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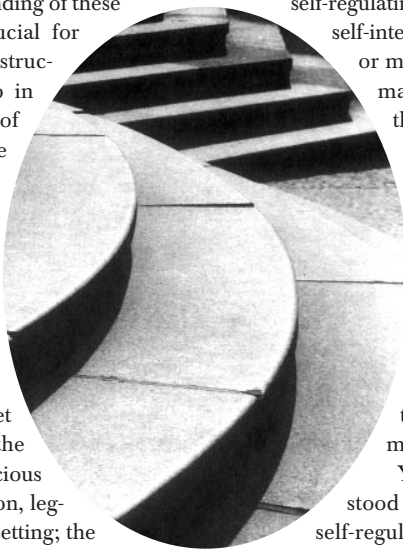
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## A Delicate Balance

**Margaret Blunden** *examines the complex relationship between the state, the market and democracy*

Ideological disputes about the respective domains of the state and the market have convulsed much of the twentieth century. Yet recent research and experience suggest that the interaction between politics and economics, between the state and the market, is complex and systemic. An understanding of these systemic properties is crucial for effective democratic reconstruction. This is especially so in countries with a legacy of communism - such as the transition states of the former Soviet Union and East-Central Europe - where not only the market but the state, and indeed society, may have to be reconstructed, if not reinvented.

The state and the market are forms of regulation: the state regulates by the conscious processes of executive action, legislation and rule- or norm-setting; the market by the autonomous impact of scarcity and demand on prices and supply. In a democratic society, where governments are held accountable, state regulation sets the rules and progressively defines and redefines the standards of the acceptable and the unacceptable. Regulation by the democratic state, unlike regulation by the market, involves ethical choices: this is acceptable, that is not. If the process of collective decision-making based on ethical criteria works well, societies are stable across the generations.



Regulation by the market, in theory, liberates governments and people from the burden of making conscious ethical choices for the common good. It legitimates the pursuit of individual self interest. Nineteenth-century economic theorists conceived of the market as a self-regulating system, one in which the self-interested actions of thousands or millions of individuals automatically aggregate, as if by the working of a hidden hand, to the collective good. Modern politicians, burdened by impossible choices between competing goods and the paralysing pressure of vested interests, have sought to shift the burden to the automatic operations of the self-regulating market.

Yet it has long been understood that the ideal of a totally self-regulating market system is flawed in two fundamental ways. First of all, the so-called free market is a dependent, not an independent variable; it is a highly artificial entity which relies entirely on the regulatory capacity of the host state. Capitalism has to be managed. In *The Great Transformation*, his study of the first industrial capitalist society - that of England - the economic historian Karl Polanyi recognized that the 'free market' was an artifact, not a natural system, entirely dependent on legislation to create and maintain the conditions for its existence. The legal system must mini-

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mally define and enforce private property rights and the law of contract - providing for redress in case of breach - as well as elementary rules of fair trading, and measures to preserve competition and resist the tendency of businesses to seek monopoly. If the operations of the market are allowed totally free rein, the result is socially devastating, the impact on social cohesion catastrophic.

The modern state, state, therefore, must fulfil the role of arbiter and regulator in economic and social matters; it must have the weight to make the general interest prevail against the many assaults, legal and illegal, which private interests will direct against it. The rights of private property and the encouragement of private enterprise must be qualified by, and subject to, overriding public interest.

The processes of globalization and the increasing impact of modern technology have each increased the demands on the regulatory functions of the state, while simultaneously weakening its capacity to fulfil that role. The international financier George Soros, writing in *The Crisis of Global Capitalism* (1998), has no illusions about the likely public costs of the unregulated global financial market. The belief underpinning the global capitalist system - that, left to their own devices, financial markets move towards equilibrium - is, he argues, a fallacy. Market discipline needs to be supplemented by another discipline: the maintenance of stability in financial markets - and this has to be the object of public policy. The international financial system is not in principle beyond control; what is absent are the mechanisms of control - the institutions - and the will to implement them. Uncontrolled international finance could produce disaster, political as well as economic.

Ernest Gellner was alert to the implications of modern technology for the balance between state and market regulation. The modern, technology-based economy is so powerful and so potentially destructive that an unrestrained market economy should be out of the question. In *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and its Rivals*, he wrote that the 'side effects of economic operations, if unrestrained, would disrupt everything - the environment, the cultural heritage, human relations. They simply have to be politically restrained, though

the control may be - and probably should be - camouflaged, consensual, negotiated and subtle. The economy must be free enough to provide plural institutions with their bases, but not powerful enough to destroy our world.'

We do not need to spend long on the purely economic benefits of free enterprise. What calls for further explanation is the role of the market economy in the creation and survival of the democratic state.

Command economies are incompatible with democracy; the free market is a *sine qua non* for civil society and the democratic state. Why is this so? The idea that civil society is an essential element of the



democratic state involves the notion of counter-balancing the power of the state by other interests, influences and sources of autonomy. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, in their magisterial comparative work, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, argue that at least a non-trivial degree of market autonomy and diversity of ownership in the economy is necessary to produce an independent and lively civil society. If all property is in the hands of the state, and all price, labour, supply and distributional decisions are the exclusive purview of the state in control of a command economy, the relative autonomy of political society required for a consolidated democracy cannot exist. Ernest Gellner understood that, in civil societies, on the other hand, autonomous produc-

tion units play a crucial role in counterbalancing the power of the state. They can only do this if political power-seeking and money-making are largely separate activities, if people are free to make money independently of the state, without bothering to acquire power or to cultivate the patronage of the powerful first.

Economic decentralization is a precondition for anything resembling a civil society. This is partly because it helps to defuse the competition for political position: there are other routes to wealth and status. Economic decentralization also underpins that miraculous occurrence, the willing surrender of power. In a mature democracy members of the defeated government trade their prestigious, but relatively low-paid and arduous ministerial posts for the opportunity of getting rich outside of office. Political power is a strong aphrodisiac, but money has its consolations.

The large measure of separation of power and wealth creation in democratic states has economic as well as political benefits. The democratic state does not have to follow the practice of some traditional societies of controlling or destroying the generators of wealth as potential threats to those in power.

Ideological conflict about the relative domains of states and markets ravaged much of the twentieth century. Nothing could be more damaging than oversimplified ideologies in this area where a complex system of essential, intricately linked, components, is operative, like some fragile natural ecosystem into which we blunder at our peril. The stable, democratic, prosperous state has to hold in delicate balance the rule of law with the freedom of civil society; democratic constitutions to restrain the power of governments with governments strong enough in their turn to restrain corruption, criminality, and the power of multinational organizations; and incentives and freedom of operation for entrepreneurs with the protection of social values and social cohesion.

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# Efficient, Disciplined, and Effective

Charles O. Jones *assesses the Bush transition*

The normal transition for a US president-elect extends from the day after the election to the inauguration on 20 January. Thus a new president has approximately ten weeks to create a new administration. He is expected during this time to nominate his cabinet and other major positions and to select his White House staff; to establish a theme and direction for his presidency; and to convey his policy priorities.

Attaining those goals in the time allotted, while dismantling a huge campaign apparatus, is a tall order even under the best of circumstances. George W. Bush had to do all this in 38 days, approximately half the normal time available to a new president. For it was not until 13 December that Al Gore conceded defeat, following the US Supreme Court's decision that effectively halted the recount of votes in Florida.

As it happened, the Bush team did not wait for the Gore concession to act on the transition. Planning began shortly after the election, replete with photo sessions showing Bush and his advisers at work. These sessions were criticized by the Gore team, and some press commentators, as presumptuous given that the vote in Florida was still not final. With his certification as the winner on 26 November, Bush stepped up the pace of his transition activities, though further challenges by Gore denied Bush the official designation as president-elect until mid-December.

Though the election result - in which votes were more or less equally split between the two candidates - demanded cross-partisanship, the hand-counters,

lawyers and judges who took centre-stage during the post-election counting process followed a decidedly partisan script.

It was in this context that the Bush transition advanced. The phases of the transition were these: making preparations as president-elect in waiting (8-26 November); making decisions as president-elect without full portfolio (26 November - 13 December) - these included key decisions regarding the management of the transition, as well as hints about pending nominations of key cabinet choices; and making a transition as the genuine president-elect (13 December- 20 January) - in this period plans were implemented, with full attention being given to the three basic

'The appointment process has been the most significant barrier to convincing quality executives to enter government service. It was remarkable that Bush was successful in attracting experienced executives in a relatively short time.'

elements of a transition: people, precepts, and policies. This article focuses on the third phase.

## THE THIRD PHASE

C. Boyden Gray, counsel to the first President Bush, has summarized the appointment process as 'innocent until nominated'.

No-one can quite know in advance what will turn up in the FBI's background checks of a nominee, financial disclosure forms, the Senate confirmation hearings, or in the investigations by the media. Based on a survey of prospective appointees, Paul C. Light has observed that 'the appointment process itself has been the most significant barrier' to convincing quality executives to enter government service. It was remarkable, therefore, that Bush was successful in attracting experienced executives in a relatively short time.

