay tributes, or to finance wars.

Sources of information on the Russian and Ukrainian economies were scarce until the nineteenth century, and then things radically changed. At the beginning of the century, the Tsar invited foreign scholars to travel through the country for a few months or years, each with the eventual aim of delivering a *tableau statistique* based on their observations. The most striking examples were C. von Schölzer and A. von Haxthausen. By the end of the century, local *zemstvo* statistics, central statistical bodies and scientific societies were far more effective.

Most indigenous economic thought in the nineteenth century was based around conflicting views on the *obshchina*, the traditional rural institution of collective landownership. Was it an archaic institution impeding economic development or a genuine basis for a higher socialist world? A minority defended the first point of view, including B.N. Chicherin, I.V. Vernadsky and L.N. Litoshenko and B. Brutzkus during the early Soviet period. The second point of view was the most popular, defended by authorities like N.G. Chernyshevsky, M.M. Kovalevsky and N.F. Danielson. For the government, the *obshchina* guaranteed stability through strong social cohesion (peasants bound to their land, a life confined to tradition), but at the same time, it was perceived as a low productivity system, responsible for economic backwardness. Various reforms to abolish the *obshchina* were attempted at the beginning of the twentieth century with controversial success. It nevertheless legalised the (already on-going) rural exodus, and significantly contributed to increasing it. The fate of the new city dwellers was to feed the emerging industrial system.

Industry had two roots in Imperial Russia. First, there was a centralised state-controlled and state-sponsored industry devoted to the extraction of raw materials and to military equipment. Second, there was a decentralised craft industry in the countryside, either a landlord's small factory employing serfs or an association of workers who increased their income after fieldwork in the *artel* – a production cooperative. Russian cities were unlike European cities: they were almost exclusively centres of consumption of luxury goods imported for the aristocracy, where private factories were largely missing until the 1880s. Many efforts had been made by the state to extract Russia out of its industrial lethargy: Russian ministers of finance, among others, attempted to create the conditions for an industrialisation of Russia: monetary and credit reforms, extension of the railroad network, attraction of foreign investments and active foreign policies. But – and the famines of 1891, 1892 and 1902 recalled it – industry could not develop without a strong agriculture. With P.A. Stolypin's reforms at the turn of the 1910s, for the first time the agricultural and industrial sectors seemed to develop together. Industrialisation was not abandoned after the revolution; on the contrary, it was a highly debated topic with huge practical consequences.

The various actors of the economy restlessly debated these industrial and agricultural issues. Under the old regime, society was divided into several social groups, or *sosloviye*, grouped under four titles: the nobility, the clergy, the urban dwellers and the peasants. These groups, while they might have had a direct connection with some empirical reality up until the first half of the nineteenth century, were not able to grasp the on-going stratification of society. A popular Russian proverb said, 'God is in His Heaven and the Tsar is far away'. Popular wisdom captured well the fact that the Tsar was no longer the intermediary between God and the people: there were many intermediaries between the Tsar and his peasants, including new economic actors

and economic thinkers. Whatever the names given to these groups (*raznochintsy*, *intelligentsia*), they represented those who swelled the cities but did not fit into the traditional *sosloviye*: the new professionals (merchants, industrialists, bankers), journalists, publicists, writers, artists, ruined landlords, and the growing bodies of civil servants and academics, statisticians and economists, among others, whose expertise were needed by both local and central levels of government.

Before the nineteenth century: Kievan Rus', Muscovy and Petersburg

The first articulated economic theories appeared on the territories of the present Russia and Ukraine in the nineteenth century. However, many texts involving economic ideas in more general reasoning, mostly legal, political and religious, appeared during the late seventeenth and the whole eighteenth century. And even in earlier periods, since the ninth century, some documents, often official, sometimes letters from counsellors, documenting the policies of successive Tsars, reached us. Tales and popular texts also often included economic considerations.

The Tsars' public policies provided indication on the issues of concern to the government. Military and religious problems predominated, but economics issues often derived from them. The art of war required tax collection, which implied the existence of a surplus, and knowledge of it. Thus, fiscal issues were frequently crucial. Foreign trade, with imports of luxury goods and needed raw materials against exports of agricultural goods, raised the question of tariffs. Among the frequent issues, the ownership of land and the fate of peasants were as important as the scarcity of metals for coinage (mainly copper and silver). Some particularly interesting debates, such as whether tax should be paid in nature (i.e. corn) or in coins, or on the ownership of the Eastern Orthodox Church in line with its relationship with the power, came as well.

