

Time and World Politics



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This book offers the first authoritative guide to assumptions about time in theories of contemporary world politics. It demonstrates how predominant theories of the international or global 'present' are affected by temporal assumptions, grounded in western political thought, that fundamentally shape what we can and cannot know about world politics today. The first part of the book traces the philosophical roots of assumptions about time in contemporary political theory. The second part examines contemporary theories of world politics, including liberal and realist International Relations theories and the work of Habermas, Hardt and Negri, Virilio and Agamben. In each case, it is argued, assumptions about political time ensure the identification of the particular temporality of western experience with the political temporality of the world as such and put the theorist in the unsustainable position of holding the key to the direction of world history. In the final chapter, the book draws on postcolonial and feminist thinking, and the philosophical accounts of political time in the work of Derrida and Deleuze, to develop a new 'untimely' way of thinking about time in world politics.

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