The first appointment had been signaled well in advance. Colin Powell, former National Security Adviser and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had hinted at a willingness to serve in the cabinet when he declined to run as a vice-presidential candidate. And he delivered a prime address at the Republican Convention. His appointment as Secretary of State was announced on 16 December. The following day Bush revealed another unsurprising choice, Condoleezza Rice as National Security Adviser.

Over the next 17 days, Bush completed his cabinet secretarial appointments. It was the most rapid designation of these posts following final declaration of the winner in recent times - perhaps ever.

Labor Department nominee Linda Chavez withdrew her name from consideration on 9 January when it was revealed that she had sheltered an illegal alien from Guatemala. Two days later Bush nominated Elaine Lan Chao for the Labor post. Speed was the order of the day even with problematic appointments.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the cabinet appointments is that thirteen of the fifteen cabinet members have government executive experience - at local, state, and federal level (and three have been governors and three cabinet secretaries). Only Donald Evans (Commerce) and Spencer Abraham (Energy) lack such experience, and the former was a CEO in business and chaired the Bush-Cheney campaign, while the latter once chaired the Michigan Republican Party and is a former senator.

The cabinet appointments were, unquestionably, conservative; this is hardly surprising. One Democrat was included: Norman Mineta (Transportation), who had served in President Clinton's cabinet. There was somewhat more representation of state

and local service than usual; somewhat less from education; and the usual number of lawyers.

### MAKING THE ROUNDS

President-elect Bush is often compared to President-elect Reagan, primarily in terms of their both having a delegating style and paying less attention to policy details. However, in their respective transition periods they displayed very different patterns of behaviour. Reagan - by design - played very little public role during the transition. As one of his top aides explained: 'Our whole idea was to build up to the inaugural as the big event of the transition, rather than having a series of small [or] major events [involving Reagan].'

By contrast, Bush personally announced all of his cabinet appointments, as well as several of the principal White House staff designations. He held publicized meetings with religious leaders (mostly African-American ministers), as well as with business and industrial, education, national security, and congressional leaders and representatives. He met with the (centrist) Democratic Senator John Breaux (Louisiana) to explore the possibility of his joining the new administration. Bush's two visits to Washington were more substantive and less social than were those of Reagan.

Political circumstances partly explain these differences. Reagan defeated an incumbent president by a landslide; Bush's victory was in doubt until 13 December. Congressional Republicans had impressive gains in 1980; in 2000 they had a net loss of seats in both houses. But if there are similarities in the two presidents' limited command of policy details, there are also important differences in their respective levels of personal engagement with their staffs and appointees.

### RATING THE BUSH TRANSITION

It was reported that Clay Johnson, director of the Bush transition, had an extensive reading list of books and articles to help him prepare for his job. Johnson formulated several lessons based on his reading.

1. *The hiring order follows the administration's policy priorities.* It is doubtful that the order as sequence, if that is what Johnson means, is all that important for a hiring process that has to

take place quickly. If it had been important to the Bush team, then the first appointments would have been for Treasury, Education, Health and Human Services, and Defense. Instead, these posts were filled in the second, fifth, fifth, and fourth series of appointments, respectively. If, on the other hand, Johnson simply means that the president-elect must appoint persons who will be enthusiastic and effective promoters of his policy priorities, then Bush receives strong marks. This is not to say that Bush's selections will simply march to White House orders. Rather, their strength - based on experience - suggests that they will enhance the president's priorities with their active engagement in the issues. The challenge for the president will be to guarantee this result.

2. *Hire White House staff before agency bigwigs.* This lesson was well applied. In fact, there never seemed to be any doubt that Bush's closest aides - Ari Fleisher, Karen Hughes, Joe Allbaugh, and Karl Rove - would have important staff positions in the White House. They are, in fact, an extension of the president-elect, much in the manner of Kennedy's aides in 1960. In addition, however, Bush announced Andrew Card as Chief of Staff even before 13 December, thus signaling who would be his organizational lead person in the White House. As we have seen, Condoleezza Rice was tapped for National Security Adviser just after Colin

'Of recent cases in which partisan control of the White House has changed, the Bush transition was more like that of Reagan than like those of Carter or Clinton.'

Powell was announced as Secretary of State, as was Alberto Gonzalez for White House Counsel.

3. *Create a system to resist patronage.* It is difficult to judge the extent to which the Bush team was able to resist patronage. The delay in the official start of the transition meant that cabinet secretaries and other major appointments were made before transition teams were in place. The reverse is usually the case, with the result that the team members may come to expect sub-cabinet appointments themselves or be viewed as providing

access for patronage appointments. Liaison chiefs to the major departments and agencies were designated on 20 December but, by the time they were at work, most of the cabinet secretaries had already been announced. Accordingly, the secretary-designates could think about their own appointments independent of, or in concert with, the transition teams.

4. *Have a good idea of who will staff your administration well before the election.* This lesson teaches forward thinking about who should be in an administration. What should the class picture of a presidency look like? One can only estimate the extent to which this advance planning occurred. What seems apparent, and is acknowledged by Johnson, is that a kind of MBA/MIT Sloan School of Management approach dominated the thinking about the transition. And certainly it was the case that Dick Cheney's effect during the campaign and after was organizational and purposeful.

5. *Develop a clear set of goals.* It is too early, at the time of writing (February 2001), to judge the extent to which Johnson's final lesson was absorbed and acted on. Evidence to suggest it was comes from the meetings of the president-elect with various groups, Bush's statements reiterating his agenda from the campaign, and from his actions in his very successful first week in office. A downturn in the stock market and testimony of Alan Greenspan now appear to have increased the chances for an across-the-board tax cut. And there appears to be cross-party support for education, prescription drugs, and defence proposals. It is not entirely clear, however, in what order these proposals will be acted on.

Of recent cases in which partisan control of the White House has changed, the Bush transition was more like that of Reagan than like those of either Carter or Clinton. Indeed, like Reagan's, the Bush transition was one of the most efficient, disciplined, and effective in the modern era.

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# Before and After Jeffords

**John E. Owens** *analyses congressional strategy in the early Bush administration*

Most of the commentary on US politics since the November 2000 elections has focused on the president's strategy in the new 50-50 government inaugurated in January 2001. But America's is neither a parliamentary nor a presidential system; it is a separated system. Institutional competition - rooted in the Constitution's insistence on separate powers, different electoral bases for the executive and the two legislative chambers, staggered elections, and so forth - is the system's most significant characteristic. Many of the questions we ask about a new president - what personal and political qualities does he bring to the office? What strategic environment does he face? - may be also asked about Congress, particularly about the House and the Senate party leaderships.

## **PARTY LEADERSHIP STRATEGY**

Despite the decline in American voters' attachments to the main political parties and the rise in candidate-centred politics, party organizations since the late 1970s have become the most significant organizational structures on Capitol Hill. Coincident with the return of split-party government (when control of the Congress and the presidency is split between the Democrat and Republican parties), House and Senate party leaders have become far more active than their predecessors: they have been routinely involved in all stages of the Washington policy process, much more engaged in shaping political discourse on the national stage, and have competed aggressively with the president in shaping the public

agenda. Much of the pressure on them to perform these tasks has come from rank and file House members and senators, whose policy preferences are now much more homogeneous than 20 years ago, and who increasingly expect their party leaders to influence the terms of national political debate and deliver to them collective products which promote and protect the party's image and help them and their parties win re-election next time.

## **THE NEW CONGRESS AND THE SECOND BUSH PRESIDENCY**

Following the election results - and now, most recently, the unprecedented shift in partisan control of the Senate between elections - what might we reasonably expect from the leaders of the 107th Congress? What strategic environment do they face? What governing strategies are they likely to pursue?

Although Republicans retained control of both houses of Congress at the 2000 elections (for the fourth successive election and for the first time since the 1920s), their nominal majorities were small - nine in the House; and (until Senator James Jeffords's defection to become an Independent) one, the casting vote of Vice President Cheney, in the Senate. In this environment, then, there was always a real possibility that partisan control would shift - although it was thought more likely that the cause of the shift would be the failed health of two Republican senators (who would be replaced by Democrats) rather than Bush's assertive, conservative, governing strategy.

In order to retain his party's nominal

control of the Senate, Majority Leader Trent Lott - for the first time since 1881 - had to concede 50-50 divisions on the committees, committee staff and budgets, and allow Senate Democrats ample opportunities to pursue their own agenda and block Bush's. These arrangements were always going to be difficult; and they were. Although they were the nominal majority, Senate Republicans could not be certain that their party would always control the Senate's legislative agenda - and help Bush - as they would have been able with a clear majority. This is because the operation of the Senate depends, as always, on unanimous consent - agreements between the majority and minority leaders on how to proceed: what legislation will be considered, how, and for how long.

On the House side, Republicans won their smallest majority since 1953. Yet,

'America's is neither a parliamentary nor a presidential system; it is a separated system. Institutional competition is the system's most significant characteristic.'

any comparison with the Eisenhower period is fraught. Today, there is not the large bloc of Dixiecrats that held sway in the 1950s; the size of the centrist Democratic bloc whose support Republicans might attract today is much

smaller; and on some issues (such as abortion, education, and the environment), the Democratic minority might easily gain votes from moderate Republicans. 'Republican leaders will have to rule from the centre, not from the right,' one moderate Republican declared after the election, 'or risk losing those of us in the middle.'