In contrast to the military needs, the Russian economy was insufficiently productive at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The productivity of the peasant economy is explained by the low level of education of the serfs, the exorbitant transportation costs due to the lack of commercial roads and the low handicrafts activity. The tax burden heavily weighed on the peasantry, who would revolt on several occasions (the Pugachev revolt of 1773–4 being a lustrous example). The Tsar, helped by a few councillors, and annoyed by some pamphleteers, was aware of the situation and tried to reform the country. Essentially under the reigns of Peter the Great (1682–1725) and Catherine the Great (1762–96), Russia underwent profound changes: development of large state-owned (but also private) manufactures, exploration for locating natural resources, development of the mining industry, of trade, maritime roads, etc. The first institutions dedicated to knowledge appear: the first museum, the Academy of Sciences (under Peter the Great), the universities of Moscow and St. Petersburg, the Free Economic Society (under Catherine the Great). This modernisation was carried out in the name of Westernisation and at the cost of the peasant world.

The attraction exerted by liberalism, by the French enlightenment philosophy, by the Physiocrats (e.g. on D.V. Golitsyn) and by the ideas of Smith (which were taught at the University of Moscow by two of his students, S.E. Desnitsky and I.A. Tretyakov) took place within an autocratic environment. Any liberal reform that threatened state power was suppressed and many pamphleteers, because they dared touch taboo issues (absolute power and serfdom in particular) were imprisoned.

Among the documents of significant importance in this vast period up to the eighteenth century, let us mention four. The *Russkaia Pravda*, the old legal code of the Kievan Rus' (whose origin goes back to the ninth and tenth centuries, but our knowledge of it dates from the dozens of different versions of the thirteenth century), which explained among others the existing social

relations and serfdom. The *Domostroi*, a sixteenth-century guide for the management of the household, explaining in every domain of private life (religion, education, agriculture, cooking, etc.) the good (i.e. moral and useful) way of doing things. I. Pososhkov's *Book on Poverty and Wealth* (1724) evaluated Russian society and gave advice for the management of the social economy. On every aspect of the Russian economy (agriculture, trade, taxes, money, mining, fishing), he explained 'what causes useless poverty', he fought injustices and gave advice on how to increase wealth. Finally, A.N. Radishchev's *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow* ([1790] 1958) inaugurated an economic and systematic denunciation of serfdom.

The nineteenth century: Imperial Russia

The imprint of political power on the Russian economy is significant during the whole nineteenth century. The Tsars wanted at the same time to maintain the autocracy, which implied *status quo* policies, and to fight on equal terms with the other European powers, which implied major reforms of the economy and consequently of the whole society. Within this dilemma, nineteenth-century tsarist policies look like political business cycles measuring conservatism and reform. The general trend, however, is characterised by an accumulation of reforms. The reign of Alexander I (1801–25) started with a relative burst of liberalism. He was replaced by Nicholas I (1825–55), who inaugurated his reign by the suppression, through bloodshed, of the Decembrist revolt in 1825. Meanwhile, during half a century, the Russian economy was kept unchanged.

In contrast, the reign of Alexander II (1855–81) was decisive as an attempt to modernise both society and its economy. The most important reforms were: the abolition of serfdom (1861), the establishment of local governmental bodies (*zemstva*, 1864), a judiciary reform (1864), the establishment of municipal *dumas* (1870) and various measures to boost industrialisation and the railway network. The reforms of Alexander II were driven less by the desire to meet the growing demand of radical factions of society than by the fear of social unrest, and the recognition of the backward state of Russia after the military disappointment of the Crimean war. And indeed, Alexander II's reforms were clearly not enough to answer the aspirations of the society. After several miscarried attempts, the Tsar Alexander II was assassinated in 1881. The reign of Alexander III (1881–94) was characterised by a return to authoritarianism, with measures specifically aimed at fighting terrorism and strengthening the autocracy (creation of the *okhrana*, the political police and the re-establishment of precautionary censorship). It marked a break in the reforms. The last Tsar, Nicholas II (1894–1917), initiated numerous reforms, often as a response to the troubles of the time. In particular, his ministers S.Yu. Witte and Stolypin conducted reforms to modernise and boost, respectively, industry and agriculture.