### AN ACCOMMODATIVE ROLE

Following six years of Congress and the presidency split between the two parties, unified party government was reinstated in 2001- for Republicans for the first time since Eisenhower in 1952. Under conditions of unified party control, we expect majority party leaders in Congress to play an accommodating role - leaving it to the president to act as the party's primary agenda setter. The reasons for this are easy to see: majority leaders of Congress and the president (particularly when the president is first elected) share a common political interest in making the president look good and in producing some kind of policy record which the party can take to the electorate in 2002 and 2004.

So, it was really no surprise that the main legislative priorities enunciated by Lott and House Speaker Dennis Hastert for the new Congress's first 100 days were strikingly similar to Bush's: tax cuts, as well as a budget, education, Social Security reform and Medicare, including prescription drug coverage for the elderly. Wisely, Republican leaders steered clear of the more explosive (and divisive) issues, such as abortion.

### PURSUING CONGRESSIONAL STRATEGIES

While relations between the Congress and a president are likely to be more harmonious and cooperative if the same party controls both institutions, unified party government is not a sufficient condition for such relations. The last time the United States experienced unified party government - 1993 to 1994 - President Clinton encountered opposition from within his own party in Congress on such issues as his comprehensive health care programme and the budget. 'What the Constitution separates,' the presidential scholar Richard Neustadt wrote in *Presidential Power*, 'our parties do not combine'.

Inherent in the separated system are some important institutional differences between the Congress and the president, which remain even when the same party

controls both institutions. Members of Congress are elected to the House and Senate because they have cultivated close relations with voters in their districts and states. This often means that when the president proposes legislation, members of his party in Congress are likely to look after their own political interests, view proposals through a local lens, and sometimes reject them if they do not reflect their perceptions of what local voters want - regardless of what the president wants.

Added to these institutional factors are others: the willingness of congressional leaders to use their prerogatives; leaders' abilities; and the relations between leaders and rank and file members of Congress.

Partisan factors are also important elements of the strategic environment. In this context, the fragility and disparate nature of the contemporary Republican coalition in Congress is a case in point. At one end of this coalition are the hard-line conservatives. Egged on by their core supporters in the electorate as well as Republican Party activists back in their districts and states, these individuals adopt hard conservative positions on economic, social welfare, and cultural issues, including the role of religion, including abortion, and education policy. Their geographical

'At one end of the Republican coalition in Congress are the hard-line conservatives. These individuals adopt hard conservative positions on economic, social welfare, and cultural issues, include the role of religion, including abortion, and education policy.'

bases lie in the south, the Plains states, and the Rocky Mountain west. These are the politicians - including leaders of an almost solidly conservative Republican Party in Congress, House Republican Whip Tom DeLay, House Majority Leader Dick Arney, and Lott - who pursued Clinton resolutely even though every national opinion poll showed that the American public steadfastly opposed his impeachment and conviction. At the other end of the spectrum are a small but significant group who adopt more moderate positions on welfare and cultural issues. A

dwindling breed, they are elected from states and districts in the increasingly Democratic northeast.

In the election campaigns, several spats occurred between the hard-line conservatives and a Bush campaign team eager to claim the 'compassionate conservative' label. In mid-1999, DeLay and other Congressional Republicans were far from pleased when Bush accused Republican congressional leaders of trying to 'balance their budget on the backs of the poor' (sic) by proposing to eliminate an earned income tax credit for working families. Bush was also openly critical of what he called House Republicans' 'anti-government' fervour. Four months before the elections, at the Republican nominating convention, Bush sidelined Republican congressional leaders; and throughout his campaign generally played down any connection with them.

With Republicans winning control of the presidency as well as both houses of the Congress, many commentators thought (or hoped) that Republican congressional leaders would accommodate to a presidential governing strategy which reflected Bush's rhetoric of 'uniting, not dividing the country', his winning of only a minority of the popular vote, the result of the election being decided effectively by the Supreme Court, and his party's slim majorities in the House and Senate. Sensibly, neither Bush nor congressional leaders placed the Republicans' more explosive issues - abortion, religion, crime and punishment, and the traditional family - at the top of the party's agenda. Nevertheless, controversial issues - including a very large tax cut, with implications for social spending - were given priority. In the strategic environment embracing the politics of these issues, congressional leaders found it all too easy to accommodate to a decidedly assertive White House strategy that assumed that the new president had won the election decisively and with a clear mandate for enacting a conservative agenda.

Predictably, Bush's assertive strategy received an enthusiastic reception from House Republican leaders who skilfully used the majoritarian procedures of the chamber to push through the legislation, in the process ignoring the demands of most Democrats. However, even in the evenly balanced Senate, Republican lead-

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# What Kind of Europe?

**Sonja Puntscher Riekmann** argues that giving citizens a voice in European Union politics could be a tool for creating a European identity.



The common sense view seems to be that there is no such thing as European identity. European citizenship may be enshrined in the Treaty of European Union, but Europeans do not feel themselves to be European, or only to a small degree. This lack of identity is often welcomed with the argument that it means Europeans will not construct grand narratives that highlight the apocalyptic threats to Europe posed by real or imagined enemies. Indeed, many people consider that a Europe without passion is the best available Europe.

At the recent Franco-German forum on the aftermath of the December 2000 EU intergovernmental conference in Nice, the French writer Régis Debray - once a companion of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro; later an adviser to the French president François Mitterand - welcomed the dispassionate and pragmatic way in which

European integration has evolved. He criticized the ideological attitude of 'Europeanists' towards European identity, with its blindness to the real interests of the modern European consumerist masses; these masses, he argued, are indifferent to bold concepts of European unity, let alone to constructions of a European identity. The most appropriate form for the EU, he argued - one which corresponds to this 'civic sluggishness' - is that of well-organized free trade zone.

The battle between the cool-headed political engineers of European integration - of whom Debray is one - and the fervent Europeanists advocating federalism are as old as the project of European unification itself. As early as the 1950s, European federalists (with their dreams of the United States of Europe modelled on the German *Bundesstaat* or the United States of America) and pragmatic neo-

functionalists (with their mundane policy-making producing 'spillovers' from one policy field into another - 'integration by stealth', as Joseph S. Nye called it) were arguing with each other; both sides' positions have changed little since. One day, the neo-functionalists believe, the peoples of Europe will wake up and find themselves in a new political order that has emerged from the sedimentation of thousands of unremarkable policy measures - and they will like it. The federalists, by contrast, claim the new order will only be legitimate if it is constructed by a sovereign's act of will. To which their opponents say: even if this were desirable, this sovereign does not exist.

While both arguments have some validity, they also have their weaknesses. The existing supranational order has been constructed in a pre-democratic manner. What if - one might ask the pragmatists - its legitimacy is challenged? Is not the continuous erosion of the consensus amongst Europe's citizens on which European politics has until now been grounded not a sign that functionalist integration is in crisis? Moreover, are the Union's institutional structures in a fit state to meet any possible future challenges?

The federalists have to answer other questions. As the federalist model is - obviously - not widely in use at the national level in the EU, how can the support of Europe's peoples and elites for European federalism be achieved - and its legitimacy thus secured? In addition, is federalism really the only constitutional structure for the Union? Is there not a need for a new approach, one that does not rely on a model invented two hundred years ago?

## ENLARGEMENT: A CATALYST FOR DEEPENING?

The difficulties attending the next enlargement towards Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) are looming large (and they are enhanced by the special problems inherent in the accession of Cyprus). The debate about this enlargement differs from previous ones in that it involves more than ever the crucial question about the Union's borders - that is, about where Europe ends. This issue could be ignored as long as the Iron Curtain seemed to be a permanent, indeed almost a natural, border. The nature of the Soviet regimes - first totalitarian, then authoritarian - as well as the Soviet Union's antagonism with the USA, allowed West Europeans to create, slowly and largely undisturbed, a new (West) European unity.

This era came to an abrupt end in 1989. Since then developments have proceeded at a new speed: a plethora of new and small states has emerged, most of which are eager to 'go West' (or to 'return to Europe', in the metaphor used by CEE intellectuals) by applying for membership in the Union; market economies and democracies need to be reconstructed in regions unused to both; Germany has been unified - and a large state at the core of the Union has been created, thus altering the old balance between states; and, last but not least, there have been wars in the Balkans, in response to which the Union has been unable to develop a common strategy.

What appeared to be a great opportunity to create a stable Europe has given rise to two countervailing political movements: one aims to establish a single market with a single currency based on specific criteria of economic convergence; the other is more or less trying to halt the automatic movement toward an ever closer union. The Danish referendum's No to the Treaty on European Union agreed at Maastricht in 1991 was the most important example of this - even though, unfortunately, it was deemed by outsiders to be the eccentric action of a traditionally eurosceptic people.

Maastricht was, in fact, the Union's Rubicon: once it had been crossed, the whole game changed. European officials, however, behave as if nothing had happened. For this they suffered at the intergovernmental conferences in Amsterdam (1996) and Nice. Neither treaty was a high point of European integration: rather, they both reaffirmed the concept of 'l'Europe des petits pas'. They offered solutions for some minor problems, but left unresolved the big issues: what should be the final shape of the new polity; and would the polity's structures of governance be democratic? This debate has - once again - been postponed, this time to the 'post-Nice process'. In this process the old argument - between federalists and pragmatic neo-functionalists - will surface again.

If the 'post-Nice process' is to produce results appropriate to the problems that the European Union is facing then the problems must be clarified, as must the ability of European elites' ability to find viable solutions to them ('viable' means that the solutions must also be acceptable to citizens). This argument is in sharp contrast with Debray's advocacy of just getting people used to the construction of



Europe. While people undeniably learn to accept their political institutions over time, even if they have had no or little role in their construction, it is also obvious that they will be more loyal to these institutions if they are given a voice in building them.

So the complex problem of democracy in the supranational context requires pas-

'Without the "tyranny of small decisions" resulting from deliberations and negotiations in the hundreds of working groups and committees of the Commission and the Council - the 'underworld' of the European institutions - there would have been no European integration.'

sion, both in thought and action, a passion which authors like Debray say cannot be found amongst the peoples of Europe. But democracy and enlargement are two sides of the same coin. If parliaments are downgraded to being mere notaries of European law not only the development of loyalty to the European Union in the new democracies, but of democracy itself, might be hindered. And enlargement has another implication for European gover-

nance, too: the larger the Union becomes the more the question of the legitimacy of its policy-making process will be raised.

## EUROPEAN POLITICS: THE WORK OF EXECUTIVES

Until now European politics has been conducted mainly by the executives. National and supranational administrations have written the rules and regulations with which Member States and individuals must comply. Until the mid-1980s governments had the ultimate word in the legislative process, with the right to initiate legislation lying with the Commission. After the Single European Act (1986) the European Parliament was attributed a right of co-decision in selected fields; this has been expanded in subsequent treaty revisions. However, the Member States remain the final arbiters of the treaties. Treaties are revised in intergovernmental conferences and are subsequently ratified by national parliaments (and, in some countries, by popular referendum). But parliaments as representative organs of the people, or the people themselves, intervene only to accept or reject the result of negotiations in which they cannot participate actively. Until the ratification of Maastricht this procedure went largely unchallenged.

And the complex way in which negotiations over single regulations - from food to telecommunications to competition policy - are conducted has remained largely unchallenged. From its origins - the Coal and Steel Community - European integration has been as much shaped by the politics of bureaucracies, national as well as supranational, as it has been by various treaty revisions. Without the 'tyranny of small decisions' resulting from deliberations and negotiations in the hundreds of working groups and committees of the Commission and the Council - what Joseph Weiler has called the 'underworld' of the European institutions - there would have been no European integration. This has been, in Maurizio Bach's words, a 'silent revolution by administrative procedures'.

It was Jean Monnet who developed this method of small-scale, quotidian political engineering. Monnet believed that European unity would result not from high but low politics; not from high-flown rhetoric but from concrete actions and from a well-orchestrated interplay between the formal and the informal. Monnet created the 'High Authority' with



truly supranational powers: the European Commission. The other - though unsung - hero of European integration is the European Court of Justice. The ECJ, in sophisticated interaction with the Commission, has produced a series of rulings that have 'deepened' the Community decisively: it has issued directives in specific cases where the treaties have been silent; given individuals the right to take action against their states when the latter have been found to have infringed European law; and, on the basis of far-reaching interpretations of the treaties, it has developed jurisprudence on fundamental rights.

### THE NEED FOR PASSIONATE RATIONALITY

The achievements of these political engineers are impressive. They confirm that Monnet's method has worked well. But enlightened technocracy has its natural limits - for example, when there are 'output' failures, as with the current agropolitical crisis. This blame for this crisis is largely attributed to the Union; but what is not widely understood is that all European politics is the product of joint national-supranational decision-making. There is no genuine, independent European policy-making process. Policy-making is, rather, largely the work of national governments, bureaucracies and experts acting in supranational committees organized, steered and supervised by supranational actors, mainly the European Commission. Governments have discovered that this widens their scope of decision-making vis-à-vis their parliaments and their electorates. Whenever public fears or opposition to certain policies arise they can scapegoat Brussels and maintain their own position as legitimate guardians of the national interest.

After the referenda on Maastricht in Denmark and France a new discourse came to the fore: getting the Union closer to the citizens. But this is quite a paternalistic understanding of democracy, one that is unlikely to enhance the loyalty of the peoples of Europe towards the new polity. For loyalty is intimately connected with identity: it is the result of a process of identifying oneself with the polity under construction. Only participation in this construction will enhance identification and - in the longer run - create identity.



### COMMON POLITICAL CULTURES

The notion that identities must be constructed on the basis of grand narratives is questionable. It is not grand narratives, but the processes of institution building that will help construct a European identity. A thorough analysis of European constitutions and political systems will reveal

'Loyalty is intimately connected with identity: it is the result of a process of identifying oneself with the polity under construction. Only participation in this construction will enhance identification and create identity.'

that the states of Europe have a common political culture. Constitutionalism in Europe has common roots in English liberalism and French republicanism. The various constitutions on which all our political systems are founded derive from the original idea that political power should be balanced and checked by political power; that political action should be based on the rule of law; and, last but not least, that the individual has specific rights vis-à-vis the state. Hence the important phrase in Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union: 'The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental

freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States.' Since 1989 these principles have been part of the new or amended constitutions of the Central and Eastern European states.

We should focus our political discourse on these constitutional traditions common to Member States. It is sometimes argued that people find such discourse highly abstract and appropriate only for legal experts. But then why do European citizens respond so favourably to the question about a European constitution in surveys conducted by Eurostat and other polling institutes - while, in the same polls, expressing considerable scepticism towards existing institutional arrangements? Constitutional questions are questions about the organization of power. European citizens seem to want a voice in the process of the distribution of power at the European level, just as they did in the battles for national democracy. By engendering an idea of a European 'res publica', giving citizens a voice could be a tool for constructing a European identity. To find forums and procedures in which this voice could legitimately be articulated and mediated is an important task for European elites.

*Sonja Puntischer Riekmann is director of the Research Unit for Institutional Change and European Integration at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna. This is an edited version of a talk she gave to the CSD Research Seminar in March 2001.*

## CSD Interview

## The Big Picture

Barry Buzan discusses neo-realism, the English School, and the future of International Relations

### What got you interested in the study of International Relations?

One reason - the most embarrassing - was a boyish interest in war, which I never grew out of. I was very interested in matters naval, and for a long time thought of making a career out of that - even going so far as to be a naval cadet, until I discovered that military hierarchies didn't suit me very well! The other thread was probably science fiction. I discovered HG Wells, probably through the war interest in *The War of the Worlds*, and started to read his work, and eventually came across his *Outline of History* which I thought was wonderful. But history as taught in school, where I was growing up, was incredibly dull. It was Canadian history - and there basically wasn't any - or it was local history, and that didn't do anything for me. So I was engaged by history, but then pushed away from it as an academic subject. In High School, I majored in science and maths. War and history came back into focus when I was in the second year at the University of British Columbia [UBC] in Vancouver. I took Kal Holsti's course in international politics - the course which eventually

became his text book. And that just blew me away - it was an inspiration. Mark Zacher also played a crucial role at this time. He made me aware that I had career potential as an academic, and he encouraged me at several key points to develop that potential.

### Who are your main intellectual influences?

The most obvious is Kenneth Waltz. What grabbed me in Kal Holsti's course was the idea of polarity (the number of great powers) as a way of thinking about the international system, which at that time was relatively new. Waltz was the leading exponent of that idea, which eventually became the core of his neo-realist theory. Its stunning simplicity grabbed my interest. I had been used to thinking about international relations as a kind of history, and therefore full of complexities. That you could think about it in a structural way, in terms of big simplifications, was something of a revelation to me; that's what pulled me into the subject. To the extent that my interests have been in International Relations (IR) theory, I've always taken Waltz's work as a foil, a key referent point. Sometimes very

explicitly, as in *The Logic of Anarchy*, but even *International Systems in World History* is in some way a dialogue with Waltz's work. I've moved quite a long way away from his position, but I still think he exposed an interesting bit of theoretical bedrock, of which there is relatively little in International Relations.

I've also drawn a lot from Ole Wæver, with whom I've worked since 1988. He and I share a range of interests, both in International Relations theory, and in the field of international security, about which we've written a lot together. In a sense he has also been my link to a younger generation. He's read all sorts of things that I would otherwise never have heard of. Our dialogue has been tremendously influential on a lot of things that I've written. I have also written extensively with Gerry Segal and Richard Little, both of whom have shaped my thought in a variety of ways.

### Has anyone outside International Relations been an intellectual influence?

No-one in particular. I've never worked that way. Things interest me, and subjects interest me. In that sense Waltz is something of an exception - he's the only person I've consistently used as an intellectual

'I'm very attracted to the top-down view of things, the big picture. That's one reason I was attracted to science fiction: it's a literature that encourages you to think big'

foil. (The relationship with Ole Wæver is a personal and collegial relationship which spans all sorts of things, in which we have sparked off each other.) Otherwise I'm an intellectual opportunist - I just pick whatever seems to be interesting, but I've not been attracted to schools of thought. At the moment I'm working on the English School, but I'm not interested in the work of Hedley Bull or Martin Wight so much as in the ideas of international society and world society.