Within this political landscape, political economy flourished when it could, at the whim of censorship. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, for instance, there was a fad for Smith. The ideas of the classical school were dominant. There were fewer economic discourses up until 1870. From the 1870s onward, stimulated by the reforms, economists and publicists acknowledged the reception of several foreign currents: Marxism (especially by N.I. Ziber, among the first readers of K. Marx, and G.V. Plekhanov) and the German Historical Schools (I.K. Babst, A.I. Chuprov). After a time of assimilation of these theories, the 1890s inaugurated what was called the 'golden age of Russian political economy'. Russian revisionism in Marxism (i.e. Legal Marxism) was stimulated by the import of neo-Kantian philosophy and of Austrian marginalism (P.B. Struve, M.I. Tugan-Baranovsky, S.N. Bulgakov).

Mathematical economics developed often with a Walrasian inspiration (V.K. Dmitriev, E.E. Slutsky, N.N. Shaposhnikov, L.N. Yurovsky). The theory of probability entered in statistics thanks to economists (Yu.E. Yanson, A.A. Chuprov, L. von Bortkiewicz). F. List was invoked

in tariff issues (Witte, D.I. Mendeleev). But, more crucial for the Tsarist economy, on *the* practical issue, i.e. the economic development of Russia (and its sub-issues: industrialisation, reforms in agriculture, the role devoted to the *obshchina*, capitalism versus socialism, etc.), two main camps confronted each other: the Populists and the Marxists.

The Populists (*narodniki*) were a considerable social movement born in the 1870s. They inherited a Slavophile heritage, which implied a faith in the *obshchina* and in the Russian *muzhik* (peasant), and a rejection of the Western path of development (industrialisation and capitalism). Their master philosopher was Chernyshevsky, supplemented by Marx's critique of capitalism. The movement was very broad, from very conservative to socialist, revolutionary and terrorist members. The most famous economists in the movement were V.P. Vorontsov and Nikolai-on (i.e. Danielson, the translator of Marx in Russia). Populists theorised the possibility for Russia to jump from archaic communism to the higher agrarian socialist stage, without having to cross 'painful' capitalism. This argument was strongly disputed in the 1890s by the Marxists, which were also a broad movement. Almost every anti-Populist was a Marxist. It included the future Bolsheviks (V.I. Lenin) and Mensheviks, Liberal authors and all those who believed in the ineluctability of capitalism in Tsarist Russia. Marx found as nowhere else such a remarkable circle of followers. There were of course other movements besides Populists and Marxists: anarchists, liberals, followers of early French socialists, etc. And the influence of the German Historical School was colossal. In order to give a picture of turn of the twentieth century Russian economists, here are two examples: A.I. Chuprov and Tugan-Baranovsky.

A.I. Chuprov (1842–1908) was perhaps the most characteristic Russian economist of his time. A student and follower of Babst (the translator of W. Roscher in Russia and thus a bringer of the German Historical School to Russia), he was professor of political economy at the University of Moscow, where his manual of political economy was used by several generations of students. At the same time, Chuprov adopted Marx's theory of value, was an active promoter of *zemstvo* statistics and had sympathies with the Populists' doctrines. Chuprov's example does not suggest that all Russian economists were historicists, but most of them shared a historical approach.

Tugan-Baranovsky (1865–1919) was a socialist economist. He had special connections with both Ukraine and Russia: born in Ukraine, he studied first in St. Petersburg in the 1880s, but was then exiled in Kharkov in Ukraine, where he pursued his studies. He further studied in Moscow in the 1890s, and taught in St. Petersburg from the mid-1890s. He was once again exiled in Ukraine at the beginning of the twentieth century. Back in St. Petersburg in 1905, he left Russia finally in 1917 for the nascent independent Ukraine. Fascinated by Marx, I. Kant and by the marginalist school, he made path-breaking contributions combining historical research with highly theoretical constructions (he was the first to make an analytic use of Marx's schemes of reproduction and later to suggest market socialism).

He also contributed to revision of Marxism with a synthesis in value theory, combining a labour theory of value with a marginalist theory of price (see Allisson, 2012). He worked on the history of Russian industry, on socialism, cooperatives and monetary circulation. But he is world-renowned for his theory of business cycles developed in his 1894 masterpiece *Industrial Crises in Contemporary England, their Causes and Influence on National Life*. In this theory, crises occur endogenously because of disproportions in branches of production, and their recurrence as phases of the business cycles is explained by fluctuations in free loanable capital. On this latter point, his influence on Western business cycles theorists (A. Spiethoff, A. Aftalion, J.A. Schumpeter, W.C. Mitchell, D.H. Robertson, J.M. Keynes) was important. And in Russia and Ukraine, Tugan-Baranovsky's influence on economists active under the New Economic Policy (NEP) was tremendous.