### And individual events? Or is it the broad sweep that interests you?

In a way it is. I'm very attracted to the top-down view of things, the big picture. Not many people are. That's one reason I was attracted to science fiction: it's a literature that encourages you to think big, and the best of it provides you with a mirror image of history, enabling you to look at the present in a kind of historical perspective.



**Could you briefly describe the Schools of thought with which you've been associated: Realism, neo-realism, and the English School?**

Neo-realism is a bare bones - structural - version of power politics thinking; it assumes that the logic of power politics is generated not by the nastiness of individual human beings or individual states, but by the anarchic structure of the international system. It's an extremely simplified idea as to where the logic of power politics comes from.

Traditional Realism is much more elaborated, in the sense that it contains an element of conservatism, and a judgement about human nature. It's a conservative interpretation of human nature projected on to the international scene.

The English School stems from the body of work produced by Martin Wight, Hedley Bull, Adam Watson, John Vincent, Herbert Butterworth and others starting in the late 1950s. It's best known idea is international society, which exists as a kind of *via media*, a connecting position, between Realism and liberalism or utopianism. It sees the deep institutions of the international system - sovereignty, balance of power, and international law, for instance - as constitutive of the system. In that sense it's the opposite of the more mechanistic Realist approaches, in which the system is seen more in billiard ball terms - physical objects bouncing off each other according to certain sorts of rules. International society is about the social construction of the international system: its norms, rules and institutions, and the way these are created and maintained.

The English School can also be seen as a methodologically pluralist way of approaching international relations, one rooted in Wight's 'three traditions' of Hobbes (international system, or Realism), Grotius (international society, or Rationalism) and Kant (world society, or Revolutionism). That's what attracts me to it most. In contrast to the paradigm wars favoured in recent decades in the discipline, which say that you have to choose - between Realism or liberalism or radicalism or whatever - the English School starts from the idea that all of these concepts are in play at the same time, and that you have to determine what their interplay is. Given my holistic instincts I find this immensely appealing.

**You began as a Realist and you are**

**now working on the English School. Can this evolution be explained in ideological terms?**

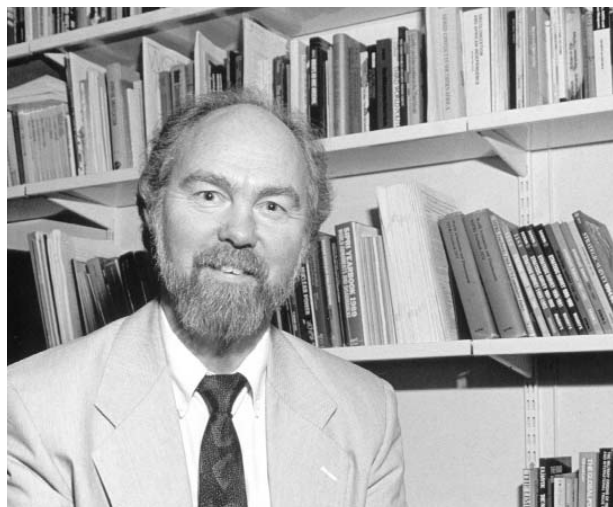
I've never been a particularly ideological character. I don't think of myself in those terms - although, of course, below the surface all this must have some kind of ideological coherence. I suppose I was initially attracted to Realism because it was the fashion of the day, and also because it fitted in with why I was originally interested in international politics - my boyish interest in war and things military. International Political Economy wasn't really up and running until the later 1970s, long after I had finished my PhD.

I was not mobilized politically in any way. There are various ways of reading that. You could just think of me as being politically dull, or you could take the view that where I grew up was a political backwater in which absolutely nothing of any political interest whatsoever was happening. Vancouver was 1000 miles away from the next nearest city in Canada, and British Columbia was run by a bunch of populist right-wingers - left-over lunatics from the 1930s in Britain called Social Credit. So local politics, and, to my mind, Canadian politics, were unspeakably dull. Politically I'm pretty middle-of-the-road. I

'My best intellectual high is linking two things together that are normally thought of as separate in a way that works for both sides.'

see political life as extremely complicated, difficult and fragile, and this makes me a species of social democrat, a wishy-washy middle-of-the spectrum, compromising kind of person.

My intellectual development has been dictated more by the questions that have interested me as my research has unfolded. Since I like to think big, the goal is to move towards some general under-



standing of humankind seen as a whole: to understand patterns and directions of world history, if you will. In a sense my work is just one damn thing after another. But each thing sets up a new train of questions, and the whole process is driven along and inspired by the interplay of what I write with the work of many others across a wide range of disciplines and specialisms. So by the early 1990s - having worked through my way through neo-realism and understood what its shortcomings were - the English School drifted into my focus as something which offered the possibility of explaining things which the frame I was using couldn't explain. I was working with Ole Wæver and Richard Little, both of whom had also noticed its potential, and it moved steadily from the periphery to the centre of our intellectual conversation. It seemed to provide a much better answer than that being given by regime theorists, or neo-liberal institutionalists, or International Political Economy folk, or whatever. It had that nice connection to the Realist core but yet moved beyond it and to open up lots of other possibilities. In some ways my intellectual progression has been an attempt to find ways of bringing more and more things into relationship with what I already know. My best intellectual high is finding ways of linking two things together that are normally thought of as separate in a way that works for both sides.

**Is that why collaboration has been a marked characteristic of your work?**

Possibly. I've always found it relatively easy, and stimulating, to work with others. Partly this is because I find it easy to write, and so I can take the loss if the collabora-

tion doesn't work out. Co-authoring takes a long time, but you learn a lot, because in order to be able to write together you have to be able to get inside each others' heads and understand the other person's point of view. I've found that a very nice way of learning. Creating a kind of third mind has been a key feature of all of the major writing partnerships I've had.

**Could you say a little about the English School project itself, of which you're the convenor?**

The English School has become quite big and international, and it has crossed several generations. But by a certain point it had become a victim of its success: as it grew, and because the founding fathers had mostly passed on, it became a bit incoherent. It was an assemblage of people all working in the same tradition but mostly by themselves. One part of my work in the project is to help 'reconvene' the English School by strengthening the ties within the existing community of scholars working in and around the English School tradition, and by building new ties to related areas of work in other disciplines and areas. Richard Little is also very involved in this, and there are another dozen people active in building and maintaining the network. There are at least 200 people spread across four continents who work in or around the English School's ideas.

There's now an English School website, and at most of the major International Relations conferences there will be a section of English School panels. We are establishing working groups, whose function is to think about different themes within the English School and also to diversify the management away from me.

My other role in the project is to work on theory, and particularly on an interpretation of English School theory as structural theory. This keeps the link to neo-realism and that kind of structural approach but also connects with the world of Alex Wendt and others, the modern constructivists who use concepts and vocabularies that are in many ways quite close to English School ideas.

**Is the security and strategic studies phase in your career now over?**

I've probably made all the major contributions that I'm going to make to the security studies debate. I think it's fair to say that

I've put a couple of substantial ideas into that debate, and seen them grow and be taken up by others and used in a variety of ways. The collaboration with Ole Waever was extraordinarily fruitful in this regard. He came in as that strangest of all things: a postmodern Realist! (Metternich and Kissinger were his particular gods.) Over the years, a synthesis between our positions grew up; this synthesis has been very successful and produced the so-called Copenhagen School. But the Copenhagen School is now going more in his direction than in mine. Most of the interest lies in securitisation theory, which focuses on the discursive processes by which social groups come to designate something as a threat (securitisation) - or to decide that

'IR takes aspects of theory from all sorts of different places; but if you try to think of what IR has exported to any of the other disciplines, it's a much bleaker landscape.'

something is no longer a threat (desecuritisation). The ending of the Cold War was a major example of desecuritisation at work. I've made my contributions to this idea, but it is his theory, and it is mainly his task to carry it forward.

**How do you think International Relations will develop?**

I'm not sure, but I can tell what worries me about it. I'm interested in big synthesizing moves; so what irritates and increasingly concerns me are the fissiparous tendencies within IR. I don't mean the loss of a dominant or hegemonic theory - I'm entirely happy with the case that Realism deserved to be unthroned as the hegemonic theory - but the loss of interest in grand theory. So my career endgame, as it were - I'm going to be booted out in ten years time - is to have a shot at re-kindling an interest in grand theory.

IR is a very lively discipline to be in: it's expanding - there are more students, more staff, the literature is diversifying; this is all interesting and entertaining to be a part of. But IR is amazingly self-referential: it takes aspects of theory from all sorts of different places; but if you try to think of

what IR has exported to any of the other disciplines, or indeed whether any of the other disciplines pay any attention to it at all, it's a much bleaker landscape. There are no major figures in IR who are known in other disciplines. We don't have any Immanuel Wallersteins, W.H. McNeills, Michael Manns, Charles Tillys, or Anthony Giddenses. IR's mission as a discipline should be to draw together all the macro threads from all the social sciences and history and create a true inter-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary way of thinking. If it can't tie these together, then what's it for? Perhaps I am revealing here that I do have a kind of intellectual ideology: call it the ideology of the big picture. My belief is that you cannot understand social and historical phenomena unless you can see them as a whole, and my fear is that IR has lost interest in trying to do that.

In my view, the English School is the best available vehicle for doing this in IR. One of the attractive things about the English School is that it brings history back in, which is vital. Neo-realism, and to some extent neo-liberalism, tended to drive history out of IR. Once you do that you cease to be able to communicate very easily either with the public or across disciplinary boundaries. History is the common language of all the social sciences. In that sense Wallerstein is an object lesson: he did a fine job of crossing disciplinary boundaries with a powerful set of ideas that created debates in anthropology, sociology, IR, political science, and economics. Whether he was agreed with or not mattered less than that he was talked about and created a linking framework that pulled together a lot of disciplines. He used history to create a language of communication that carried not only across academic divides, but also to the public and even to the activist community.

We haven't done this in IR. But since I have the pleasure and the privilege of being in a relatively senior position I can have a good crack at it. That's the motivating energy behind my English School work.

*Barry Buzan is Professor of International Studies at CSD. This is an edited extract from an interview conducted in May 2001 by Patrick Burke, Ana Gonzalez-Pelaez, and Richard Whitman. The English School website address is: <http://www.ukc.ac.uk/politics/englishschool/>*

# Basic Rights in International Society

Ana Gonzalez-Pelaez discusses the work of English School theorist John Vincent

Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, founders of the English School in International Relations, define international society as a 'group of states in which the behaviour of each is a necessary factor in the calculations of others, and which have established, by dialogue and consent, common rules and institutions for the conduct of their common interest in managing this arrangement'. (*The Expansion of International Society*, 1984) 'International society', then, refers to the society that states form among themselves, a society the main principles of which are sovereignty and non-intervention.

The notion of international society is anchored in the writing of Grotius as a *via media* between realism (the Hobbesian tradition) and idealism (the Kantian tradition). It both describes how states do behave and how they ought to behave. However, there are problems with this approach: one of these is the place in it of morality, about which there is no consensus inside the English School. This lack of agreement is reflected in the pluralist-'solidarist' debate.

Pluralism and solidarism provide two different interpretations of the role of morality, sovereignty and order in international society. Whereas pluralism believes in 'moral minimalism', solidarism advocates the protection of individuals beyond the frontiers within which they are organized. Though solidarism - unlike cosmopolitanism - does not want to transcend 'organized particularity' (that is, states), it does require moral responsibility from states: it assigns to states the need to act 'as guardians of basic rights everywhere'.

## JOHN VINCENT

John Vincent is a key figure in the solidarist tradition of thought. The notion of basic rights is at the heart of Vincent's analysis of international society. He argues

(in *Human Rights and International Relations*, 1986) that, 'for international society to become better founded, there must be a minimum standard of human rights observance'.

Basic rights discourse tries to establish, within the body of human rights, a core of rights which do not permit derogation under any circumstances. According to some authors, the enjoyment of these rights is a precondition for enjoying other rights. Arguably, basic rights are rooted in 'basic needs'.

There is no agreement, inside and out-

'Vincent argues that "the failure of a government of a state to provide for its citizens basic rights might now be taken as a reason for considering it illegitimate".'

side the academy, as to what constitutes basic rights or basic needs. Vincent, following Maslow, adopts the notion of a hierarchy of basic needs, 'from physiological to psychological with each level requiring to be met before progressing to the next level: first provide food and water, then security, and so on. . . . Starvation is the resident emergency, and it is reasonable that seriousness about human rights should be tested by reference to it. . . basic rights ought to be met; the plight of the global poor is the worst offence against these rights'.

Vincent's basic rights argument has economic implications: the 'basic needs strategy designed to meet subsistence rights is also', he writes, 'one of the strategies identified for the creation of a New

International Economic Order'. However, he continues, if the pursuit of the basic rights doctrine in the context of development is to make a difference then it must impose a 'correlative obligation' and not be merely an 'option in the strategy of development'.

Vincent wants to avoid ideological problems by creating a practical doctrine of basic rights that is distinct from Western discourse on freedom. But a strategy for improving access to food, health, education and security cannot be clearly separated from the Western 'liberty discourse', as the right of such access is inherently linked with ideas of human rights and democracy. Such a strategy would also raise the question of humanitarian intervention (which, in turn, challenges the primacy of the notion of state sovereignty). Would the fact that people were dying because they had been denied the right to subsistence be a powerful reason to consider humanitarian intervention?

Vincent argues that 'the failure of a government of a state to provide for its citizens basic rights might now be taken as a reason for considering it illegitimate'. But he goes further: in regard to the failure to provide subsistence rights, 'it is not this or that government whose legitimacy is in question, but the whole international system in which we are all implicated'. Implicit in these statements is the question of the legitimacy of the mechanisms of international society. This, in turn, prompts two questions: who decides if these mechanisms are legitimate? and what should be done if they are found to be illegitimate? This questioning shows how Vincent's initial plan of building a concept of basic rights on the neutral grounds of basic needs cannot avoid having ideological implications.

Vincent seems to want to respect the foundational principles of the society of states (above all state sovereignty and non-intervention), and to make it the duty of the 'core' of international society - the wealthiest countries - to ensure that the basic right of subsistence is provided. This stance has other, profound, consequences for international society - which he does not address - including the question of how the society of states should be organized in economic terms.

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Continued from page 6

ers pursued a similar hard-line strategy. This was effective in providing solid Republican support for all Bush's Cabinet nominations, including for Attorney General John Ashcroft - a fully paid up member of the Christian fundamentalist right - and Interior Secretary Gale Norton, as well as for Bush's agenda on tax reduction, education, workplace safety standards, and bankruptcy reform. So that, by late May 2001, congressional Republican leaders could justifiably claim some victories for their party, achieved in the case of the tax reduction with support from moderate Democrats.

Yet, this governing strategy - so appealing to an overwhelmingly conservative Republican Party in Congress - was always susceptible to its executors overreaching themselves, either because of an exaggerated belief in its efficacy or because of a simple failure to recognise the arithmetic of an evenly balanced Senate where just one defection from the majority party would result in loss of overall control. 'If you're going to threaten retaliation and revenge against people if they don't vote the way you want to,' observed Senator John McCain (Bush's rival in the Republican presidential primaries), after Jeffords's defection, 'there is going to be a price. . . . It is well past time for the Republican party to grow up.'

### DEMOCRATIC STRATEGY POST-JEFFORDS

Following Senator Jeffords's defection, Democrats hold a majority for the first time since 1994, albeit a slim one: 50-49-1; with a real possibility that the Democratic majority may increase further if two frail Republican senators retire and/or other Republican moderates take the same action as Jeffords. The 50-50 arrangements in the Senate committees have now been abandoned: Democrats enjoy majorities on all committees; and the new majority now possesses a greater capacity both to pursue its own legislative agenda and block Bush's.

With Democrats now forming the Senate's majority, party control of the Congress and the presidency is again split between the parties and the strategic environment facing congressional leaders is different. In these circumstances, leaders of the 'out-party' in Congress have sometimes been able to pursue an assertive governing strategy, effectively challenging the



president's efforts to dominate the public agenda, as Newt Gingrich's Republicans did after the 1994 mid-term elections.

A new, more assertive, congressional strategy is certainly available to the new Senate leaders. The new Democratic Majority Leader, Tom Daschle, has already expressed reservations about Bush's programme for energy (no drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve), national missile defence, and social security reform, as well as about potential 'far right' nominees to the Supreme Court. He has also promised to revisit the large tax cuts already approved by the House and Senate; and to open a new political front in pursuit of Democratic priorities, including a patients' bill of rights. He has a rather soothing, politically moderate, public persona, is good on television, and will surely

'Outside Congress it will be important that Daschle and his fellow Democrats are not perceived as obstructionist by the voting public.'

present a real challenge to President Bush in this regard.

Sensibly, Daschle has reminded himself and others that the current Senate is one of the most closely divided in American history. It is also the case that the new party majority party will now find itself subject to the same procedural delaying tactics from Republicans as his party

used against the previous Republican majority; and, depending on the issue, to attempts by congressional Republicans and the White House to win support from centrist Democrats, Republicans, and Independents on whom Democratic leaders will rely for support. Outside Congress, and particularly on television, it will also be important that Daschle and his fellow Democrats - as the 'out-party' - are not successfully labelled as obstructionist by a still popular president and perceived as such by the voting public. For the 2002 mid-term elections - and the prospects of further changes to the strategic environment - are rapidly approaching.

The changing politics of America's separated system in 2001 demonstrate well the importance of examining the strategic environment as it looks from Capitol Hill, and the governing strategies which are available to congressional leaders, as well as considering how the political landscape looks from the White House and what strategies are available to the president. Whether it is exercised from the House or the Senate, or by the president, leadership behaviour is basically strategic and formed by the wider political environment within which party leaders seek to exercise leadership.