The USSR and beyond

The revolutions of 1917 gave various new directions to economic thought in Russia and Ukraine. There was no initial rupture, and much continuity can be observed. The people suffered from World War One, and the policies of War Communism (1918–20) – shock therapy in the vanguard – did not help to recover the situation. Lenin announced NEP (1921–9), bringing back temporarily the market in the developing USSR.

The 1920s were a period of intense theoretical stimulation for economic thought. Communism was to be built. Research was mainly organised around institutes and administrative bodies. N.D. Kondratiev's Conjuncture Institute – where E.E. Slutsky, N.S. Chetverikov, T.I. Rainov and Shaposhnikov worked, among others – was a place where business cycles, price movements and monetary circulation were studied in a pioneering manner.

Slutsky (1880–1948) was an economist and statistician, established in Kiev until 1926, when he had to leave Ukraine, due to him not mastering the Ukrainian language. He then joined Kondratiev's Conjuncture Institute in Moscow. Slutsky is famously known in economics for two contributions. The first, 'On the Theory of the Budget of the Consumer' (1915), was originally published in Italian and went unnoticed for several years. It was rediscovered as a path-breaking mathematical development of Paretian ordinal utility theory, in particular of his distinction, similar to J.R. Hicks's later one, of the budget and substitution effects of the consumer's demand subsequent to a variation of price. This contribution is the only one, out of this history, to be included in all contemporary mainstream economic textbooks. The second, 'The Summation of Random Causes as the Source of Cyclic Processes', first published in Russian in 1927, then in 1937 in English in *Econometrica*, is concomitant with similar efforts in the West to formalise business cycle theory. He was the first to show that stochastic errors may by itself cause a cyclical process (see Barnett, 2011).

Kondratiev's Conjuncture Institute also worked on the development of emerging econometric techniques, and on methodological issues related to economic equilibrium and to planning. Agriculture was the speciality of the Institute of Agriculture Economy, directed by A.V. Chayanov. The Central Statistical Directorate, headed by P.I. Popov, provided innovative methods for the establishment of a balance of the national economy. The People's Commissariat for Finance, among others things, worked hard in stabilising the ruble, with Yurovsky. The Marx-Engels Institute published, under the editorship of D.B. Riazanov and I.I. Rubin, the works of Marx and F. Engels and high-quality Marx studies. Closer to the centre of the political power, economists like N.I. Bukharin, Ye.A. Preobrazhensky, A.A. Bogdanov and V.A. Bazarov were directly involved in the debates on *the* direction to take, while Gosplan (State Committee for Planning), where V.G. Groman and S.G. Strumilin worked, became the heart of Soviet economic policies from the first five-year plan (1929–33).

Stalinism had disastrous consequences on the fate of Soviet economic thought. The 1920s developed under the banner of economic pluralism. The 1930s, inaugurated by a series of trials involving many of the mentioned economists, established a single-minded world of ossified Marxism-Leninist dogma. Many economists (Bukharin, Kondratiev, Yurovsky, Chayanov, Riazanov, to name only a few) were executed during the Stalinist purges of 1937–8. But besides physical liquidations, Soviet economic thought lost even more. Many economists worked only for themselves, since they were not allowed to publish their work (this was the case of L.V. Kantorovich, the future and only Soviet Nobel Prize in economics, whose works could be published only after J. Stalin's death). Others would simply substitute economics for another discipline (geophysics for Slutsky). Eventually, many chose (or suffered) exile, like W. Leontief, S.N. Prokopovich and Brutzkus. This represented an enormous loss of human capital. In the

meanwhile, a massive collectivisation in agriculture (far away from the old *obshchina*) and an accelerated industrialisation were occurring, while Soviet economic thought was at half-mast. For instance, Stalin commissioned in 1936 what was to become the first Soviet manual of political economy, but its conception implied difficult debates, in which Stalin himself intervened. The first and only manual was eventually published in 1954.