*John E. Owens is Reader in United States Government and Politics at CSD and the co-editor of The Republican Takeover of Congress. This is an updated version of a paper he gave to the CSD Research Seminar in February 2001.*

# Muslim Identity and Civil Society

*The discourse of civil society may help resolve the identity crisis in the Islamic belief eco-system, argues Ali Paya*

From a cultural point of view, human beings are, in the final analysis, what they believe and think. As such, one can think of identities - individual or collective - as belief systems, which themselves reside within belief-ecosystems. Belief-ecosystems, like natural-ecosystems, are shaped by their interaction with their environment. Belief-ecosystems are constantly being transformed under pressure from internal and external factors: social, economic, political, environmental, scientific, technological, and cultural.

Islamic civilization can be regarded as a geographically vast and historically old belief-ecosystem. Many diverse belief-systems exist within it: Shiism and Sunnism, as well as other less comprehensive sects; various schools of thought and intellectual disciplines - for example, mysticism (*Irfan*), philosophy, theology (*kalaam*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*); and the myriad folk-cultures of the Islamic lands.

Identity crises are the products of threats that individuals or communities consider to be detrimental to their existing belief systems. It is only since Islamic societies encountered modern Western civilization in the early nineteenth century that the symptoms of an acute and comprehensive identity crisis in the Islamic belief-ecosystem have been evident.

As a result of this encounter, a large number of new intellectual elements have been introduced into traditional belief systems that were previously in a state of quasi-equilibrium. In Islamic societies many questions which, before the encounter with West, were simply taken

for granted, have become important: 'who or what is a Muslim?', for example, 'Is Islam really superior to all other systems of belief?', 'Is the apparent weakness of Muslim communities in comparison to Western societies a result of deep defects in the Islamic belief systems, or of defects in the approaches and attitudes of Muslims?' And the encounter with the West has also resulted in many socio-economic and political upheavals. In Iran alone, during the twentieth century, two major revolutions have taken place in direct response to the flow of new elements (1905-6 and 1979), both of which penetrated the traditional fabric of the Iranian society.

## ISLAM AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The questions listed above, and others, have still not been satisfactorily answered. However, there are encouraging signs that this state of intellectual unproductiveness is about to change. Perhaps most importantly of all, Muslims are slowly coming to terms with the fact that just one unique and absolutely valid interpretation of Islam is not within the reach of mortal souls; it is possible for various groups or individuals to offer rival interpretations, all of which may appear to be equally valid, without this epistemological pluralism producing rampant relativism.

Of particular interest is the re-emergence of the discourse of 'civil society' in Islamic countries. This may play a positive role in resolving, or at least damping down, the identity crisis in Muslim communities. Just as in the West there are

those who ardently advocate the idea of civil society, while others voice concern about it, so the notion of civil society has received a mixed reaction amongst Muslim intellectuals and scholars, statesmen, and political activists. Within the Islamic belief-ecosystem there are those who argue that civil society is incompatible with Islamic views; others advocate an Islamic civil society; while a third group argues that 'civil society' is ideology-neutral.

Civil society, as Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato argue in *Civil Society and Political Theory* (1992), is a sphere of social interaction between the state and the economy. This sphere is composed above all of the family, voluntary associations, social movements, and forms of public communication and self-mobilization. Civil society, in this sense, is institutionalized and generalized through laws and rights. In this model, civil society is not identified with all of social life outside the state and the economy in the narrow sense. Thus, for example, political organizations, political parties and parliaments, as well as organizations of production and distribution of goods - firms, co-operatives and partnerships - are not part of civil society per se. The political and economic role

'Within the Islamic belief-ecosystem there are those who argue that civil society is incompatible with Islamic views; others advocate an Islamic civil society; while a third group argues that 'civil society' is ideology-neutral.'

of civil society is not the control or conquest of political and/or economic power but the generation of influence through the work of democratic associations and through unconstrained discussions in the cultural public sphere.

The arguments for the incompatibility of civil society with Islam have appeared in two distinct forms: historical and moral. Some writers, usually Western orientalist, and occasionally their oriental companions, following Max Weber, claim that historically the structure of Islamic societies has prevented the emergence of civil societies. B.S. Turner, in *Capitalism and Class in*

*the Middle East* (1984), summarizes the two main features of this line of argument thus:

The first is to make a dichotomous contrast between the static history and structure of Islamic societies and the evolutionary character of occidental Christian culture. . . . The second . . . is to provide a list of causes which explain the stationariness of Islamdom. The list typically includes the absence of private property, the general presence of slavery and the prominence of despotic government. . . . These features . . . can be summarised by the observation that the oriental social formation possessed an overdeveloped state without an equivalent civil society.

This argument, however, is based on an oversimplified picture of the life in Islamic societies. Louise Massignon (in 'Sinf', *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 1935) for instance, has observed that:

There was not a single town . . . from Central Asia to Mesopotamia, which did not have its *ayyarun* [local volunteers renowned for their acts of chivalry] . . . they . . . seem to be more closely linked with the local bourgeoisie in support of a native prince. . . . Sometimes the bourgeoisie relied on them in resisting the authorities . . . in the majority of towns which had no *charta* (police force), they formed an indispensable local militia, . . . upon whom the race of the city relied.

Bernard Lewis, in a more critical vein, having compared the similarities and the differences between Muslim and the Western European towns, argues for the independence, and the social function of, Islamic guilds, which were precursors to modern 'civil societies':

Unlike the European guilds, which was basically a public service, recognized, privileged and administered by public authorities, seigniorial, municipal or Royal, the Islamic guild was a spontaneous development from below, created not in response to a state need, but to the social requirements of the labouring masses themselves.



Whereas orientalists have based their argument against the compatibility of the models of civil society and Islam on the so-called 'stationariness of Islamdom', some Muslim writers - who mainly advocate a traditional approach to Islam - have produced, from a doctrinal point of view, moral arguments against the thesis of compatibility. Civil society, they write, is a product of the liberal philosophical tradition, which is inherently at odds with Islamic ideas and ideals. Thus S. Larjani, a lecturer in Qom seminary, in a recent paper entitled 'Religion and Civil Society':

In a nutshell, civil society and liberalism are twin brothers, and one of the main theses of liberalism, and therefore of the civil society, is the neutrality of the state. This is not consistent with pure Islamic doctrines, unless one is so infatuated with liberalism that one does not care about such an inconsistency - and that is another matter. Contrary to the views of a number of myopic intellectuals, liberalism is not only incompatible with the fundamentals of religious belief in general, and with Islamic thought in particular, it also poses grave philosophical problems for individuals. A necessary consequence of liberal doctrine is that every immoral law, if it is endorsed by all and sundry,

'A society can be built not just on the basis of a Hobbesian social contract, but on the foundations of a moral contract, or a covenant.'

is enactable, and it is the duty of the state to pave the way for its implementation. This is because the state has no criterion for distinguishing right and wrong. Its only obligation is to safeguard liberties. If people decide that abortion or a homosexual life style should be allowed, then the state must follow suit . . . Such ideas are not only untenable from an Islamic point of view, since among other things, Islam does not endorse moral pluralism, but also contain unresolvable philosophical difficulties.

### A MORAL CONTRACT

However, to equate *laissez-aller*, or unconstrained freedom, with liberalism is to ignore the actual history of ideas. In the past two decades, and especially since the demise of state socialism and the discrediting of the fully-fledged free-market economy and rampant *laissez-faire*, many thinkers have tried to develop more refined models of civil society. In these models the rights and liberties of the individuals are reconciled with a partnership between the state and the society. These approaches emphasize the priority of morality in the affairs of both state and individual.

A model of civil society which emphasizes moral considerations and the idea of partnership should prove to be attractive even to traditional writers. There are further affinities between this kind of civil society and the more traditional interpretations of Islam. A society can be built not just on the basis of a Hobbesian social contract, but on the foundations of a moral contract, or a covenant. Political philosophers have shown that a society based on a social contract is maintained by an external force: the state's monopoly of the justified use of coercive power. By contrast, a society grounded in a covenant, as J. Saack (*The Politics of Hope*, 1997) has pointed out, is maintained by an internalized sense of identity, kinship, loyalty, obligation, responsibility and reciprocity. Parties can disengage from a contract when it is no longer to their mutual benefit to continue. A covenant binds them even - perhaps especially - in difficult times. A covenant is predicated not on interests, but on loyalty and fidelity.

However, while this model of civil society might succeed in mitigating the opposition of more conservative and traditional Muslim writers, it could prompt the discontent of more critically minded citizens



in Islamic communities. It could be dangerous, they might argue, to give the moral law precedence over the law of the land. However, this difficulty could be circumvented by adopting a solution offered by H.L.A Hart (in *Essays in Jurisprudence and Philosophy*, 1983): namely, to accept that where the law of the land has possibly sacred sources, the law itself is a set of fallible interpretations by mere mortals and, as such, is not only not sacred, but may not even be moral in an ideal sense. However, such a law has to be made as moral as possible. This is close to the view that science should be seen as an approximation to truth rather than the truth.

In this kind of civil society, citizens can play an active role in producing better laws. This civil society can also help promote the search for a satisfactory resolution of Islam's identity crisis. In a civil society strengthened by the notion of a moral contract, values like freedom, equality, solidarity, democracy, and basic rights can all be realized. Such a civil society can facilitate the constructive interaction between different elements of the belief systems and can, therefore, help produce novel solutions to the crisis of identity.

In discussing various approaches to civil society in the context of Muslim reactions to the problems of the modern world, the notion of pluralism also plays a significant role. Human communities - including Muslim societies - are increasingly becoming pluralistic. Traditionalists (who emphasize an exclusivist reading of Islam, and draw rigid boundaries between 'insiders' and 'outsiders') have argued that civil society is a superfluous or an incongruent concept: we either have Islamic society or civil society; and since these two societies are based on two different ideologies, they cannot be reconciled. However, the argument from pluralism provides a strong rebuttal of the positions of both traditionalists and the proponents of the Islamic civil society. Iftikhar Ahmad sums up one argument against the latter camp (<http://www.pakistanlink.com/Letters/97/Dec/19/08/html>):

'Civil society is ideology-neutral. It is a means to an end, and can be used properly or misused. However, an ideology-neutral model need not be value-free.'

Islamic civil society is an oxymoron.



Civil society is a secular construct, which either exists or does not exist. If we accept the idea of an Islamic civil society, then in principle we should also agree to the legitimacy of Christian, Hindu, and Jewish civil societies. But that would be tantamount to celebrating the exclusionist character of societies, an atavistic approach at best.

### RATIONAL APPROACHES

Civil society is ideology-neutral. It is a means to an end, and can be used properly or misused. However, an ideology-neutral model need not be value-free. In fact, the model of civil society advocated here is value-laden. These are universal values: they include rationality, freedom, equity and the like.

Our preferred model of civil society could help rational interpretations of Islam meet the challenges of Islam's identity crisis. However, within the Islamic belief-ecosystem, only the fittest belief systems will survive: those which can best cope with rapidly changing situations within and outside the boundaries of the system. Within the Islamic eco-system, there is a belief system with a long history and rich varieties whose main characteristic has been the great emphasis it places on basic values such as freedom, tolerance, equity, responsibility, and love and respect for all earthly manifestations of God, that is, all creatures small and large, animate or inanimate. Though some varieties of this par-

ticular belief system have traditionally been suspicious of the role of intellect and reason, a few sophisticated and well-developed versions of it - whose proponents have included such influential Muslim figures as Jalal Al-Din Rumi, Hafiz, Molla Sadra - have managed to create a unique synthesis between rational and trans-rational elements (love and direct and intuitive wisdom). In recent years - in Iran - a handful of intellectuals, of whom Abdul-Karim Soroush is one, have been trying to develop systems of thought which combine critical rationalism with the main features of this type of bona fide traditional belief system.

In meeting the challenges facing Muslim communities in the next millennium, those rational approaches which have managed to incorporate the more sophisticated trans-rational (mystical) traditions, and have embarked on the project of implementing a model of civil society more or less similar to that briefly described here, will be better placed to weather the storm which is blowing over the Islamic lands.

Those Muslims who intend to carry out the project of providing viable solutions to Islam's identity crisis know that such solutions are unworkable without broad-based participation, and that such participation is impossible without pluralism. Only those who have heeded Kant's admonition and have dared to be wise can produce wise solutions. However, to be wise also means to be open to criticism: rationalists may seek, and propose, positive proposals, but they owe it to themselves to take criticism seriously.

*Ali Paya is an assistant professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Tehran and a visiting research associate at CSD.*

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### Chinese Poster Collection at CSD

CSD houses the University of Westminster's unique Chinese Poster Collection: over 600 posters dating from the 1960s to the early 1980s (the majority Maoist propaganda posters from the Cultural Revolution). Two of posters are reprinted in this column.

The collection will be accessible on-line by Summer 2001 (<http://home.wmin.ac.uk/china/chinaindex.htm>).

The Chinese Poster Project - linked to the CSD MA in Contemporary Chinese Cultural Studies (see box on this page) - is developing the collection as a resource for the study of modern Chinese history and modern Chinese visual culture.



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The establishment of the CSD Trust Fund, and the launching of an appeal to raise an endowment to support these various appointments and activities, was initially supported by a modest grant from the University. The CSD Trust Fund operates strictly under the auspices of the University of Westminster Prizes and Scholarships Fund, to whose Trustees it is directly accountable. Decisions about fund-raising and disbursements are initially formulated by a CSD Trust Fund Working Group, which includes several CSD staff, senior University representatives, well-placed patrons of the appeal, and a representative of the CSD Council of Advisers. In principle, the functions and activities of the CSD Trust Fund are kept quite separate from the governing institutions of the Centre, including its commitments to the wider University structures.

Requests for further details and offers of financial support should be directed to: Dr Richard Whitman, Centre for the Study of Democracy, University of Westminster 100 Park Village East, London NW1 3SR.

## Staff News

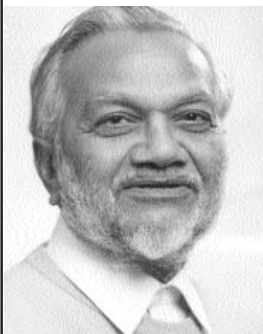
**Abdelwahab El-Affendi's** new book, *Rethinking Islam and Modernity: Essays in Honour of Fathi Osman*, will be published shortly by the Islamic Foundation in Leicester. His most recent book - in Arabic - *Islam and the Modern State: Towards a New Vision* (London, Dar al-Hikma, 2000), has sparked a lively media discussion across the Arab world.

**Harriet Evans's** recent and forthcoming publications include 'Marketing Femininity: Images of the Modern Chinese Woman', in Timothy B. Weston and Lionel M. Jensen (eds), *China Beyond the Headlines*, Lanham/Boulder/New York/Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000; 'Past, Perfect or Imperfect: Changing Images of the Ideal Wife', in Susan Brownell and Jeffrey Wasserstrom (eds), *Chinese Femininities/Chinese Masculinities*, Berkeley, University of California Press, forthcoming (2001); and 'What Colour is Beautiful Hair? Subjective Interventions and Global Fashions in the Cultural Production of Gender in Urban China', in a special issue of *Figurations* (Berlin) on Beauty (*Figurationen Schönheit*), edited by Sander Gilman, forthcoming (2001).

**Simon Joss** has been invited by the Deutsches Hygiene Museum in Dresden to work on an initiative on genetic testing funded by the German Ministry of Research.

### Bhikhu Parekh

A fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and of the Academy of the Learned Societies for Social Sciences, Bhikhu Parekh has recently joined CSD. Professor Parekh is a member of the House of Lords. He was chair of the Runnymede Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain (1998-2000), whose report, *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*, was published in 2000. His main academic interests include political philosophy, the history of political thought, social theory, ancient and modern Indian political thought, and the philosophy of ethnic relations. He is the author of *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory* (2000); *Gandhi* (2001); *Colonialism, Tradition and Reform* (1999); *Gandhi's Political Philosophy* (1989); *Contemporary Political Thinkers* (1982); *Karl Marx's Theory of Ideology* (1981); and *Hannah Arendt and the Search for a New Political Philosophy* (1981). He has also edited four volumes of *Critical Assessments of Jeremy Bentham*.



**Chantal Mouffe's** and Ernesto Laclau's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* has been published in a new edition (Verso, 2001). The first edition, published in 1985, sold 50,000 copies. *The Legacy Of Wittgenstein: Pragmatism Or Deconstruction*, edited by Chantal Mouffe and Ludwig Nagl (based on the conference organized by CSD and the Austrian Cultural Institute in November 1999) is published this year by Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main.

In May 2001 **Richard Whitman** presented a paper on the 'Development of a New Political and Constitutional Order in the European Union' at a conference at the Portuguese Institute of National Defence on the 'Transformation of the European Union and NATO after Nice'.

## CSD

The Centre for the Study of Democracy (CSD) is the postgraduate and post-doctoral research centre of Politics and International Relations at the University of Westminster. Well known for its inter-disciplinary work, CSD is led by a team of internationally recognized scholars whose teaching and research concentrate on the interplay of states, cultures and civil societies. CSD also supports research into all aspects of the past, present and future of democracy, in such diverse areas as political theory and philosophy, international relations and law, European Union social policy, gender and politics, mass media and communications, and the politics and culture of China, Europe, the United States, and Muslim societies. CSD is located in the School of Social and Behavioural Sciences (SBS) on the Regent Campus, and works alongside the influential Policy Studies Institute. It hosts seminars, public lectures and symposia in its efforts to foster greater awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of democracy in the public and private spheres at local, regional, national, and international levels. It offers a number of MAs on a one-year full-time, two-year part-time, basis (see back page for details). CSD's publications include a series of working papers entitled *CSD Perspectives* and this bulletin. *CSD Bulletin* aims to inform other university departments and public organizations, and our colleagues and undergraduates at the University of Westminster, of CSD's research activities. The *Bulletin* comprises reports of 'work in progress' of our research students and staff and contributions from visiting researchers and speakers. Comments on the content of this *Bulletin*, or requests to receive it, should be directed to The Editor, *CSD Bulletin*, 100 Park Village East, London NW1 3SR. As with all CSD publications and events, the opinions expressed in these pages do not necessarily represent those held generally or officially in CSD or the University of Westminster.

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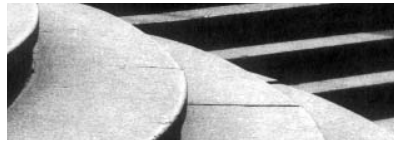
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