The death of Stalin in 1953 released some of the pressure, and Soviet political economy began to revive. But the blow to Soviet science remained visible: for instance, teaching (at universities) was separated from research (at the Soviet Academy of Sciences). Moreover, the ideological framework provided by the Soviet manual of political economy prevented any theoretical research at the core of socialist political economy. Research was therefore confined to applied issues, or engaged in comparing the Soviet economy with other countries. However, Kantorovich, V.S. Nemchinov and V.V. Novozhilov made an achievement in the field of linear programming, recognised abroad, with mathematical techniques of optimisation for economic planning. As in Tsarist times, the importation of ideas from abroad had a huge impact. In this context of intellectual stagnation, the arrival in the 1980s of copies of the work of Janos Kornai (*The Economics of Shortage*) had a decisive influence on a new generation of economists (an example among others): those involved, like A.N. Yakovlev, in the internal reforms under M.S. Gorbachev's *perestroika*, and those involved, like Ye.T. Gaidar, in the transition to a market economy.

The post-Soviet transition to a market economy in the independent Russia and Ukraine was anew the battleground for different camps, representatives of several currents of economic thought. Today the old Marxists, supporters of the former regime, still resist. The young liberals, seduced by the Western neoclassical market model, brought the first liberal reforms. But a third group challenges their dominance. This heterogeneous *third way* consists of economists with (either) neo-institutionalist, evolutionary, nationalist (or Eurasian) ideas, seeking the optimal path of economic development for their respective countries. These economists returned to the debates that inflamed economic thought in the late-nineteenth century on the same issue. Thus, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, contemporary Russian/Ukrainian economic thought is also fed by the history of economic thought, perhaps more so than in the West.

Global influences and impacts

From Kievan Rus' to post-Soviet times, Russia and Ukraine were often integrated in global currents of thought. The Eastern Orthodox Church, which came from Rome after successive schisms, or the modern Cyrillic alphabet, which results from successive adaptations from the Greek alphabet, are perfect examples of the ubiquitous importance of the circulation of ideas. In their first centuries, Russia and Ukraine mostly borrowed ideas and techniques. And it was done in a way of adapting them to local conditions.

Economic thought in Russia and Ukraine was for a long time (as elsewhere) encompassed in broader social thought and very little differentiated from the latter. But the desire, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, to imitate developments in Western Europe produced a different story. Political economy was rapidly institutionalised; chairs were established at universities, scientific societies were inaugurated. But, the autonomy of the discipline had not even started. This explains in large part the fact that, during the nineteenth century up to the first decade of the twentieth century, the import of knowledge from Europe had such an impact in Tsarist Russia. Books were imported and translated. But also professors were imported (Germans were at that time considered the most erudite, while in the eighteenth century it would have been the French and English). From the 1890s, things began to change. Original

ideas were exported (Tugan-Baranovsky's and Kondratiev's works on crises and cycles for instance). During the 1920s, many academic exchanges took place between the Soviet Union, Germany and the USA. With Stalin and after, there was a reversal of the trend: ideas were no longer imported. The USSR and USA were cautiously watching each other, but didn't exchange ideas any more, except with émigré economists: Russian professors were welcomed in German universities (the reverse situation, 150 years after) and in the USA. With the fall of the USSR, Russia and Ukraine strongly started again the importation of Western economic ideas, with always the same question: are these theories good for us?

Many lively discussions were driven, and continue to attract the finest scholars, over the issue of whether there is (or is not) a Russian and a Ukrainian economic thought. The two extreme positions are the following. The first believe that the science of political economy was born in Russia in 1802–06 with the first translation of Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. They think that political economy is, if not universal, at least a Western affair, although Russia and Ukraine may benefit from these ideas. The second think that there is genuine indigenous economic thought going back to well before the arrival of classical political economy (or the Physiocrats or Mercantilists) on Russian and Ukrainian soils. This indigenous thought should be traced back in the specificities of the indigenous economy: the *obshchina*, the Eastern Orthodox Church, the characteristics of the Russian *muzhik*, etc.

In the Soviet Union, there was an official position stating that, while the Russian bourgeois only imitated Western economists, there was a genuine non-bourgeois Russian economic thought that owed nothing to Western ideas: instead of catching up with their Western colleagues, genuine Russian socialists were actually far beyond them (see the papers in *Problems of Economic Transition*, 2002, 9–10). The truth is probably in between the two extremes. To sum up, Russian and Ukrainian economic thought was often fed by foreign ideas, which were adapted to local conditions. In a few occasions (in the 1890s, the 1920s and with Kantorovich's Nobel Prize in economics in 1975) the balance of trade of economic thought showed a surplus of exports.

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This bird's eye view would have been impossible to write without relying on works previously published by historians whose works are listed below. A special mention is due to the efforts of Russian scholars in editions of the works of past Russian economists, such as P.N. Klyukin. This chapter draws on chapter one of my doctoral dissertation (Allisson, 2012).

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